NEBRASKA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

ARCHWAYS



SPRING 13 | VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1





Dear Alumni and Friends,

Anyone who follows the news, whether through newspapers, television, or the internet, knows that higher education is under regular attack these days. Most of the attacks come from politicians, journalists, and pundits. Unfortunately, they do seem to speak for a broad concern among the public at large.

What's it all about? What are alumni and friends of Nebraska Wesleyan to think?

The main claims are that going to college costs students and their families too much while it benefits graduates and society too little. Often there are related claims that universities and colleges aren't responding fast enough to the changes in our world, they aren't forthcoming enough about costs and financial aid, and they keep raising the price when it ought to be falling.

There are some extreme suggestions being bandied about right now. Governors in several states have called for cutting the total cost of a bachelor's degree to \$10,000. They remind me of a friend of mine who bought a Yugo car in the late 1980s for \$3,990. It was so worth what he paid for it that he traded it in after six weeks. But college degrees, good or bad, don't trade like that.

Here are things that we know are true, amidst so many conflicting claims and strong opinions:

- College tuition takes a bigger share of family income now than it did a few years ago.
- Colleges find it harder today to fund core expenses: pay the faculty and staff what they merit, fund programs adequately, and keep up the buildings and grounds.
- Legislatures in many states have cut their appropriations for public higher education.
- Technology is changing how some college learning takes place.
- More and more students transfer between institutions before they graduate.
- People who wouldn't have gone to college before—because of disabilities, special learning needs, or other limitations—are on campus in much larger numbers now.
- The number of 18-year-olds has been declining in Nebraska and will keep going down.
- Some colleges are struggling and, in effect, buying students with price discounting so steep that they won't have enough money to pay the bills, just to keep their numbers up.
- Public universities that are NWU's main competition are eager to grow, with plans to add 10,000 students in a state that only has 20,000 high school graduates per year.

Here's what you need to know about Nebraska Wesleyan in order to interpret what's being said and to know where our school fits amidst so many changing and challenging circumstances:

- The excellence and hard work of our faculty and staff are our most valuable assets.
- Our reputation is as superb as it ever was and our signature programs are a big draw.
- We're #2 in Nebraska (after Creighton) for four-year degrees completed in four years.
- We're holding costs down and offering as much financial aid as we can, while emphasizing the value of the liberal arts education and career preparation we offer.
- We're adjusting the mix of our offerings—and preparing to add new graduate programs—in order to have the diversi-fication in revenue that will help going forward.
- We now teach some courses in a hybrid format (in-person and on-line), while continuing to take justifiable pride in the powerful learning that occurs through personal attention.
- Our newest alumni continue to impress both employers and graduate professors.
- Your strong and consistent support is essential to keeping NWU strong going forward.

Let me know what you're hearing in the news. Let me know what things concern, perplex, and delight you about higher education.

Most of all, I want you to know how grateful I am for your pride in this fine school and for the ownership you can and do show through your gifts.

Yours truly. Fred Ohles President



CONTENTS Spring 2013 | Volume 13, Issue 1

ON THE COVER

MLK and NWU

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s world-changing beliefs bear the distinct fingerprints of two Nebraska Wesleyan thinkers.

HEROES

Prairie Wolves in Print: Called to Justice

Judge's memoir shows that justice is the friend of peace.

I Need a Hero

NWU's film guru wants you to see your major on the big screen. 24

Eight-Man Men

Three small-town roommates from eight-man football high schools team up to dominate the GPAC. **30**

Grip

Not even a tornado's fury could break Rev. Tim Travers' grip on what's most important: family and faith. >39

RESEARCH

A River Thinks through It

The key to wilder creativity may be wilderness. **18**

Slow Text Movement

Googling "gifted researchers" produces 5.1 million results in 0.24 seconds. But when it comes to producing actual gifted researchers, results come more slowly. >22

Like a (Latex) Glove

Two would-be physicians find the perfect fit in biomedical research **26**

NWU

NWUniverse >7

Art >28

Sport >30

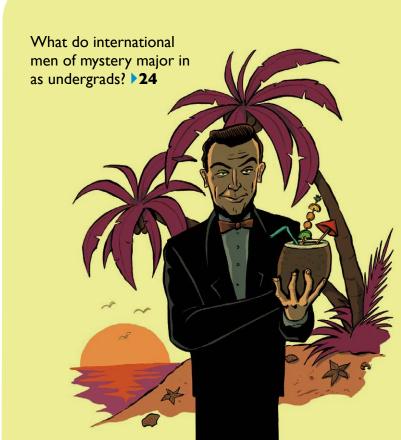
Student Pride >32

Departments

- 2 From the President
- 5 Letters

Alumni Pages

- 35 Mystery Photo
- 37 Alumni News
- 41 Class Notes
- 47 Calendar



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Nebraska Wesleyan University is an academic community dedicated to intellectual and personal growth within the context of a liberal arts education and in an environment of Christian concern.

Archways is an examination—and, ideally, a conversation—of how Nebraska Wesleyan University and its people relate to the world around us. That examination is academically sound, socially conscious, and continuously curious.

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David Whitt, "I Need a Hero" >24

David is an associate professor of communication who started teaching at Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1991. He is a fan and student of popular culture who has published books on science fiction and mythology. He recently served as a juror at two film festivals in Croatia.



Dwain Hebda ('90), "Grip" ▶39

Dwain grew up in Fullerton, Neb. During his time at Nebraska Wesleyan, he edited the school newspaper, was a multiple national qualifier on the NWU speech team and freelanced for area weekly newspapers. A successful freelance writer and playwright, he has written and directed five full-length plays for young actors. In 2000, he received the NWU Alumni Association's Young Alumni Achievement Award. He lives in Little Rock, Ark., with his wife, Darlene. They have four children. His son Brandon ('08) and daughter-in-law Maryann (Rezac) Hebda ('07) are NWU alumni.

Joseph Fiedler, illustrator, "MLK and NWU" > 12

Joseph was born in Pennsylvania and has lived in Tokyo, New Mexico, Michigan and California. He's worked as an artist and illustrator since 1973 and has taught painting and illustration at Carnegie Mellon University and the College for Creative Studies in Detroit. His work has appeared in countless publications and more than 75 gallery and museum exhibitions throughout the U.S., Germany and Japan.



Letters

Many Happy Returns

I must tell you how happy I was when I received the winter issue of *Archways*. I was happy to see the campus group picture, which I was in. I had a great time attending the NWU 125th anniversary event and meeting a lot of friends on campus. It was the highlight of my life in 2012!

Also, I was overwhelmingly happy to read the article about Dr: **Karen Clarke** ('89) ["'Number One' Priority," winter 2012-2013] and to see her picture. For years she was a very special person in my heart; I thought of her so often and always wondered where she is now. She wrote me once when she was in medical school but somehow we lost contact.

When Karen was one of a few minority students on the NWU campus, I was one of a very few minority faculty/staff members to

Deep in my heart I knew how hard it was for a minority student to break the barriers on a homogeneous white campus. greet her and talk with her about her life on campus. She was a very bright but shy student with a beautiful smile and soft tone of voice. She came to the library to study often; we did not talk a lot but I was sure she knew that I cared about her academic studies as well as her life on campus in general.

Deep in my heart I knew how hard it was for a minority student to break the barriers on a homogeneous

white campus. She adjusted her college life well, studied hard, graduated from NWU and went on to medical school. I was very proud of her then and I am very proud of her now for her accomplishment in her profession as a medical doctor!

I am very grateful that in my life's path I have met so many wonderful people, young and old, who have touched my life and rewarded me with warm friendship and happiness.

Janet Lu, professor emerita of library science Longmont, Colo.

What's in a Name?

I just finished reading **Richard V. Miller's** ('50) letter to the editor, "Fresh off the Bus" [Letters, winter 2012-2013]. It brought back some nice memories. I was there from 1958 to 1966 (with time out for the USMC).

I don't know if **Oscar Bennett** was called "Doc" in 1948, but in 1958, everyone called him "Pop". I was in chapel choir, which he directed, and he was a wonderful director who expected a lot from our group. I believe he was also head of the Music Department until his retirement, but I never heard him called "Doc".

Warren Woods ('66) Creston, Iowa



A View from the West Bank

Last December, I traveled with a study group to Israel and the West Bank with an amazing organization, Americans for Peace Now. We explored the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, meeting with experts, political figures, retired military officials and a retired Israeli intelligence officer. We also met with academics and journalists, including *The New York Times* Jerusalem bureau chief.

To better understand the American position, we visited our embassy and met with our ambassador and our consulate general.

We also viewed Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Palestinian neighborhoods in Ramallah and the biblical city of Hebron where Abraham, Isaac and Sarah are buried in the Tomb of the Patriarchs.

The tour gave me an unfiltered view of the conflict that few will find via American media. It was fascinating to hear from people on both sides of this contested debate. So many peace efforts, led by American presidents and others, have fallen short for a host of complex reasons.

It was painful to see the consequences of our shared failure to reach peace: the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Palestinian communities surrounded by concrete walls and razor wire, and the heavily armed Israeli Defense Forces present on the streets.

The multiple checkpoints we crossed were often quite intimidating. In Hebron, I saw Palestinian children who must navigate these frightening military checkpoints on their way to and from school. These hardships were not things I'd fathomed prior to witnessing them myself.

(continued)

I support Israel's right to protect itself. Yet I am deeply concerned about the heavy-handed and one-sided nature of the security situation there—a situation that can only thrust more Palestinians toward desperation and its accompanying desperate measures.

The school children walking around the West Bank were just like our children. I saw the same jeans and sneakers and backpacks. The experts we spoke with in Ramallah were like American professionals-well-intentioned, well-educated and well-spoken. And yet many of them also spoke with great pessimism for the future. They see fleeting chances for peace in the near-term. They continue to look for leadership from the U.S. to help facilitate a path to peace and a better way of life.

I also found concerned Israelis committed to a peaceful two-state solution—Israelis who recognize that such an outcome is best for Israel and for Palestine.

