

"On the catwalk, baby"



Fashion fest fetches funds

By **BRET SCHULTE**
Senior Reporter

Already the most Parisian club in town, Club 1427, 1427 O St., is going all-European Saturday with a benefit fashion show, champagne and a techno dance party.

The show will feature the fashions of local retailers Rialto Extra, Precision Skate, Eyes of the World and local designer Yousuf. Proceeds from the \$5 admission fee and champagne sales will go directly to The Nebraska Children's Home Society, said club co-owner Kimbe Meares.

"A lot of people in Lincoln complain there is nothing to do," Meares said. "This is not real expensive. They can get dressed up, have a good time and support a good organization."

Although formal dress for a fashion show may seem obvious, it is required at all of Club 1427's special events. Meares said that "formal" simply means abandoning the jeans and T-shirt for a night and donning garb more suitable to a fashion show and benefit event.

"You don't have to wear a tuxedo or Gucci," Meares said.

"This

will be a formal event, so dress up and even get funky."

As the beneficiary of the event, the children's society will use the proceeds to continue its four-fold mission of foster care, emergency shelters, pregnancy counseling and adoption services. Director Robert Brandt said the non-profit organization is thankful for the help offered by Club 1427 and other participating businesses.

"We are excited that they are willing to do that and allow us to be the beneficiary," Brandt said. "Anytime we have an opportunity that will allow people to notice and support our mission, we'll take it."

As the largest adoption agency in the state, the children's society helps children in both urban and rural areas. Brandt said the agency operated strictly from donations, and was the only one of its type in the country that does not charge for its services.

Brandt will be the guest speaker at the event, where he will inform people about the agency and its goals.

"Mostly I'm going to let them know what services we provide and how they are helping children and where their money is going," Brandt said.

He said while fund-raisers are a necessary facet of running a non-profit organization, he expected Saturday to stand apart from the rest —

largely

because of the targeted audience. Expecting to speak mostly to college students, Brandt said adoption was a very real issue for many young people who are confused about their choices.

"Many fund-raisers involve an older generation who is looking at it as an adoptive parent," he said. "The younger side may identify more with the birth parent side and adoptee side."

Brandt's speech will outline some of the options for people considering adoption.

"I want to present what is out there (for adoption alternatives)," he said. "You are allowed to determine how much involvement is available, and what the Nebraska Children's Home Society does."

Not only will the speech carry a different tune, so will the entire fund-raiser.

Disc jockey Jim Pokorny will be mixing for the models walking the runway and will continue for the following dance. Meares said the runway will be cleared for the crowd to dance to Pokorny's mix of European dance-and-trance music. The dance will run until 1 a.m. and the knowledge that the evening is for a good cause should promote a good time as well, Brandt said.

"It will give (students) an opportunity they don't normally have to help children," she Brandt. "This will give people an opportunity to see new things, benefit a worthwhile cause and have a good time."

AARON STECKELBERG/DN

Dancers of Fire strive to stifle stereotypes

By **BRET SCHULTE**
Senior Reporter

Tommy Wildcat is not a private dancer.

In fact, the Cherokee Indian dedicates his life to performing and educating others about the traditional dance, song and language of his native culture.

After spending a week touring Lincoln public schools, Wildcat and the rest of the Cherokee Dancers of the Fire will perform a public show Saturday at the Indian Center, 1100 Military Road.

The show will celebrate Cherokee traditions and culture with a series of authentic stomp dances, lessons on river cane flute carving, songs, stick-ball games and bead-making.

Wildcat said the occasion served a dual purpose: To educate Native Americans about their past, and to increase cultural awareness among people of all backgrounds. As part of the program, Wildcat will periodically explain the history of certain traditions and rituals, and the importance of keeping them alive.

"Our native culture is fading," Wildcat said. "Some (Cherokees) have never danced or never sung. We put a lot of effort into teaching boys and girls native song and dance."

The Cherokee Dancers of the Fire emphasize youth in their program and dedicate it to educating the next generation of Cherokee tribe members. The focal point of this education revolves around the stomp dance, which has a history nearly as old as the Cherokee nation

itself.

Formed as a ring around a central fire, the Stomp Dances were a seasonal event that served several functions, Wildcat said. Most importantly, the dance was a sort of communion for leaders of different Cherokee clans that had converged on a specific site for the ritual.

"The Stomp Dances were a means for Cherokee clans to maintain solidarity," Wildcat said. "It has been part of the Cherokee tradition since before written history."

For more than five years, the Cherokee Dancers of the Fire have toured nationally and internationally, sharing their culture's history. As one of few young men in his Oklahoma-based tribe who could speak both Cherokee and English fluently, Wildcat realized he could act as a link

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TOMMY WILDCAT
Cherokee dancer of the fire

between two coexisting, but profoundly different, cultures.

"When I went to school I heard so many stereotypes about Native Americans being drunks and alcoholics," he said. "Now, we want to get rid of that image. We were very proud of our heritage, and today's children need to be brought up the same way."

As the Cherokee Dancers of the Fire travel across the country, they hope to dispel many myths about

Native Americans while simultaneously reaffirming pride in their culture and heritage.

"It is a great honor to represent our people and rid the stereotypes that linger over us," Wildcat said. "We are so scattered, but the ones who we reach, we can show to them opportunities and pride."

Saturday's performance begins at 8 p.m. and admission is free. Its rain site is Park Middle School, 855 S. Eighth St.