

“
I loved being
all wet and gross.
It was a lot
of fun.
It was like a
whole other world
down there.”

MARTHA CHRISTENSEN
Outdoor Adventures leader



ABOVE: TONY BURRIS, a junior adventure-based experiential education major and Outdoor Adventures trip leader, takes a quick snooze on the way to Sullivan, Mo. The trip from Lincoln was about an eight-hour drive.

TOP: THE SPELUNKERS take a lunch break in Little Scott Cave. At one point in Little Scott Cave, the group was forced to crawl in about a foot of 50-degree water through a 3-foot opening.

Spelunkers delve into underground

CAVES from page 1

Adventures trip leader, said one of the goals of the trip was to bring students back to the natural world, where mankind came from.

“It’s very fragile. It’s very precious,” she said. “We want you to understand it must be protected.”

Outdoor Adventures offers students about 40 to 60 trips a year including canoeing the Niobrara River and exploring the Australian Outback. The trips are designed for beginners without prior knowledge of

the challenge they are about to take on.

“We want to provide the basic skills and avenues so that you can pursue an activity further if you wish,” said Jon Godsey, director of the Outdoor Adventures Program. “It’s kind of like teaching a new sport.”

Since the cost is split between all of the people participating, Outdoor Adventures is able to offer trips at a fraction of the cost that professional outfitters charge, said Godsey.

The caving expedition cost \$95, and future trips such as a Grand Canyon backpacking trip and a Niobrara River canoeing trip cost \$295 and \$85, respectively.

The prices students pay cover

transportation, food, guidance and all of the necessary equipment.

Outdoor Adventures provides student trips year-round, which are open to the general public for an added cost.

Some future trips include: Grand Canyon backpacking, May 9-16, Niobrara river canoeing, July 9-11, and an Australian trip, June 1-July 3. For information, visit Outdoor Adventures in the Campus Recreation Building.

Godsey said the program opens many new doors for students interested in exploring the outdoors.

“There is a world of wonderful things out there,” Godsey said. “And there is a program on campus that tries to bring you to those wonders.”

Catholics offended by drag queen nuns

■ Plans for an Easter party in San Francisco draw the ire of Catholic authorities, who say the group mocks them.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — San Francisco’s world-class reputation as a place where a guy can be himself — or herself, for that matter — has been sorely tested by a group of drag queens who dress like nuns.

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence are planning an Easter block party, an idea some Roman Catholics find offensive.

In their glittery makeup and false eyelashes, the “nuns” have shimmied and sashayed in their habits for 20 years, raising money for AIDS, breast cancer, youth groups and gay rights since the 1980s.

Block parties in San Francisco’s mostly gay Castro District are common, and when the Sisters sought a permit to close down a block of Castro Street for a party on their anniversary, the request got unanimous approval from the Board of Supervisors earlier this month.

But last week, the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights protested. Issuing a permit to a group that “mocks Catholics” showed “extraordinary insensitivity to people of all faiths,” archdiocese spokesman Maurice Healy said.

On Tuesday, Mayor Willie Brown and two other city officials backtracked, asking fellow supervisors to reconsider.

“I would hope that the Sisters could select some other day on which to do their thing,” Brown said.

Supervisor Alicia Becerra proposed another date: April 11. But it turns out that’s the day the Greek Orthodox Church celebrates Easter.

The Sisters said they’re not backing down. The party — with its picnic baskets, performances and bonnet contest — will go on, Sister Ann R. Key, one of the few women in the order, said Wednesday.

“Not everyone does exactly what the Catholic Church does or says to do on Easter Sunday,” she

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SISTER ROSEANNE MURPHY
bona fide nun

said.
The order came into being in 1979, when a couple of men got dressed in the habits they acquired while doing “The Sound of Music” and went out to the Castro on Easter Sunday.

Today, there are about 30 active members — men and women, gay and straight — and they go by names like Sister Hellen Wheels, Sister Penny Costal and Sister Reyna Terror.

In 1983, the group took on a new role: activism. They founded the AIDS candlelight vigil that year, and since have raised funds for AIDS, youth and breast cancer groups.

Some of their antics have raised the ire of Catholics, including an “exorcism” during the pope’s visit in 1987 and its “Condom Savior Mass,” which celebrates “the Latex Host.”

“If a group of adolescent men display their prejudice by mocking and ridiculing religious women, that is their problem,” Sister Roseanne Murphy, a bona fide Catholic nun, wrote in a newspaper editorial this week, calling the board’s vote “appalling.”

But members of the group say the whiteface, campy getups, outlandish pseudonyms and irreverence bring a measure of hilarity to some serious issues in the gay community.

“We can add humor to a situation that has been very painful,” Sister Ann said. “People can be more vulnerable around us when I’m a ‘sister.’”

Deadly spider found in fruit crate

SPIDER from page 1

Saver came from a family of 550 species, all of which are tropical or subtropical spiders — some of which are venomous.

These types of spiders crawl on the ground but also live in the foliage of tropical environments.

After two weeks of research, Kalisch said he was confident the Super Saver spider was venomous.

Kalisch said he was still unsure about how poisonous the spider was and of what species the spider came from.

What he was sure of, he said, was that it was not a typical spider.

“Usually when you have a family of spiders, they seem to be similar on their consequences of a bite,” he said.

Kalisch said the Super Saver spider was a hunter and attacked insects and even small birds.

The spider uses its orange fangs to attract its prey, and then injects it with venom, he said.

“This particular venom attacks the nervous system that produces paralysis,” Kalisch said.

Human contact with the spider

could be dangerous, he said.

“If it bit a human, the symptoms are high temperature, chills, vomiting and nausea. It’s somewhat similar to the black widow spider.”

The features of the tropical wandering spider are very similar to those of wolf spiders, which have been known to invade homes in Lincoln.

The Super Saver specimen was the most unusual Kalisch said he had seen from a grocery store since a weevil — a species of beetle with a projecting, downward-curving beak — turned up in a box and was sent to his laboratory.

The uniqueness of that episode combined with the current one is staggering, he said.

Kalisch said he was surprised that the spider was still alive and inside the box since it had passed through various inspection stations upon crossing the U.S. border.

He said it was normal for insects to be missed during some inspections. But it is very rare, he said, that a spider of this caliber would turn up in Nebraska.

The entomology department may be forced to turn the spider over to

state authorities, who would kill it. State laws prohibit exotic insects from entering the country.

“Normally we can’t bring in (exotic) insects from another country,” Kalisch said. “We may need to apply for federal and state permits to do so.”

Kalisch said he somewhat regretted bringing the spider to his laboratory.

“I wanted to try to find out what species it is,” he said. “I should have put it in a vial of alcohol and called it quits.”

Brian Haze, store director at Super Saver, refused to comment on the spider incident.

“I’m mad as hell that this leaked out,” he said.

James Sanborn, a Super Saver employee and UNL senior English and political science major, commended the university on its research of the spider.

Sanborn said he was puzzled as to why his employer was reluctant to disclose such information.

“I think it’s rather silly for Brian (Haze) and the company to be so protective of this.”

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