One such Israeli I have come to revere is Hagit Ofran. She is the heart and soul of Shalom Achshav (or Peace Now) in Israel. Hagit is an expert on the settlements in the West Bank and tracks their every development. Frustrated by her work, some Israeli settlers have threatened her with violence and deeply oppose what she is trying to do for the sake of all in Israel. Yet she pushes on for the sake of everyone who wants to see a fully democratic and prosperous Israel. She is the epitome of courage in my opinion.

Many have asked why I took this trip to a region where rockets were very recently flying.

I tell them the U.S. contributes billions of dollars each year to Israel and hundreds of millions more to the people of the West Bank through foreign and military aid. We are investors in the region with a responsibility to understand what is happening there. I am deeply interested in a thriving Israel. I'm also convinced that the clearest path to that goal involves a thriving Palestine.

To neglect the region is to ignore great suffering as we waste our considerable investment. But to tend to peace there is to lessen their suffering as we lessen also the chances of our own entanglement in future wars that we can no longer afford to take part in.

David Edelman ('91)

Oswego, III.

Edelman welcomes civil and open-minded discourse on the topic of Middle East peace at jillanddavid@comcast.net and invites readers to learn more at peacenow.org.

From Grief, Goodness

It was such a joy to read the Archways story about the Cameron Effect ["In Tragedy's Wake, Cameron Effect Founders Share Two Keys to Happiness: Be Nice. Make a Plan." Winter 2012-2013]. I had tears of happiness and heart squeezes knowing the story and its spirit would reach more people.

And though whoever wrote the story is a writer/journalist, we

were impressed with how well it was done. Thank you so very much.

The Cameron Effect continues to grow. It's as if seeds are planted and springing up to our surprise. Many schools continue to use "Acts of Kindness," and there is a movement to present it to all the Lincoln schools next year. Campbell Elementary School sent a number of seeded kindness cards

It is articles like yours that spark ideas in others to further the Spirit.

to the elementary school in Newtown, Conn., where the kids were killed. They will be planted in a kindness garden there.

It is articles like yours that spark ideas in others to further the Spirit. And it puts us in awe and humbleness.

Thank you!

Paul Freeman

Lincoln

Opinions expressed in letters to the editor are not necessarily those of Archways magazine or Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Anonymous letters will not be printed. Letters may be edited for length, content and style.



We want to hear what you have to say. Send your letters to:

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NWUNIVERSE

Arriving on Time: NWU's New Graduation Commitment

Kyle Rohrich ('12) admits his senior year at Nebraska Wesleyan University was a little hectic.

His class schedule and internship made for some long days. Add his volunteer work, an international research project and his involvement in several campus organizations and a busy schedule could border some days on chaotic.

Rohrich's four years at Nebraska Wesleyan also included a semester in Spain and another in Washington, D.C., through NWU's Capitol Hill Internship Program. Then there was his service trip to Turkey with the Global Service Learning student organization, and his stint as a Liberal Arts Seminar student instructor. He double majored in political science and Spanish. "I don't just believe that it's



Kyle Rohrich challenged himself to make the most of four short years at NWU.

possible to graduate in four years at Nebraska Wesleyan," said Rohrich. "I believe it's possible to do it while taking advantage of some seriously awesome opportunities."

Starting next fall, students who enroll at Nebraska Wesleyan can take advantage of the same kind of opportunities that Rohrich did and rest assured they'll graduate in four years.

The Nebraska Wesleyan Graduation Commitment ensures that students who satisfy the requirements will graduate in four years. If a student meets the requirements but does not graduate in four years, NWU will pay for the cost of completing the degree up to 16 hours.

Nebraska Wesleyan's four-year graduation rate among students who attend NWU exclusively is 83 percent.

"Graduation in four years should be an expectation for undergraduates at Nebraska Wesleyan University," said President **Fred Ohles**. "We fulfill our mission when students graduate in a timely matter."

The requirements allow the necessary time needed to complete coursework and take advantage of opportunities like internships,

Feminist Economics.

The English major and communication studies minor credited her academic advisor and other faculty for helping her earn her degree early.

"My advisor was so helpful in making sure I had everything I needed to get my course work done and done well," said Miller. "The personal attention was great and really made it possible for me to learn everything I needed."

Miller—who was active in Alpha Gamma Delta sorority, Student Affairs Senate and Global Service Learning—admitted she'll miss her friends and the campus activities planned for the spring semester.

"I had done many of the things that Nebraska Wesleyan offers and now I'm ready for a new challenge," she said.

Thanks to the Nebraska Wesleyan Graduation Commitment, incoming students can be even more confident that, after four years, they'll be ready, too.

Business Leaders Join NWU Board of Governors

In February, the NWU Board of Governors welcomed two new members.

David Hansen ('77)

Hansen is partner and chief executive officer at Swanson Russell, Nebraska's largest marketing communications firm. He is married to Terry (Kloefkorn) Hansen ('78). Hansen will serve on the board's Enrollment and Marketing Committee.

Ben H. Harris

Harris is co-founder of NBC Bancshares, LLC, a Lincoln-based bank holding company with banks in Nebraska and Colorado. He earned his bachelor's degree at Washington University in St. Louis and a law degree at the University of Nebraska College of Law. Harris will serve on the Advancement Committee.



David Hansen ('77)



Ben H. Harris

campus leadership, service learning, research and studying abroad while staying on track to graduate on time. A few programs are excluded from the guarantee.

"The graduation commitment keeps students and families from spending more than they plan on a college education," Ohles said.

Other benefits include ensuring students that they will be prepared for life after graduation whether that is continuing on to graduate or professional school or beginning work on their careers.

Mandi Miller ('12) estimated she saved over \$7,000 by earning her degree in three and a half years. Miller graduated in December and landed a full-time job as a proposal development specialist for the International Association of

Lester's Improvisations Make Her Carnegie "Nebraska Professor of the Year"

-By Sara Olson ('95)

Photo by Shane and Sunny Photography

Rita Lester stepped out on a tightrope of sorts in her Liberal Arts Seminar on mythology last year. That was when the professor of religion agreed, on her student co-instructor's request, to add a book to her class's reading list that she'd never read herself.

Lester admitted to her class that she was unfamiliar with the graphic novel by Neil Gaiman."I confessed... that I didn't know where on the first page of *Sandman* I should start reading."The student co-instructor led the discussion while Lester and her students felt their way along together.

"At the end of the class... the students confirmed the pedagogical usefulness of watching a professor struggle with a reading, just like they do," Lester said. (Read more about the value of students seeing their professors struggle with unfamiliar subjects on page 22.)

Her open approach gave **Tim Brawner**, her student co-instructor in this year's seminar, valuable op-

portunities. "She's given me the space to operate as a partner rather than just an assistant," said Brawner. "She's educating me in the art of education while also teaching a course to 15 first-year students."

That's part of what led the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education to name Lester the 2012 Nebraska Professor of the Year. Lester was selected from nearly 300 top professors. Only 31 states fielded winners this year. Lester accepted the award November 15 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

"I am incredibly encouraged to win this honor as a person who teaches a really small major," said Lester."It puts the spotlight on small majors and how important they are to a student's experience."

While her department is small, Lester's reach is wide. She teaches general education classes on world religions, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, women in religion and religious diversity. "My goal is to introduce religion as an academic field," Lester said.

"I want students to have the basics. And I want to give them a safe space to think critically about religion."

Elizabeth Neemann

('13) of Sioux City, Iowa, didn't expect to study religion before meeting Lester. "She changed my attitude toward the scholarly study of religion," said Neemann. "As a student, my level of excitement about a subject is influenced by a professor's enthusiasm, and Prof. Lester is clearly passionate about what she does."

That enthusiasm extends beyond the classroom. Last year, Lester spent an hour

each week learning Arabic with Neemann to better understand Islam.

Lester is also the faculty president, serves on the Board of Governors and chairs the Philosophy and Religion Department. In 2011, she won the university's Margaret J. Prouty Teaching Award for outstanding teaching at NWU. In 2010, Lester was one of only 12 American professors selected to attend a Jordanian seminar, "Teaching About Islam and Middle Eastern Culture."

Lester is the fourth NWU professor to win Nebraska Professor of the Year since 2001. Others include Maxine Fawcett-Yeske (music, 2006), Kelly Eaton (political science, 2003) and David Iaquinta (sociology, 2001).

Grant Supports Campus Effort for ''Vocational Reflection''

"Helping students create their stories" is the theme for a two-year project to integrate "vocational exploration" into the high-quality advising and instruction that already takes place at NWU.

"Vocational exploration is a natural fit with our priority to use experience as part of a meaningful education. Helping students explore the connections among their talents, passions, and values-and the needs of their communities—is an important part of our mission," said Kathy Wolfe ('90), dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Wolfe co-chairs the project funded by a \$49,000 grant from the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and the Lilly Endowment. NWU is a charter member of the NetVUE (Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education) consortium within CIC.

"Encouraging students and ourselves to take time to reflect, asking them to be intentional about the activities they select—these are ways staff and faculty can be more deliberate in guiding students' learning," said Wolfe.

A goal for the project is to build a campus awareness of vocation and its many interpretations.

"We need to listen for any opportunity to engage students and one another in conversations about vocation, and how we make meaning of our experiences," said **Pete Armstrong**, dean of students, who co-chairs the project.

Kelli Wood, coordinator of service learning, is managing activities as well as piloting an academic course called "Reflection on Community Involvement." She was part of the NWU team that earlier visited Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, a NetVUE mentor for other institutions. A national expert there, Chris Johnson, consulted for NWU groups in March.



As a student, my

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A Taste of History

Students cap a semester of study with Titanic's "last supper." —By Sara Olson ('95)



Last spring **Sheryl Rinkol** ('99) boarded the Azamara Journey, a memorial ship that traveled from New York City to the site of the Titanic's sinking in commemoration of the I00th anniversary of the marine disaster.

While on the journey, Rinkol visited with relatives of survivors, heard from some of the world's leading Titanic experts, visited graves of Titanic victims, and participated in a 90-minute memorial service where all 1,503 victims' names were read aloud.

Rinkol, assistant director of Nebraska Wesleyan University's Cooper Center for Academic Resources, spent the fall semester sharing her experience and artifacts with firstyear students enrolled in the Liberal Arts Seminar (LAS) titled, "Boarding the Ship of Dreams: Sailing across 100 Years of Titanic."

