

# Auf Wiedersehen

## Columnist leaves 'the good life' for better life in Germany



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When I was in the German army, I started to count the days to my discharge with about two months left.

In Nebraska, I started counting days 2½ years ago. I compare my college experience with a cloudy night sky. It wasn't all that great with the exceptions of a few bright spots which made it memorable in its own way.

So here it is, my final farewell to Nebraska and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

I am quite sure I'll never win anything in my life, so this is my only shot at one of those speeches people give whenever they are honored, so bear with me.

If you have read my columns, then you will know that I'll go ahead and skip the part where everybody else is thanking the Lord. Instead, let me go straight to giving credit where credit is due.

More than anybody, I would like to thank my family for having made me the person I am now proud of. Everything I have accomplished is a reflection of the greatness of my parents and everybody else in my family. Every one of my successes also is their success. I would be nothing without their love and support.

As you can probably tell by reading my columns, I have never felt really comfortable or at home in Nebraska.

It would be wrong to say I hated it; there were too many good and memorable things, but more often than I would have liked it, living here was a very unpleasant experience. At times I felt lonely and isolated, and it is needless to say I didn't particularly cherish such feelings.

Still, I received what I believe to be a good education; and I didn't come here to have fun, so I guess I can't complain.

Therefore, more thanks goes out to everybody in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications. I think it has assembled a fine group of people, and the reason it is one of UNL's best colleges is because of its staff.

Obviously one of the things I will look back on is my work on "Three Men and a German." It has been a good run, and I wish Dave, Matt and Jay great success without me (although it would suck if the show would be better without me, because it would make me look like a jackass).

Thanks to all our listeners and callers who have made the show a forum for anybody who wants to talk about oral sex and masturbation.

This year, I was UNL's King of all Media when I also got to write in this fine publication. I would like to thank the folks here at the Daily Nebraskan for making me feel welcome, although I was totally aware of what they said behind my back.

Letting me write on a day with Malcolm Kass was really nice because his gibberish made my columns look good. No, that's not true.

Actually Erin Schulte made them look good. She gave my columns sense when she proofread them and corrected not only orthographic mistakes but also pointed out time and time again that I'm a worthless piece of German slime. So, if you have enjoyed my work, a lot of credit goes out to Erin.

To the rest of the Daily Nebraskan staff (apart from Chad Lorenz and Erin, for whom I have the utmost admiration, and Lisa, with whom I am in love): Broadcasters are the better people. Still, thanks for giving me the opportunity to write.

I also appreciate all the people who took the time to read and think about my columns, and I would like to express my gratitude to those who responded (including everybody at the University of Oklahoma who told me I'd go to hell).

I want to thank the administration for selling out time and time again, most recently to Pepsi, to show us students what real-life capitalism is all

about. UNL officials have taught me a great many lessons, most often how *not* to run things.

There have also been a couple questions left unanswered: How come Andrews and Burnett look exactly alike, but only one building had asbestos in it which needed to be removed? To everybody in the English department: If you have cancer in a few years, I would consider suing the university.

One of those rare bright spots here has been my work at the University Child Care center. Staff and children alike were like a family away from home, and I could not have graduated in three years if they hadn't kept me sane.

Some people asked me how I could take 23 hours and still work, and I told them it is because of my work that I can take 23 hours.

Obviously I will miss Husker football when I'm back in Germany. I'd like to thank the team for winning a couple championships while I was here.

Our last title run resulted in me going to the Orange Bowl with a few friends, and it was one of the best road trips in history. If you want to get married in a trailer home church, look no further than Tennessee.

The trip included memorable events, such as one girl asking us if we were from "out of town" when we asked whether we were in Alabama or Mississippi.

I will never again blame the Yankees for participating in the Civil War. The North had every right to go south and kick some Confederate ass.

Not enough thanks ever goes out to all those people who were really responsible for me being able to graduate.

Therefore, my gratitude goes out to all of the nameless persons who assisted me in everyday life. They include

the fine people in the Selleck cafeteria (I'm sure the food isn't your fault), Abel desk workers, librarians, the custodial staff and even all the great campus security officers who guarded me in my sleep.

In general, I was never truly happy in Nebraska, and I have always wondered why.

I think the state lacks diversity, and I had a hard time making true friends. In my humble opinion, friendship is demonstrated by actions and not words, but sometimes I felt as if this does not necessarily hold true here.

Still, I have met a handful of very neat people.

First and foremost Greg, Tom and Craig, who were willing to form the band Spiceballs with me. The project never got under way, but I'm sure we would have been huge. How could anybody resist a singer named Old Spice?

It also is the fault of these three people that it will take several years before I will be able to watch a movie in Germany that I have not seen in the United States before.

I believe I am a better person when I am around my people and in an environment in which I feel comfortable, so I encourage anybody who is in Europe to stop by.

I live in the big yellow house in Horrem, which is just outside of Cologne. Just ask for me anywhere in Germany; they'll know.

There will be many things I'll miss. Obviously "The Simpsons" with German voices will just not cut it. Many people asked me whether I would miss Jerry Springer. The answer is no. We have the same show every Saturday when tens of thousands of people beat the living hell out of each other.

We call it Fussball; you call it soccer. Anybody who thinks the Nebraska-Colorado rivalry is intense

should spend an afternoon in a German stadium, trying to cheer while avoiding knives and firecrackers.

Actually, while we are talking about Germans, let's just get rid of some of the stereotypes for a minute.

My country is not obsessed with David Hasselhoff. This affects only a minority of senior citizens, and I blame Alzheimer's for that, not a lack of taste on the part of the Germans.

Also, the vast majority of European women shave, and I'm not talking mustaches (well, apart from the Romanians), so don't ever bother to ask another European this question.

And to all of you who have told me they are German, half-German or whatever percentage German: You are 100 percent idiot.

The only way to be German (and I find it questionable to be proud of that heritage in light of recent history) is to have a German passport.

I just explained this to Todd Munson, who claimed to be a woman just because he likes to wear bras. It just is not the same.

Yet, although I didn't really like it here, I benefited from my time in Nebraska. There are many neat things I will take back to Germany.

One of them is the "Abdominizer," which I purchased for three easy installments of \$39.95 through a one-time only offer on television. America does have great things to offer.

Actually, it is not fair for me to be so cynical.

There have been many good times, and I have met good people with whom I intend to stay in touch. Apart from a good education, I made a few friends, and if nothing else, living here has made me mentally tougher.

In the beginning of the column, I compared this experience with a cloudy night sky. Come to think of it, there were a lot more bright spots than I thought.

Right now I am just ready to go back home and to be there for all my friends and family who have had nothing but support and love for me.

I am sure when I look back at my Nebraska experience in a few years, the sky will have cleared up and I will be able to remember more of the good things and not the bad.

This is the moment when I get all teary-eyed, because I have to say my final goodbye to everything I liked about my three years here.

Maybe the term "Heartland" is taking it a little too far, but there are many good people here whom I will miss a lot and who have earned a spot in my heart and my memories.

Farewell.



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