



DAWN DIETRICH/DN
JAN ELLSTON runs Indian Jan's Taco Stand during World Day on the Mall on Thursday afternoon. Ellston is from the Rosebud-Sioux tribe of South Dakota.

Celebrating good times

World Day promotes ethnic diversity downtown

BY KELLI LACEY
 Staff writer

Thursday's World Day celebration was a free, interesting lunch option for people from downtown offices on their noon breaks.

But when an R&B band struck up "Celebration," by old-school funksters Kool and the Gang, even businessmen in dark suits started dancing.

A range of revelers crowded Centennial Mall for music, food and, as organizers hoped, a touch of diverse culture.

World Day on the Mall, in its second year, celebrates and recognizes the diversity of state employees in the work force.

For many, like Mary Smith, it also meant a fun break in the day.

Smith, who is retired, said she just wanted to get out of her home for a good time because she lives in an apartment with 40 other people who never leave.

Smith said she tries to attend a variety of different events around Lincoln, but World Day was one of her favorites.

The mall took on a carnival-like atmosphere as vendors representing different ethnic countries served ethnic foods such as Indian tacos, enchiladas and Chinese food.

Gov. Ben Nelson used the celebration to urge Nebraskans to fight discrimination.

"Regardless of race, religion, sex, background, age or ability, we are all Nebraskans, and we will move forward by working together," Nelson said in prepared remarks.

A few stores had booths showing examples of handmade crafts from Indonesia and India. Such items included scarves, bags, jewelry boxes

“It is a good way to represent ourselves and to represent diversity.”

IGGY JAY
 World Day attendee

and bracelets.

Bodhi Imports, a south Lincoln store that sells internationally made items, operated one of the booths. Crafts for sale included tan, heart-shaped paperweights; black, woven backpacks; and silver, beaded bracelets.

"It is a good way to represent ourselves and to represent diversity," said Iggy Jay, a friend of the owner of Bodhi Imports.

And with the spirit of a village marketplace, local businesses used the party as an opportunity to advertise.

National Bank of Commerce had its booth set up directly in the center of Centennial Mall. Workers gave away water bottles when people applied for bank cards.

"We are a hometown bank," said Evangline Lager, an NBC teller. "We like to keep positive relations with the community."

Another booth was operated by the National Managers Association. The NMA has been a chapter for 15 years and consists of 280 managers from across Nebraska.

Su Perk Davis said the NMA participates in World Day for recognition.

"It is one way to get NMA known to state employers," Davis said. "It's great (public relations)."

Kilty Band of the band St. Giles Kirk played music on bagpipes early in the celebration.

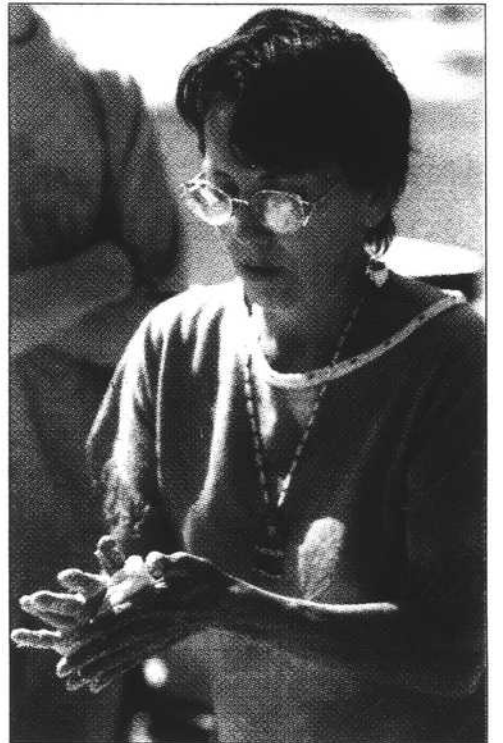
Bossphilly, a local rhythm and blues band, played contemporary

music during its two-hour performance. Lincoln Nights, a singing quartet, also entertained on the mall's sidewalks.

A staff of about 15 volunteers — all state employees — worked at the celebration all day.

Louise Latimer, a staff member and the governor's urban affairs director, said she was pleased with the turnout.

"World Day was held to celebrate the growing number of minorities," Latimer said. "It is to celebrate who we are."



DAWN DIETRICH/DN
ANITA WEBB, of Lincoln, dances to the music of Bossphilly over her lunch hour Thursday at World Day on the Mall. More than 200 people attended the ethnic festival on Centennial Mall.

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UNL selected as site for ESPN broadcast

BY DARREN IVY
 Staff writer

Each week "ESPN College Football GameDay" airs live from the site of the top football game in the country.

Saturday's matchup between No. 2 Nebraska and No. 8 Washington drew that billing after Washington beat BYU on Sept. 19 to remain undefeated, said Steve Vecchioni, coordinating producer for GameDay.

That means Cornhusker fans will have a chance to get their faces seen nationally today at 4:30 p.m. and Saturday morning at 10:00 when the show is broadcast live from the east side of Memorial Stadium.

The gang of Lee Corso, Kirk Herbstreit and Chris Fowler will return to Lincoln for the first time since the Colorado game in 1994.

The group takes turns discussing college games involving top 25 teams. But the focus of their show is talking about the game of the week. Comments from the announcers usually draw responses from the crowd.

That's when the GameDay cameras pan the audience.

The college football atmosphere is what the producers and members of GameDay enjoy, Vecchioni said.

"We do love college football," said Vecchioni, who's produced "NFL

GameDay," "Baseball Tonight" and "SportsCenter." "I think it really shows from the guys on the set, to the producer to the camera man."

Herbstreit, Fowler and Corso get most of the air time, but there are a lot of people behind the scenes who make the show a success.

Two ESPN crew members arrived Thursday morning in a big rig with the GameDay set and stage.

They were met by a crew of local workers who assisted with the assembly of the stage.

By 5 p.m., everything was ready.

"We are the first ones in, and the last ones out," said David Weiler, director of GameDay, who oversees and organizes operations.

The GameDay crew had to displace a crew from Gear Up, a touring carnival of off-beat sporting events. Gear Up had been scheduled to use the same space at the same time.

Today, electrical technicians will wire the stage and connect the television equipment.

John Green, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate student and worker at the Department of Landscape Services, was one member of Thursday's crew.

"It makes you feel good when you get it all together, and it works right," said Green, who's been assembling stages and sound systems for 13 years.