Students studied the ship's history, how it was built and marketed, and how the media portrayed the fateful journey. Toward the semester's end, students celebrated their work with Titanic tribute poetry, question and answer sessions, Edwardian teatime desserts and a performance of

"Nearer My God to Thee," the song that Titanic survivors reported was the last played as the vessel sank.

"My knowledge of the Titanic was very minimal before taking the class," said first-year student **Alexandria Bardwell** of Omaha. "I only knew what the movie and basic articles had presented."

Bardwell said she has enjoyed learning more about the passengers aboard the Titanic, and has developed a real connection to their personal stories. Now she wants to share her interest with others. "The fascination still surrounds the Titanic today," Bardwell said.

The event also included memorabilia Rinkol has collected over the past 30 years, including posters, books, model ships and even coal and wood splinters from the Titanic. As a college student at NWU in the late 1990s, Rinkol completed an independent research project about the infamous ship and did her student teaching in Southampton, the English port from which the Titanic departed.

"I don't want it to go away," Rinkol said of why she decided to teach a LAS class about the Titanic. "The Titanic deserves attention beyond 100 years. It's an important part of history."

Following the day's events, students drove to Omaha's Renaissance Mansion for a theme dinner, "The Last Dinner aboard the Titanic."The eightcourse supper replicated the last meal first-class patrons ate on that fateful night in 1912.



Melanie Falk's award-winning illustration accompanied Ben Gotschall's ('03) essay on the introduction, decline and prospects of Nebraska's ring-necked pheasant.

CASE Gives Archways Gold, Gold, Silver

The Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) held its District V and VI convention in Chicago, III., in December and confirmed something we hope you already know: namely, that Nebraska Wesleyan's *Archways* magazine is a cut above just about every university magazine you're likely to find across the Midwest.

An illustration by *Archways*' art director, **Melanie Falk** ("A Good Rooster Is Hard to Find," winter 2011-2012), took the district's gold medal among universities of all sizes for "Excellence in Design—Illustrations". Falk went ahead and took the silver medal, too, for illustrations she did to promote NWU Theatre.

Eric Wendt's ('99) spring 2012 article on the late Dr. **Donald Gatch's** ('53) efforts to provide access to care in the segregated South, "Truth Like a Hippo," was deemed "The Best Article of the Year" among district university magazines of all sizes.

And Archways magazine took home a silver medal in the category of "University General Interest Magazines with circulations under 30,000," coming in behind only the United States Air Force Academy Association of Graduates' *Checkpoints* magazine.

"In the world of Midwestern university magazines, this is sort of like the Oscars," said Director of Marketing **Peggy Hain**. "These awards show the talent we have on our small team and the wealth of wonderful material we have to work with as we share Nebraska Wesleyan's stories."

CASE District VI includes colleges and universities of all sizes in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.



Alex "Beard Al" Michalak took one on the chin to advocate for men's health issues on campus in November.

Looking Good Students show the beauty of campus life with big beards and ugly sweaters

"You know what the difference is between you and me?" Will Smith asks Tommy Lee Jones in the 1997 movie, "Men in Black." "I make this [outfit] look good."

It takes self-confidence and an intangible something to pull off certain looks. We saw a good amount of that swagger on campus this winter.

First came "Novembeard," as NWU men stowed their razors for a month to raise money and awareness for men's health issues like prostate and testicular cancer. On December I, sophomore Alex "Beard Al" Michalak of Omaha "agreed to let donors to the cause shave off his so-called Verdi," Faiz Siddiqui wrote for the Lincoln Journal Star. "Remnants of the round beard... (were) auctioned off for a dollar. Like basketball nets after a state championship, but 'a little more gross,' junior **Robert Lighthall** admitted."

Attendees of the Novembeard event enjoyed root beard floats and played "pin-the-mustache-on-the-hipster."

The following week brought the NWU Greek system's ugly sweater holiday open houses. Greek members invited students, faculty and staff into their chapter houses to enjoy food, fun, eggnog and enough ugly holiday sweaters to fill the closets of both Clark W. Griswold and Cliff Huxtable.

The two events reveal a campus that cares about community and looks out for one another without ever taking itself too seriously.

It could very well be that not every Nebraska Wesleyan student who took part in Novembeard or donned a reindeer sweater in the Delta Zeta house actually could pull a Will Smith and "make this look good." Maybe some of them looked downright silly. But, then again, maybe the intangible secret to "pulling it off" is simply not caring whether or not you do.

Mattingly Scholar Unravels Lincoln's "Ultimate Principle"

First United Methodist Church seemed an odd place to talk movies just days before the Oscars. But First Church, with its huge dome topped by a stained glass portrait of Abraham Lincoln, was also the perfect place for a discussion of Steven Spielberg's "Lincoln".

As Rev. Robert Jewett ('55) began his Mattingly Visiting Distinguished Scholar Series lecture, he said that window has often been misinterpreted. One guest once called it "the oddest portrait of lesus I've ever seen." But Lincoln, lewett said, is accustomed to misinterpretation.

An America that's come to view the Civil War as foremost

a struggle to end slavery has conflicting views of Lincoln. Was he the Great Emancipator, or something less glorious: a reluctant emancipator?

Jewett suggested this debate misses something fundamental about Lincoln. For him, freedom was what lewett called a "penultimate principle."

It's a radical statement. The man on our penny and five-spot didn't hold freedom as his highest ideal. Freedomloving Americans everywhere ask: What, pray tell, did Lincoln prize above freedom?

lewett's answer: union.

He pointed to Lincoln's 1862 letter to abolitionist Horace Greeley. "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union.... If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it. And if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

his name.

Like a doctor in triage, Lincoln first sought to protect his patient's airway—America's very breath as a constitutional democracy. Concerns for liver and laceration, liberty and peace, could come later.

To have allowed secession for the sake of peace would have been to suffocate the patient to stop her bleeding. Slavery would have grown toward South America; Confederate States, rooted in secession, would have seceded again; and the continent would have slipped into warring tribes. The American experiment in majority rule would have failed.

To Lincoln, Americans weren't God's chosen people so much as heirs to what Jewett called a "providential system of government"—a fragile thing that's made peace and liberty possible for 237 years.

That system was Lincoln's "ultimate principle." Jewett argued it should remain ours.

ioto by Emily Jess

Called to Justice: The Life of a Federal Trial Judge

By Warren K. Urbom ('50, LL.D. '84)

360 pages | University of Nebraska Press | \$25

-Reviewed by Larry L. Ruth ('67)

Respect the law. Honor the law. But never worship the law. The law does not represent our highest standards. The law is... a set of rules of minimum acceptable behavior, and you can do better than that.

-Warren Urbom

Around the time that first Social Security check arrives, we tend to stop and take stock of ourselves. We hope to look back on a life well lived. In *Called to Justice*, we have a memoir of one such life.

Warren Urbom ('50) journaled throughout his life and kept a paper trail that, with his keen memory, provides the facts chronicling a life of extraordinary service. His intellect and heart are also on display in this finely documented book.

Urbom arrived at NWU from Arapahoe, Neb., after a stint in the Army and a sojourn to Denver. At Nebraska Wesleyan, Urbom "learned to think more than I thought I could, to care more than I thought I should, and to give more than I knew I had." His thinking, caring and giving resulted in a call to "do justice" as a federal trial judge in 1970 after a notable career as a trial lawyer. "Respect and fairness do not require each other," he said, "but they are good companions."

Urbom faced a greater challenge in the Wounded Knee Trials than thorny cultural issues. His review of the Laramie Treaty of 1868 as a defense to the criminal charges showed his fealty to his oath of office. He said, "It challenged me to honor my judicial oath to follow the law completely or not at all." No judicial activism here, but there is a revealing introspection on the constitutional role of a federal trial judge.

Important chapters of the book explore Urbom's heritage and life outside the courtroom. The roots of his "call to justice," after all, reach deeper than his profession. He weaves pieces of his personal life throughout showing that a judge is first a person and second a judge. Urbom generously writes of his connection with NWU over the years, first as an honor student and

Respect and fairness do not require each other, but they are good companions.

later as chair of the Board of Governors while enduring a heavy court schedule.

Other personal matters are much more poignant. In the book we travel with Warren and **Joyce** (Crawford) Urbom ('51) as she battles and succumbs to cancer. We also travel with them as he lives through his personal version of restorative justice with a family grievously harmed by him in an automobile accident.

Schools like Nebraska Wesleyan need their heroes. Often, these are professors and administrators. But the truest measure of any university's value lies in the integrity and work of its alumni. Urbom and NWU may both rest assured of their worth by this measure.

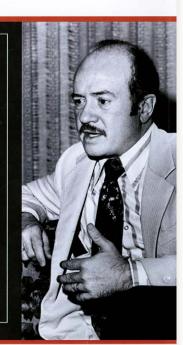
Judge Urbom has, in many ways, epitomized Nebraska Wesleyan University since he first arrived from Arapahoe. This book tells his story. Thank you, Warren Urbom, for a life well lived and book well written.

As its title suggests, much of this book describes a continual search for the meaning of justice. Urbom plays with the term throughout the book and constructs his own intricate working definition. But the book's true delight is its descriptions of the multiple cases from his time on the bench that show justice in its many forms. High profile cases ranging from anti-abortion laws to the death penalty are told from the inside with clean dispatch.

His most well known cases are the Wounded Knee Trials, rising out of the American Indian Movement's 1973 takeover of the tiny village of Wounded Knee, S.D., on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Urbom tells the story of how he modified the oath-taking, reacted to defendants' initial refusal to stand on his court entry, and allowed an in-court Native American prayer to build respect for Native American traditions. CALLED TO JUSTICE

> The Life of a Federal

Trial Judge



WARREN K. URBOM



A PAIR OF NEBRASKA WESLEYAN MEN SHAPED THE VERY PERSONAL THINKING OF ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST ORATORS.



Illustrations by Joseph Daniel Fiedler

In 1912, a young Methodist philosopher by the name of **Edgar Sheffield Brightman** took a train from Massachusetts and unpacked his bags at University Place, Neb. The 28-year-old stepped into Nebraska Wesleyan University's Main Building and launched a teaching career that would eventually lead him back home to Boston and culminate in the education and inspiration of Martin Luther King, Jr.

