

Tidball recipients, nominees honored

By KELLI LACEY
Staff writer

Sue Tidball loved butterflies.

For Tidball, butterflies symbolized the freedom and open-minded spirit that resembled people.

Before her death in 1976, Tidball, who worked in campus ministry at UNL, was known for helping students, faculty and staff to care for each other.

Because of her caring personality, the Sue Tidball Award for Creative Humanity has been given out on the UNL campus yearly since her death.

The 18th annual ceremony, honoring 12 nominees for their outstanding contribution toward the development of an open and caring environment at UNL, was held Sunday night at St. Mark's on the Campus Episcopal Church and Student Center.

Three of the 12 were named as Award Recipients for the year.

"All of these people nominated are winners," Angie Splittgerber, member of the Sue Tidball committee, said.

The first recipient of the award was Ardis Holland, who is the assistant to the dean of the Teachers College.

Holland, who has worked for the University for 25 years, serves on the Teachers' College Equity Committee where she works with organizing multicultural faculty and staff events.

The second recipient of the Tidball award was Claudia Price-Decker, who is an administrative technician in the psychology department.

She served on the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women and was chairwoman of the commission from 1993 to 1994. Upon helping to create the anti-discrimination sexual harassment policy, she has worked at speaking out and advocating for others.

The third recipient of the evening was Jocelyn Walsh, a junior in the college of Arts and Sciences.

She served as the programming chairwoman of the Neihardt Residence Hall Council and now serves as president of the council. She also serves as vice-president of Alpha Phi Omega, a co-educational service fraternity.

James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs at UNL, responded to the recipients.

"I know the university appreciates you all very much," he said.

The ceremony was held not only to recognize the recipients, but all of the nominees, Splittgerber said.

"Everyone here is very much a winner."

High school courses now on the Internet

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"A student in Benkelman can talk to a student in West Point can talk to a student in Valentine," he said. "This is an interactive classroom setting."

While many at the conference emphasized positive effects for rural areas, Jerry Ice, a member of the committee that helped develop the courses, said the courses are "especially promising" for education in urban areas.

Ice, vice president and provost of Thomas Edison State College in Trenton, N.J., said overcrowded schools burdened with basic course requirements would be able to add classes for gifted students or students with special needs.

Kerrey encouraged educators to share thoughts on the courses.

"You are the customers and your feedback is vital," he said.

Web site challenges Cliff's Notes

Schoolbytes.com hopes to take byte out of other literature summaries

By MICHELLE STARR
Staff writer

Look out Cliffs Notes Inc., a new kid on the block said it wants to shut you down.

Schoolbytes.com sprung onto the Web on Feb. 24 offering free study aides online.

The site, created by Mark Saldanha, 22, and Michael Burgess, 21, received around 80,000 hits during its first 10 days of operation.

The Web site presents brief plot summaries of books and short stories as well as free term papers. Other topics will be added later.

Saldanha, graduate of Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y., said while other companies offer book notes prepared by professors, Schoolbytes.com set out to use simple language written and understood by students.

"I was a lazy student," Saldanha said. "So, we wanted easy explanations — the way a best friend tells you."

For example, Schoolbytes.com described the "Native Son" character Bigger Thomas as "the main dude of the story" and Mrs. Thomas as "Bigger's mommy. She's a religious nut."

The plot summary online begins: "Bigger Thomas is this dude who lives

in a small apartment in Chicago with his mom, brother and sister."

Saldanha said he wants to shut down businesses such as Cliffs Notes by offering similar services for free. He said students don't want to pay for book explanations.

Cliffs Notes President Robert Covolik, who had been unaware of Schoolbytes.com, said it presents "muddy waters, but I'm not really concerned."

Covolik said he thought students would remain loyal to Cliffs Notes because it had been a quality product for 40 years.

Cliffs Notes is also available on the Internet, he said, although all services are not free. The site, at <http://www.cliffs.com>, offers downloads for \$6 a piece.

Jonella Knight, Cliffs Notes senior technology administrator, said the cost is worth it.

"I didn't look at (Schoolbytes.com) too closely, but it is not the same quality when it is free."

Saldanha disagreed.

"Just because (services) are free, presented in a friendlier manner, it shouldn't be communicated that they're done in a sloppy manner," he said.

"They're written by two college graduates, both with 3.4 GPAs — one

“

... We wanted easy explanations — the way a best friend tells you.”

MARK SALDANHA
Schoolbytes.com co-creator

from Vanderbilt University.”

Covolik and Knight said they were more concerned about copyright infringement than they were about competition from Schoolbytes.com.

Covolik said other study aide sites have taken Cliffs Notes and copied them onto the Web.

"We review the Internet daily and will take aggressive action," he said.

Saldanha, Burgess and their friends maintain Schoolbytes.com, which is primarily funded by a \$6,000 loan from Saldanha's parents.

Along with presenting book summaries, Saldanha said, the site creates a convenient way to exchange information between students.

Saldanha and Burgess have already received summary suggestions and term paper submissions from students visiting the site. In return for the term papers, the students will be receiving Schoolbytes.com stickers.

Saldanha and Burgess said they

plan to add a math section and an American history section soon, and to include a program that would provide answers when students enter their homework.

The Web site also has a section promoting a spring break tour.

Both Saldanha and Burgess said they have made a full-time commitment to Schoolbytes.com, and because the site is free they hope to make money through advertisements.

Saldanha said he was excited about positive e-mail responses the group had received from students — including 13-year-olds, college seniors and 40-year-old men.

Saldanha said he looks forward to helping other students through the site's continued expansion and taking away some of Cliffs Notes' business.

Burgess agreed.

"If you're going to buy Cliffs Notes," he said. "You might as well read the book."

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