While NWU students were the first to study philosophy and religion under Brightman, King would be among the very last. King would take what he learned from Brightman at Boston University and use it to deal a devastating blow to American segregation.

But first came Brightman's Nebraska Wesleyan years. He arrived at NWU to take up the teaching responsibilities left by the death of Chancellor **D. W. C. Huntington**, and taught courses in the Bible and biblical literature. According to NWU historian **David Mickey** ('39, Litt.D. '12), Brightman was among a group of professors "who were Is religion simply lost in a blind alley of desire, or is it right in its faith that there truly is a personal God?

increasingly distressed because... [NWU's literary societies] were becoming much more social and much less literary."

Brightman worked to correct that trend, leading the university's effort to join Phi Kappa Phi as the esteemed society's 11th member in 1914. And as he taught religion and philosophy over three years on campus, he began formalizing his own views on morality, religion and the nature of God.

His philosophy would eventually be given a name— Boston Personalism—that pointed I,500 miles from University Place to Brightman's home. That philosophy nonetheless bears the fingerprint of his Nebraska Wesleyan experience in its kindness, its optimism and its belief in the power of close, personal attention to others, to one's self and to one's God. These attributes of personalism resonated with the young King, who chose to travel north to Boston University in large part for the opportunity to study under Brightman.

"Personalism interprets the universe as friendly," Brightman wrote in his 1925 book, *An Introduction to Philosophy*. "It justifies hope. It finds in the relation of human and divine wills an inexhaustible meaning and purpose in life." Brightman's personalism contended that God has characteristics of a human personality and that those characteristics open the door for a personal relationship with the divine. Boston Personalism holds as a central principle the sacred possibilities of human personality.

While hopeful in its outlook, Brightman's philosophy was not doe-eyed or naïve."The universe puzzles, terrifies, amazes, benefits, tortures, ignores, and yet produces us. Is religion simply lost in a blind alley of desire, or is it right in its faith that there truly is a personal God?" he asked in his 1940 book, A Philosophy of Religion, "The problem is worthy of [our] best thought."

King gave it his and found himself on the side of the Nebraska Wesleyan philosopher. When Brightman died in 1953, King needed a new professor to serve as a mentor and advisor for his dissertation. He made the small leap from Boston University's Philosophy

Department to its School of Theology to work with another Boston Personalist, and, amazingly, another Nebraska Wesleyan University product,

L. Harold DeWolf ('24).

"I studied philosophy and theology at Boston University under Edgar S. Brightman and L. Harold DeWolf," King recorded in his personal papers."Both men greatly stimulated my thinking. It was mainly under these teachers that I studied personalistic philosophy-the theory that the clue to the meaning of ultimate reality is found in personality. This personal idealism remains today my basic philosophical position."

How did this philosophy-founded by two Nebraska Wesleyan men-influence King? "Personalism's insistence that only personality... is ultimately real strengthened me in two convictions," King wrote.

"[I]t gave me metaphysical and philosophical grounding for the idea of a personal God, and it gave me a metaphysical basis for the dignity and worth of all human personality."

The philosophy is noble in the abstract. King was determined to make it nobler still in practice. "King could be so enthusiastic in expressing his indebtedness to DeWolf and Brightman... because, long before his contact with Personalism, he had experienced some of the ways in which the evil of segregation systematically does violence to the human personality," wrote John J. Ansbro in his 1982 book, Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Making of a Mind. "The very idea of separation offended his sense of dignity and self-respect. The first time [King] was seated behind a curtain in a dining car, he felt as if a curtain had been dropped on his selfhood."

Ansbro continued, "Long before his encounter with Personalism, he had chosen to devote his life to... the ministry, but once he decided that this service involved a total and persistent public assault on segregation, the moral laws of Personalism [outlined in Brightman's 1933 book, Moral Laws] served to reinforce that commitment."

Just as Brightman had helped fill the void at Nebraska Wesleyan in 1912 after the death of Huntington, DeWolf proved after Brightman's death to be the right teacher for King. The two men had more than Boston Personalism in common.

At Nebraska Wesleyan, DeWolf was himself an award-winning

orator. The 1923

edition of The

Coyote reveals

DeWolf was a

part of the 1923

champion junior

debate team; Pi

Kappa Delta, the

national forensic

fraternity; and the

group promoting

"the challenge of Christian ministry".

With faith and

a gift for public

speaking in com-

Oxford Club. a

The first time [King] was seated behind a curtain in a dining car, he felt as if a curtain had been dropped on his selfhood.

mon, DeWolf and King would remain lifelong friends. Thanks in large part to that friendship, King entrusted Boston University with his massive body of personal papers as the demands on his time and threats on his life grew more and more intense. DeWolf dedicated his 1975 book, Crime and Justice in America: A Paradox of Con-

Cochrane Woods Library has one of the nation's most complete collections of the works of Edgar Brightman (above). After his years at NWU, he published extensively on religion, ethics and philosophy. Fifteen of his books are in NWU's rare books collection.



science, to "the revered memory of my student and cherished friend Martin Luther King, Jr., who stirred many Americans to seek justice with new urgency."

To King, personalism in practice involved stressing the humanity of both the oppressed and the oppressor. "While denouncing his acts, King could still revere the personality of the segregationist as an image of God, and regard him as a potential

The optimism of King's personalism constantly clashed with the reality of injustice. member of the beloved community," Ansbro wrote. "[King] tended to stress the eventual defeat of injustice rather than the punishment of the persons who perpetrated injustice and were its victims."

King's stress on segregationists' humanity may have won respect and gratitude among some whites, but as biographer Michael Eric Dyson wrote in *I May Not Get There with You:The True Martin Luther King, Jr.*, it also irked black critics who thought that ''loving the hell out of bigots was a deluded, even destructive, strategy for social change.''

The optimism of King's personalism constantly clashed with the reality of injustice. How could whites, whose personalities were fundamentally as close to the divine as his own, lynch and bomb and stone and segregate and oppress? Why all this baffling violence against people who prayed to the same God and called the same beloved places home? Set aside for a moment the unfathomableness of divine will and consider the unfathomableness of human will!

"King's fight proved," Dyson wrote, "that although Southern blacks and whites in many ways lived in wildly different worlds, they had too much in common to make their quarrel easy or clean. They were joined by the Bible and the ham hock, by culture and cuisine."They were joined also by human personality that could be every bit as defensive, paranoid and enraged as it could be open, trusting and holy.

Dyson held that while the white mainstream prefers to remember the King that chose to laud and love whites despite their sins, it too often overlooks the positions King took in the last months and years of his life. King declared eight months before his assassination, "I am sorry to have to say that the vast majority of white Americans are racists, either consciously or unconsciously."

It's not a statement often repeated on the national holiday honoring King. And it's fair to ask whether this acknowledgment of deeply rooted racism reflects erosion in the personalistic philosophy he developed studying under Brightman and DeWolf.

"America's schizophrenia vexed King his entire career," Dyson wrote. "He viewed the tension between America the Emancipator and America the Enslaver as

the fundamental issue of self-identification that must be resolved." And while the pessimism of King's later statements about white racism may have contrasted with the optimism of his personalistic philosophy and disappointed the white mainstream, it's clear that that disappointment did not extend to DeWolf. His pride in King was lifelong, and his pain at the death of his brightest pupil was severe.

Yet DeWolf's remarks at King's funeral were filled with acceptance of the loss and of the responsibility to carry on his student's work. "It was my privilege to teach Martin Luther King, to march with him in Mississippi, agonize and pray



with him in the midst of the worst violence at St. Augustine, to spend many hours counseling with him, to go through great volumes of his private papers organizing them, to spend many days and nights at his home. I know the innermost thoughts of this man as deeply as I know [those] of any man on earth. It has been the highest privilege of my life, this personal friendship." If Edgar Brightman was a magnetic force that helped draw King to Boston University, Harold DeWolf (photographed here during his junior year at NWU) was a propelling force that pushed King to apply what he'd learned in his fight against segregation.

See Her Through

What she pays in tuition doesn't cover NWU's full cost for the school year. Tuition dollars *only reach from August through February.*

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On their third night, Ferraro canoed alone across Trail Lake. Close on the opposite side, he heard a snap in the dark followed by a huge splash. Fearing a bull moose, Ferraro high-tailed it for deep water. Back at the campsite, students told him they'd heard the splash, too, and wondered.

As Ferraro's group portaged along the Kawishiwi

mud. It took teamwork to pull her out and keep

moving to Koma Lake.

River, one student found herself stuck in knee-deep





-By Eric Wendt ('99)

I sat down to write an article on cognitive psychology—specifically on the brain's ability to focus and be creative. I'd read the research and interviewed my sources. I was ready to go. I just needed to confirm a tiny fact about the frontal lobe's structure. So I hopped online...

That's when I noticed an alumna's Facebook post of a video of five nearly robotic North Korean 6-year-olds playing wildly complicated



After some training, the group split into two, with Profs. Bricker and Ferraro leading a western loop and Profs. Benham and Mathews leading an eastern loop. Both halves took the Remote Associates Test at their third campsite (W3 and E3).

music on huge guitars. Her comment: "Um... WHAT?"Yeah, so I watched that.

But then it was right back to my fact-finding mission when my university magazine editor listserv burst with messages consoling somebody at a prominent Pennsylvania university frantically trying to prevent administrators from axing their popular print magazine in favor of an online-only format.

Down the hall, my project manager's radio was guietly tuned to a classic rock lunch hour. It's rare that I even hear it, but I have an acute sensitivity to the Eagles. So when "One of These Nights" came trickling down the hall, I yelped and set Pandora to shuffle between Iron & Wine and Regina Spektor. Much better.

I was back at it when a police car rolled by in an awful hurry. And there came that balding guy who stomps down the sidewalk two feet from my window every day, arguing with his

unseen mother as he lugs groceries back to his apartment. "Why should I fix the cable? I told you it's not my problem!"

And to save my soul, I couldn't remember what I was searching for.

> Instead, let me tell you about Frank Ferraro, NWU associate professor of psychology. He studies

Moving from Zenith Lake to Injenida Lake involved a merciless 480-rd (1.5-mile) portage with packs and canoes. And because the group couldn't carry everything in a single trip, a few unlucky but uncomplaining students got to go back at every stop and do it again.

Unlocking your brain's creativity may involve stepping out of the data stream and into a real one.

Attention Restoration Theory. If I told him about this little spat of low productivity and poor focus, he'd pity my exhausted frontal lobe and diagnose me with a bad case of the modern condition.

DERN

I'm not alone. Millions of us find ourselves up a data stream without a paddle. "We have to make a lot more decisions now than we ever have in the past," Ferraro said. "We can't do I0 things at once. But we're asked to do that pretty often. And it's taxing."

Now, my boss could counter that she wasn't asking me to do 10 things. All she wanted was a story on cognitive psychology. (It's coming, Peggy. I promise.)

And an anthropologist could just as easily counter that it's a conceit to think stressful demands on a person's attention are somehow modern. You want taxing? Try starting a fire without a match. Or plowing with an ox.

But what is new—and particularly draining—is the noisy speed of our high-tech, data-rich age. A 2013 Toyota may boast comforts that the driver of an 1873 prairie schooner could never imagine. But the reality is that a car whizzing past billboards and construction cones at 75 mph—a car with a drop-down DVD player showing "Madagascar 3" to a row of shouting, cereal-throwing children—a car complete with a talking GPS system and a plug-in for your ringing smart phone—is taxing your brain in a way that Laura Ingalls-Wilder's "pa" never experienced driving his wagon to a little house on the prairie.

"The truth is, we don't really understand what all that does to the functioning of your frontal lobe," Ferraro said. "It looks like you can do OK for a while." But he said those constant demands for our attention erode our capacity for clear thinking.

Put less delicately: Our smart phones and super highways may make us stupider, even as they connect us to more knowledge, people and places.

I asked Ferraro the question that fell first from my tired mind: Is there a pill for this? A treatment for the modern condition?

Photos courtesy of NWU students and faculty.

A pill? No. A treatment? Yes.

That treatment happens to be all-natural. And Ferraro happens to be on the leading edge of testing its effectiveness.

Helping Ferraro in his research were nine NWU first-year students in Professor of Biology **Dale Benham's** Liberal Arts Seminar. They began by taking Ferraro's Remote Associates Test on campus. This test measures creativity by presenting three words and asking people to name the word that links the set.

Give it a shot:

envy, golf, bean

The answer, of course, is green. But before you go thinking the test is easy, try another:

jump, kill, bliss

Not so simple, is it?

With a baseline established, the students jumped in vans with Ferraro and three other NWU professors, and headed to the ideal place to trial Ferraro's method for improving cognitive function. (Ironically, this experiment in mind-sharpening involved a mind-numbing drive to Minnesota.)

You might guess their Minnesota destination to be a cognitive neuroscience lab at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, or perhaps a Twin Cities medical center. But they passed the exits for these places and continued north. The students in Benham's seminar, "Understanding Wilderness," travelled as far north as roads would take them: to the banks of Sawbill Lake in the Superior National Forest of the Minnesota Boundary Waters.

"The road to the Sawbill Canoe Outfitter literally is the end of the line," Ferraro said. North of that outfitter's tiny parking lot, there's a ban on engines of all kinds. There may as well be a ban on cell phones and laptops, too. Even if they got service there (which they do not), such devices wouldn't last long; there's no place to recharge them.

The Nebraska Wesleyan group swapped vans for canoes (and iPads for paddles), and took to the still water. They paddled themselves off the grid and into Ferraro's wooded psychology lab.

No more calls.

No texts or emails.

No YouTube videos of cats or kindergarten guitarists.

Tweets returned to the sole custody of songbirds, and all interruptions and deadlines were banished.

That's not to say this trip was a vacation from thought. In fact, on their first morning along the banks of Sawbill Lake, Benham led students on a "plant walk," quizzing them on botanical taxonomy. They then paddled for miles, navigating (sans GPS) past countless islands to Sawbill's northeastern tip. There, the vocabulary of exit ramps and miles gave way to portaging and rods.

por tage (pôr'tîj) tr.v. 2. Naut. Carry (a boat or its cargo) between navigable waters.

rod (ròd) n. 6.a. A linear measure, especially for land, equal to 5.5 yards or 16.5 feet (5.03 meters).

The NWU group portaged canoes and 40-pound packs the 78 rods to a smaller, nameless lake, which they quietly crossed before another 76-rod portage to Ada Lake. (A canoe's bullet shape, Ferraro said, lends itself to pushing through brush as you struggle through uneven terrain.) Near Ada Lake, they stopped at a campsite where Professor of History **Sandra Mathews** taught them about Ojibwa culture. Artifacts found exactly here, she said, placed the Ojibwa at this very site 9,000 years ago. Associate Professor of Biology **Jerry Bricker** added lessons about wildlife and ecology to Mathews' history and Benham's botany. And days passed without the group seeing another soul. The group's isolation in unusual and often challenging circumstances made the presence of a psychology professor especially relevant, too. "Your attitude is the most important thing when you're in a small group and things get rough," Ferraro said. "Jokes get you through when you're portaging uphill and your 40-pound pack feels more like 60 or 80."

Students' journals recorded their thoughts throughout the trip. Benham, who has led student groups here for the last five years, has seen how the experience changes students. "On day one, they're usually writing about how they don't think they can do it," he said. "On day two, they're writing horror stories about it. By day four, they're writing about the grand experience they're having. It's life-changing."

Ferraro said the Boundary Waters see their share of student groups. There was a chance, he thought, that the group might run into, say, a small team of forestry grad students, or perhaps some microbiology students examining the biodiversity of the lakes and streams. But he knew they'd see no group like themselves—liberal arts undergraduates using a wilderness experience to learn simultaneously about psychology, biology, botany and history.

"This is a great model for the liberal arts," he said. People often use the verb "explore" to describe the liberal arts experience. "That exploring," Ferraro said, "that's truly happening here."

Annie Nyffeler, a first-year student from Columbus, Neb., said, "We all got to experience the amazing feeling of getting away from civilization and technology, and how much it makes a difference in one's life."

By the time the group set up their tents for a fourth night in the wilderness, students—many of whom had never camped in their lives—were growing acclimated to a different pace. Life at the speed of a bend in the river. A descending leaf. A setting moon. There's plenty in the Boundary Waters to hold attention. But wilderness—at least in the human position atop the food chain—holds attention more softly. Less urgently. And, if Ferraro's theory held true, that soft attention was allowing the frontal lobes of these students' brains to restore themselves in a way that modern urban life typically doesn't.



Camping at a site little changed from when the Ojibwa used it 9,000 years ago was an emotional experience.

Students learned some basic knots at Sawbill Lake.

Sawbill

As their classmates back in Lincoln watched Jon Stewart interview the stars, these students simply watched the stars. And slept.

Outside their tents the next morning, Ferraro had them retake the Remote Associates Test with a different series of words. And on the eighth day, after looping back toward Sawbill Lake and their waiting vans, the students took the test a third time.

broken, clear, eye thread, pine, pain inch, deal, peg

Ferraro gave the same three 10-question tests to a control group of NWU first-year students who didn't share the Boundary Waters experience. And he compared results. Ferraro acknowledged his sample sizes were small. And he had plenty of ideas about how to augment or expand this experiment. But even these data suggested something powerful happened in the Minnesota wilderness.

The Boundary Waters group saw a 40 percent increase in its performance on the Remote Associates Test from the first exam in Lincoln to the last one by Sawbill Lake.

And the wilderness students blew the on-campus control group out of the water. By that third 10-question test, members of the wilderness group scored three more correct answers on average than their on-campus peers.

Ferraro does not believe his results are anomalous. He pointed to a similar study conducted in the Utah desert that yielded similar results. Another study at the University of Michigan had one group of students take a 45-minute walk in a quiet arboretum while another group took a 45-minute walk in downtown Ann Arbor. Then both groups took the Remote Associates Test. The arboretum walkers scored significantly higher than the downtown walkers.

Why? Why do wilderness experiences seem to improve cognition? Ferraro doesn't believe there's anything magical in the scent of pine. Nor does he think friendly songbirds are singing the answers. (*Chirp-chirp-glass! Poo-tee-weet-needle! Cheep-cheep-square!*) But our brains evolved over hundreds of thousands of years in wilderness environments. And it just may be that our frontal lobes are better able to rest and recover in that environment than they are in an extremely recent, high-tech, urban one defined by constant, hard calls for our attention.

"I'd like to see exactly what's happening in our frontal cortex in each environment," Ferraro said. "Call it environmental neuroscience. You can hook people up to sensors that can read activity in different areas of the brain. We have them. They're not heavy." Ferraro mentally weighed the pros and cons of carrying the equipment in a pack through brush. Could you portage 100 rods with sensors taped to your head? What could you do without to make room for the equipment in your pack?

He shook his head. "But I don't want to mess with the integrity of the students' experience out there," he said. It's about the wilderness. It's about leaving technology behind for a while. Not strapping it to your forehead.

Learn more and see more photos at psychology.nebrwesleyan.edu.





On Jack Lake, a cloudless night with a new moon made for some amazing stargazing. The experience led one starry-eyed student to pursue astronomy.



AINSVVERS Envy, golf, bean: green broken, clear, eye: glass broken, clear, eye: glass broken, clear, eye: glass broken, bean: green brokens

Slow Text Movement

The world's most powerful research tools may not produce strong researchers. What can?

-By Eric Wendt ('99)

Last fall, the Pew Internet Project and Common Sense Media released the latest research on research. Their separate surveys of thousands of American high school teachers revealed sharp ambivalence about the role technology plays in students' ability to do basic academic research.

First, the good news. Nancy Palmieri wrote for *The New York Times*, "[R]oughly 75 percent of 2,462 teachers surveyed said that the Internet and search engines had a 'mostly positive' impact on student research skills. And they said such tools had made students more selfsufficient researchers."

But research technology's silver lining comes attached to a grey cloud. Palmieri continued, "[N]early 90 percent said that digital technologies were creating 'an easily distracted generation with short attention spans.'"

Data from Common Sense Media's survey of nearly 700 teachers tell a similar story, as "71 percent said they thought technology was hurting attention span 'somewhat' or 'a lot.' About 60 percent said it hindered students' ability to write and communicate face to face, and almost half said it hurt critical thinking and their ability to do homework.''

Has technology had similar corrosive effects on the attention spans and research abilities of today's Nebraska Wesleyan students? Perhaps no one is better positioned to see such trends on campus than Professor of English **Rick Cypert**. He's been teaching at NWU since 1987 and is the original director of the Cooper Center for Academic Resources, which was formed in the late 1990s to help students become better researchers, writers and speakers.

Asked whether he'd seen a downward trend in incoming students' attention spans and research abilities, Cypert answered diplomatically. "Each new class of students brings with it a different set of delights and challenges." He said educators have a tendency to look to the left on the timeline and say, "Why didn't students get this before now?" We can point to the shortcomings of high schools or to the deleterious effects of too much screen time and too little class time and say it's somebody else's problem. "But the reading and writing part of this is everyone's business," Cypert said.

Those skills provide the base on which all advanced research stands. The wider that base, the higher the mountain can stack. (The accomplishments of **Andrew Cannon** and **Kate Weskamp** described on page 26 are evidence of just how far NWU researchers can reach from atop that base.)

Cypert said growing up with even the world's most powerful research tools may not prove inherently helpful to budding researchers. Google is great at stacking tremendous amounts of hay. It's even good at finding needles within it all. But what a search engine can't do is tell you which needles are credible, relevant and compelling.

The convenience and speed of search en-

gines haven't necessarily yielded patience and diligence in the work of parsing search results. And students accustomed to convenience may be less likely to turn to offline resources when what they need doesn't materialize online.

"I'll tell students that [online searches] may not get you as far as you want," Cypert said. "But that's a harder case to make when so much is so readily available online."

Professor of English **Scott Stanfield** heard Cypert from his office across Old Main's hallway and entered to concur with his colleague's point. Stanfield said, "There's a sense [among incoming students] that anything worthwhile must be on the Web," and that, concurrently, most things on the Web must also be worthwhile.

New students, Stanfield said, haven't necessarily developed the ability to "conceptualize what they find online and judge it on its merits."

He pointed to an example from one firstyear student's earliest assignment. The student's paper quoted an online source contending that "historians get a lot wrong" about an extremist group. Stanfield used the student's bibliography to locate the source. It was a site selling extremist memorabilia. "I asked him if he'd questioned the credibility of the source," Stanfield said. "And I asked him, 'Which historians are wrong? What are they wrong about? And where's your evidence disproving them?""

Stanfield didn't tell the story to judge the



young student. He shared it to show just how important it is to equip all Nebraska Wesleyan students to think critically about the information they find.

Daisy Martin and Sam Wineburg of Stanford University put it this way in a May 2008 article for the *Society for History Education* titled "Seeing Thinking on the Web": "How do we prepare [students] to enter vast digital archives with an analytic eye that prompts them to source, question, and contextualize [texts]?"

On this question, Martin, Wineburg, Cypert and Stanfield are of one mind: Slow down.

"The practice of pausing... often distinguishes able from less able readers," Martin and Wineburg wrote. Their article outlined the strategy behind historicalthinkingmatters.org, which features short videos of experienced historians "thinking out loud" as they grapple with sample material outside their expertise. The site then helps teachers and students recognize the tactics these experts used to navigate unfamiliar subjects.

In one video, the University of Washington's Joy Williamson (an expert in American black protest movements of the 1960s) dipped her toes into the unfamiliar waters of the 1925 Scopes trial. "She is an expert not because she reads quickly but because she reads slowly," Martin and Wineburg stated. "She slows down the reading process so when she gets to the body of the actual document, she brings a set of questions and a prepared mind." Cypert said this modeling helps students buck the notion that experts are experts "because they can crank it out." He said, "I want to demonstrate lifting the hood on academic articles—reading at them—figuring out how they're put together, down to the bones. If they can see those things in other people's articles, then they can change their own writing and research."

We do ourselves a favor, Cypert said, when we associate expertise with depth and struggle as opposed to speed and the ability to "make it look easy." When we rely too heavily on technology built for quickness and convenience—be it a search engine or a microwave—we tend to get lazy. That's when "What is this, exactly?" falls prey to "Just eat it."

Cypert believes this parallel between eating and thinking slowly is significant. Wise people are inclined to savor; they like to know how the food they eat and the material they read are prepared—how their ingredients work together. Riffing on America's "slow food movement," Cypert called for a "slow rhetoric movement."

You can see such a movement in action at the Cooper Center for Academic Resources, where trained students and experienced professors mentor students one-on-one, helping them become more thoughtful writers and researchers. You can see it in the staff at Cochrane Woods Library, helping students find what they're looking for across multitudes of media. And you can see it in Nebraska Wesleyan's student-faculty collaborative research projects, where individual professors assist on student-designed efforts. These collaborations are fueled by the Fleming Fund, created by an estate gift to Nebraska Wesleyan.

Maybe America's slow text movement ought to begin well before college. But, as Martin and Wineburg wrote, "Concerns about coverage in the high school classroom can make close reading seem like an expendable luxury teachers can ill afford." And maybe the large state schools should adopt it to reach the most students. But these schools' industrial scale makes that next to impossible.

Such a movement remains rooted in the small, liberal arts environment—where undergraduate students and professors still can and still do take the time to stop, think and examine the ways that complex issues and questions overlap. With enough time and space, even seeming tangents in students' research can unearth meaningful discoveries.

"Everyone's so conscious of time," Cypert said. "But I want students to see the porous connections, even among the little wicked holidays in their academic journeys." He said, "That's something we can do at Nebraska Wesleyan because we're small and we can take the time."

But isn't that inefficient?

"It is!" Cypert said. "It's highly inefficient—on purpose! And it produces incredible results." **1**





I NEED A HERO SEE YOUR MAJOR **LARGER THAN LIFE** ON THE BIG SCREEN.

Back from a sabbatical trip to Croatia where he judged a pair of film festivals, NWU associate professor of communication and movie buff **David Whitt** offers up these movie recommendations for alumni itching to see their majors in action.

ART MAJORS

"Exit through the Gift Shop" 2010

"Exit" is about Bansky, a mysterious street artist, and Thierry Guetta, a French immigrant in Los Angeles. Is this a real documentary of Guetta's modern art, or an elaborate hoax created by Banksy? You be the judge.

COMMUNICATION MAJORS

"Annie Hall" 1977

Woody Allen tells a joke at the end of the film. "Doc, my brother's crazy; he thinks he's a chicken." The doctor says, "Well, why don't you turn him in?"The guy says, "I would, but I need the eggs."That's how I feel about human relationships. They're irrational and absurd, but I guess we keep going through the craziness of interpersonal communication because most of us... need the eggs.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE MINORS

"Silence of the Lambs"

The American Film Institute named Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins) the #I villain in film history, while Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster) was the #6 hero."Hannibal the Cannibal" may steal the show, but brave Starling holds her own as she (spoiler alert!) catches serial killer Buffalo Bill.

ENGLISH MAJORS

"Spellbound" 2002

The teens at the 1999 Scripps National Spelling Bee spend months, even years, memorizing thousands of words, their use in sentences and root origins. After watching "Spellbound," you'll feel guilty every time you turn to spell check.

GLOBAL STUDIES MAJORS

James Bond 1962-2012

After 50 years, we know Bond movies' deadly gadgets, beautiful women and maniacal villains. But the exotic locales are just as crucial. The first Bond film, "Dr. No" (1962), had scenes in Jamaica, while the latest, "Skyfall" (2012), was shot in Istanbul, Shanghai and Scotland. "Moonraker" (1979) sent Bond to space, so 007 wannabes might want to study astronomy, too.

HEALTH AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE MAJORS

"Remember the Titans" 2000

So many great movie coaches here: Norman Dale in "Hoosiers" (1986), Coach Carter in, uh, "Coach Carter" (2005), even Mr. Miyagi in "The Karate Kid" (1984). But I'll go with Herman Boone (Denzel Washington) in "Remember the Titans." I never played football, but I can imagine running through a wall for that guy.





HISTORY MAJORS

"Monty Python and the Holy Grail" 1975

An NWU history professor told me years ago that "Holy Grail" was the most accurate depiction of Medieval times ever captured on film. I'll take her word for it. And I'll leave it to biology and physics faculty to determine whether a European or African swallow could carry a one-pound coconut.



"Moneyball"

2011

Billy Beane (Brad Pitt) + Peter Brand (Jonah Hill) × sabermetrics = winning Oakland A's baseball team. But I'm a San Francisco Giants fan, so whatever.

MUSIC MAJORS

"Amadeus"

While not entirely historically accurate, this best picture winner from 1984 is still a glorious achievement. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was arguably the greatest classical composer who ever lived. The bedside dictation scene is a brilliant deconstruction of Mozart's work.

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Like a (Latex) Glove

Bio majors find the right fit in biomedical research labs.

There's a two-headed myth about science majors at NWU. That myth holds that:

• Every last one of these science majors begins pre-med.

• And once most of them discover they can't hack it, they move on to other things.

Change "every last one" to "many," and there's some truth to the first part of this science major myth. But, here to refute the "can't hack it" side are junior **Andrew Cannon** of Kearney, Neb., and sophomore **Kate Weskamp** of Lincoln. Both arrived at Nebraska Wesleyan figuring they'd follow the pre-med track toward becoming physicians. And both of them strayed from that path for reasons that had nothing to do with compromise.

"**Jeff Isaacson** [associate professor of biology] got me considering a research-based profession," Cannon said. "And I gradually realized that a lot of what [physicians] do isn't suited to my curiosity. But the lab—the lab gives you that ability to explore."

Weskamp's experience was similar. "When I came here, I wasn't familiar with research as a career fit. But **Jerry Bricker** [associate professor of biology] encouraged me to apply for research opportunities."

Excitement for research led Cannon and Weskamp to apply to become NWU "INBRE Scholars" who participate in research at NWU and elsewhere through the University of Nebraska Medical Center's INBRE (IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence) Program. Cannon earned a summer research assistant position examining hematin and the proteins involved in intercellular energy transfer. He said a better understanding of the pathways involved could one day lead to better treatments for diseases like cardiomyopathy.

And Weskamp used her INBRE lab experience to study vaccinia, a pox family virus. Weskamp said most viruses reproduce in the nucleus. But vaccinia, sort of a "smallpox light," reproduces in the cytoplasm, which means the body must fight it a different way. Weskamp's work explored how the cell defends itself from vaccinia's unusual attack.

Weskamp is interested in studying more about neurodegenerative diseases and said, "The research lab is an environment that I'd gladly spend my professional life in."

The Nebraska Coalition for Lifesaving Cures would like to see that she and Cannon remain in the lab. The coalition gave Weskamp and Cannon 2012 Richard Holland Future Scientist Awards for their research as presented at the INBRE annual meeting in August, 2012. The \$2,700 cash prizes will help fund these promising researchers' continued education in the lab.

The research lab is an environment that I'd gladly spend my professional life in.

Why give to NWU?



NWU has been good to me. I need to return the favor. The faculty and staff need us, and deserve us.

-Scott Young ('01) Food Bank of Lincoln



Others gave before us to help with our experience. We need to pay it forward.

-Josh Berry ('04) Talent Plus

It felt right. NWU helped shape and solidify my beliefs and commitments.

-Trisha (Kuhn) Berry ('04) Talent Plus



My experiences at NWU in the classroom and on the tennis court made me the teacher and coach that I am today.

-**Chris Salem** ('05) Lincoln Southwest High School

Join them in giving at nebrwesleyan.edu/donate.

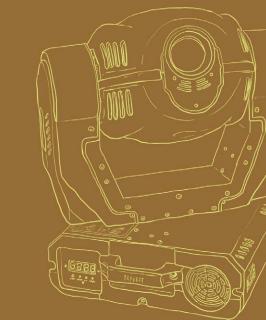




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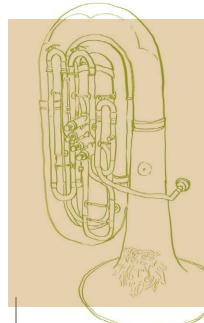
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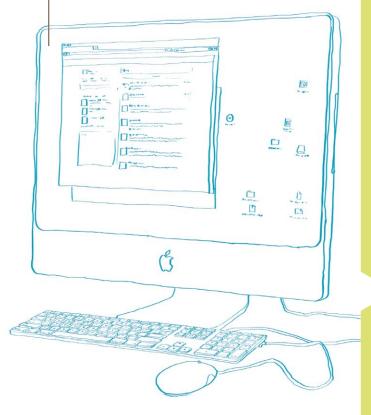
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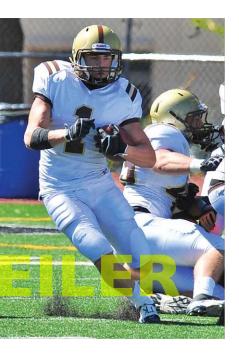
Want to help fill NWU's art toolbox? Support the Archway Fund at

nebrwesleyan.edu/donate.

SPORT

Eight-Man Men

Three small-town Nebraskans from eight-man football high schools team up to dominate the GPAC.



-By Alex Linden ('03)

When seniors **Cody Eiler** (St. Mary's HS, O'Neill, Neb.), **Brett Kaczor** (Ewing HS, Ewing, Neb.) and **Russell Walton** (Franklin HS, Franklin, Neb.) played high school football, success came relatively easily. All three defensive standouts played on eight-man squads, meaning, if you shed the often-undersized blocker in front of you, chances were fairly good there'd be no one left to impede your progress to the ball carrier.

For these three roommates and NWU teammates, college football was literally a whole new ballgame. Not only were the blockers bigger, faster and stronger—there were also three more of them flying around, eager to welcome a trio of small-town kids to the hardnosed realities of football in the Great Plains Athletic Conference.

But if Eiler, Kaczor and Walton were supposed to be scared, they didn't get the memo. More than intimidated, they were eager: "I wanted to play football for the Prairie Wolves because I knew the guys on this team were here to play football for the love of the game," Eiler said.

Strong defenses have long been the foundation of Coach **Brian Keller's** ('83) program. That's not because the Prairie Wolves have fielded the biggest or fastest players. Keller's defenses prize intelligence, heart and grit—qualities Eiler, Kaczor and Walton held in spades.

Grit is how a 210-pound Kaczor could lead the GPAC in tackles for two years at middle linebacker, gutting out his final two games with a broken sternum. Heart is how a 260-pound Walton could navigate 300-pound linemen to flush and bring down quarterbacks. And intelligence is how a 5'-10'' corner like Eiler could position himself to yank footballs away from 6'-3'' receivers.

Each took pride in doing so against opponents on athletic scholarships—athletes getting paid to play."With no athletic scholarships, football isn't a job to us," Kaczor said. "We are truly out there for the love and passion of the game."

With one of these three leaders standing on each tier of NWU's defense in 2012, expectations were high. But the Prairie Wolves struggled early, dropping four of their first five games. They may not admit it, but many 1-4 teams give up on their seasons. It's easy for younger players to look ahead to next year.

But if the Prairie Wolves' 2012 season was lost at its midpoint, their three senior leaders again must have missed the memo. NWU won each of its last five games with relentless, Keller-style defense, never giving up more than 14 points and holding opponents to seven or fewer points three times.

Along the way, Eiler, Walton and Kaczor each earned GPAC Defensive Player of the Week honors. "I think we left a great impression on the guys coming back next

SPRING SPORT SUMMARY

Men's basketball

The Prairie Wolves rode a pendulum in 2012-2013, winning four of their first five (and going 2-0 at the Snyder Classic), then losing four of their next five. The men ended a six-game skid in January by winning five of their last six to finish 13-12, just outside GPAC tournament play.



Women's basketball

The Prairie Wolves were led offensively in 2012-2013 by **Mallory Shanahan**, who averaged 14.3 points per game and was an All-Independent First Team selection. Still, the season was unkind to NWU.The Prairie Wolves were winless at home, finishing a disappointing 3-22. Why did this trio turn down athletic scholarships elsewhere to play football for NWU? For Eiler, it was about choosing the best education and playing "for the love of the game."

year and took the step to get this program turning around in the winning direction," said Eiler who started three years at cornerback. "Finishing the season off the way we did was a huge test of our character."

Coaches across the conference and nation noticed the three players as well with each being named First-Team All-Conference. Eiler was All-GPAC at cornerback and as a returner; Walton became a three-time First-Team All-Conference defensive lineman. Kaczor was a two-time First-Team All-GPAC player and went on to earn NAIA All-America honors.

The Prairie Wolves defenders are true student-athletes. Each is a past or current CoSIDA Academic All-American, among the 44 football Academic All-Americans NWU has produced to rank seventh among all schools.

"Some people may get caught up in the athletic scholarship tag and forget about the extremely important stuff like an education," said Walton, a two-time Academic All-American, "We found a routine and stuck with it to get our studies done early in the evening, but still found time to play some PlayStation."

Pre-game rituals, film sessions and good-hearted competition made times off the field just as memorable. On Friday nights of every game week, their table was reserved at the local Valentino's. If Eiler made an interception, Walton and Kaczor were sure to take credit for the pass rush that triggered it. Likewise, every Walton sack was the result of great coverage downfield.

"Russell and I always felt like we could get more interceptions than Cody, even if he was in the secondary," said Kaczor, who had a pair of picks in his final game.

NWU fans won't soon forget Eiler's game-winning punt return, Walton's signature sack celebrations or Kaczor's grit through a broken sternum.

The players themselves take away other memories."Our walks to meetings, practice, conditioning and classes together and obviously our big moments on the field are memorable, but the friendship I

gained with these two guys is very special,"Walton said.

"There is something about getting through the grind of football with class, family, losses and becoming part of each other's family that is irreplaceable," Eiler concluded."I know that if I ever need anything these guys will be the first ones I go to."

Walton put it this way. "I grew up with three sisters, but I gained two brothers when I arrived at NWU." በ

NWU hired Britni Fett to replace coach Eric Jensen, who resigned at season's end with an overall record of 32-97. He coached four players past the 1,000 career point mark, 14 All-GPAC players and NWU's only All-American.

Indoor track and field

Knight Fieldhouse was a happy home for NWU as both the men and women took the NWU Quad Meet in convincing fashion on February 2. The women carried that momentum to Grinnell, Iowa, winning the Darren Young Invitational on February 9.

NWU sent Tommie Bardsley (high jump), Deanna Dirkschneider (shot put) and Taylor Tacha (60m hurdles) (right) to the NCAA III Indoor Track and Field Championships in Naperville, III. There, Bardsley jumped a career-best 6'11'' to finish third in the nation.





Student Pride

Prestige scholars and awards



NWU Sends Another Four Abroad with Prestigious Gilman International Scholarships

Nebraska Wesleyan turned heads in 2011 when three students earned highly competitive Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships for study abroad.

Turns out, NWU was just getting warmed up. Five more NWU students earned Gilman Scholarships last fall, funding study trips to Asia, South America, Africa and Europe. And another four got the nod from Gilman judges this winter. In all, 32 NWU students have earned Gilman Scholarships since 2001.

Junior **Stephen Boakye** (left) of Columbus, Ohio, is studying Arabic, French and Spanish as well as public health in Ifrane, Morocco.

Junior **Maria Niechwiadowicz** of Sioux Falls, S.D., is studying religion in Hyderabad, India. Senior **Carrie Wiese** of Columbus, Neb., is studying psychology and health care in Accra, Ghana.

Junior **Madelen Deabill** (bottom) of Nebraska City, Neb., is studying psychology, French and art in Amiens, France.

The intent of this program is to promote study in less traveled destinations among students with financial constraints. "I may not get another opportunity like this in the future," said Deabill. While the chance to visit another country is fairly common, she said, "It's a much different experience to actually live in another country."



Take an NWU pennant with you on your next trip abroad to show your friends where a great education can lead. Maria Niechwiadowicz (above) took hers to Hyderabad, India, and Carrie Wiese (above, right) took hers to Accra, Ghana. Contact Shelley McHugh ('91) at smchugh@nebrwes-leyan.edu for your own pennant, then smile for the camera!





The Smartest Team in College Football

Who has the best defense in college football? The best receivers? The best kicking game? Fans love these debates, and spend hours parsing statistics to make the case for their favorite teams.

One debate may not light up college football message boards, but it should. Who has the smartest football team in America?

The Prairie Wolves have made an extremely strong case for themselves on that one. For the second straight year, NWU football has led the nation in Capital One/CoSIDA Academic All-America[®] Awards. And all five of this year's winners are first team selections.

NWU football passed Stanford and Carnegie Mellon to now rank seventh in the nation with 44 football Academic All-America Awards in its history. Among non-FBS or FCS schools, NWU football ranks number one.

And with 134 Academic All-America Awards in all sports, NWU now ranks eighth in the nation, regardless of division. NWU's 2012 first team football Academic All-Americans include (left to right):

junior kicker Aaron Lorraine of Omaha, Neb.;

senior defensive lineman Russell Walton of Franklin, Neb.;

junior punter Kelby Vandenberg of David City, Neb.;

sophomore defensive back Seth Wardyn of Grand Island, Neb.; and

junior defensive back **Michael Huettner** of Verdon, Neb.

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MYSTERY PHOTO

Take the plunge

Coming to college often requires leaning in and taking the plunge. But the plunger? That's a different story.

Who are these actors? And what's the show?

Send your responses to:

Eric Wendt Nebraska Wesleyan University 5000 Saint Paul Avenue Lincoln, NE 68504-2794 ewendt@nebrwesleyan.edu

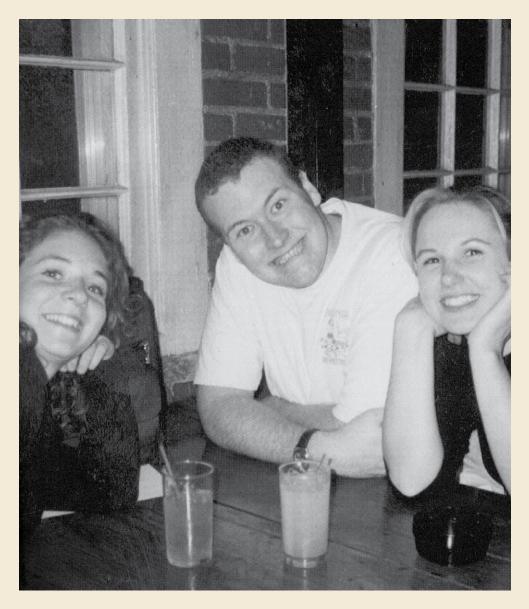
ALUMNI PAGES



Your alumni contact

Shelley McHugh ('91) Director of Alumni Relations 5000 Saint Paul Avenue Lincoln, NE 68504-2794 smchugh@nebrwesleyan.edu 402.465.2123

MYSTERY PHOTO REVEALED



Still smiling

Friends, family and one of the subjects themselves came forward with answers for our last photo.

That's the unforgettable Eric Mittan, the unstoppable Virginia Bibler (McCormick now), and me, Kate Bolz. We are smiling because we are headed home from a successful performance of the Wesleyan "Weasels" speech and debate team at Hastings College. Thanks for the good memory.

---Kate Bolz ('01) Senator, Nebraska District 29

The smiling character in the middle is my nephew, Eric Mittan!

-Nancy Morrison Morse ('69)

I can't remember the names of the two girls, but the guy in the middle is my good friend, Eric Mittan!

-Erin Quandt ('02)

Although they all look familiar, I can only come up with one name. The goofy one in the middle is clearly Eric Mittan. Even though his last name looks like "mitten," it is actually pronounced, "glove."

-Mike Nickel ('04)



Alumni News

Putting in the Time

Alumni are up to NWU's anniversary service challenge.

To mark the university's 125th anniversary, the Nebraska Wesleyan community has come together with a yearlong 12,500-hour community service challenge. Alumni have joined Nebraska Wesleyan students, faculty and staff in an effort to serve communities in the name of their alma mater.

With six months remaining in the challenge, the Nebraska Wesleyan community has already topped 10,000 hours, or 80 percent of its 12,500-hour goal.

"This is a great opportunity for alumni to get involved," said **Shelley McHugh** ('91), NWU's director of alumni relations. "We're proud of the work alumni do every day. This is just a fun new way to recognize and celebrate that great work."

You can add to the effort by logging your

own service hours in your community at surveymonkey.com/s/NWU12500Service-HourChallenge. All good works qualify—from donating blood to cleaning your neighbor's gutters. You can also plan to join our "Lend-a-Hand" efforts in several cities in August.

Help us celebrate 125 years of making our communities better. Log your service hours today.





Alumni Gather for the Holidays

The holiday spirit was alive and well as several hundred NWU alumni attended open houses in Decemeber to celebrate the season together. Alumni and friends of the university gathered in Lincoln at Wilderness Ridge where they enjoyed music from student musicians and great food in a festive atmosphere. Those in the Omaha area met at Brix to socialize and enjoy appetizers and drinks in celebration of the holiday.

An opportunity to greet old friends and hear what's happening at NWU from President Fred Ohles, these annual events continue to grow in attendance and have become a wonderful tradition at NWU.





It takes a pretty big venue to bring Lincoln-area alumni together under one roof for the holidays.Wilderness Ridge was up to the job.



NWU alumni keep the trains running on time at Union Pacific.

"Wesleyan at Work" Arrives at Union Pacific

President Fred Ohles and several team members from NWU Advancement and Alumni Relations spoke at a Wesleyan at Work event at Union Pacific in Omaha in December. Approximately 40 employees attended the luncheon, including Nebraska Wesleyan alumni, parents of prospective students and Union Pacific leaders involved in the company's hiring process. Wesleyan at Work events are social and educational workplace gatherings that bring NWU alumni in one organization together to reconnect with the university and each other. You may suggest locations for future Wesleyan at Work events at alumni@nebrwesleyan.edu.

ALUMNI EVENTS RETROSPECTIVE



Board Leader Hosts Florida Alumni

NWU alumni were invited to "An Evening on Bayshore" event at the home of **Keith** ('69) and **Judith** ('69) **Maurer** in Tampa, Fla. in January. President Ohles and Rosemary Ohles enjoyed an evening visiting with local alumni about exciting things on the horizon for NWU.

Keith and Judith Maurer (left) hosted Rosemary and Fred Ohles (right) at their home in Tampa, Fla. The Maurers are long-time advocates of Nebraska Wesleyan University. Judith currently serves as vice chair of NWU's Board of Governors; Keith is a member of the President's Board of Advisors.



Dr. **Joel Travis** ('86) and his wife, Anastasia, were among those who caught the University Choir's concert in Albion, Neb.

University Choir Hits the Road

Post-concert receptions were held for local alumni in both Fairway, Kan., and Albion, Neb., during the 2013 Choir Tour in January. Alumni enjoyed talking with student performers and connecting with other NWU graduates after spending an evening listening to the award-winning University Choir perform.



Friendly Faces Face Off at Snyder Arena

NWU basketball alumni returned to campus for an annual game against current players. The events were a success with a great turnout and alumni representing a range of classes from 1961 to 2012. Prior to the games, alumni talked with coaches and current players. Afterwards, players were hosted at an alumni luncheon.



Basketball alumni prove that a team's bond extends well past the final buzzer.

Had Rev. Tim Travers not held fast during his life's crucial moments, a Travers family protrait would look very different today.

F3 TORNADO AND STAGE 4 CANCER REVEAL THE COMPLEX FAITH BEHIND SIMPLY HANGING ON.

—By Dwain Hebda ('90)

Every Sunday, my childhood friend pulls on the vestments of a Methodist minister. He drapes a colorful stole across his shoulders and over a solid colored robe. It signifies his commitment to the service of God and humanity. Rev. **Tim Travers** ('89) spent a decade earning the vestment and decades since working to be worthy of it.

"I want to help people who are hurting by pointing to the true source of healing, which is God," he told me."I want to do it in the context of a career in the life of the Church."That career has taken him to the United Methodist Church of the Servant in Oklahoma City, Okla., where Travers is minister of congregational care.

The high school friend I followed from Fullerton, Neb., to NWU in the mid-1980s has since learned a great deal about both hurt and healing. He'd have plenty to teach on both subjects, but I didn't know that then. Life did what life does, and we lost touch.

So I missed many of the moments in Travers's life that were as colorful as his vestment: moments of true joy such as marrying his wife, Jacki, and raising two children, Zack and Zoe, with her.

I missed other moments when the vestment hung like a weight, as during the decline and death of his mother, Lois Travers, in the throes of Alzheimer's. Or when, as a young seminarian at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, he served as night chaplain at an acute care center. There, he befriended the dying, sharing in their suffering in the hopes of providing some needed comfort.

Travers parsed each of these moments through faith. Eulogizing his mother, he said though she forgot everything about her life, at last she heard and remembered the voice of Jesus.

He recalled one young man he met in the Denver facility, dying of AIDS and abandoned by his family. Being with him, befriending him and sharing in their faith—that meant something.

There is meaning in faith. In doggedness. In never letting go.

That was the blueprint that saw Travers, his very pregnant wife and their 3-year-old son through a muggy Nebraska evening in June 1998 when they found themselves driving into the breath of an F3 tornado. The family pulled over on the highway, crossed the wet pavement and flattened themselves down in a shallow swale.

Tim pinned his son beneath him and shouted prayers as hell broke loose overtop them. At its height, a tentacle of air curled beneath Jacki's pregnant belly and lifted her off the ground. Tim reached for his wife through the shrapnel of swirling debris and held on. Whether they stayed in the swale or lifted off together, there would be no letting go.

Then it was gone. The family was literally shaken but largely unharmed.

In the Book of Kings, Elijah listens for God's voice in a great wind that split rocks and rent mountains, only to observe, "the Lord was not in the wind." While Travers was not prone to calling Scripture into question, 14 years of almost daily reflection led him to believe the old prophet had it wrong.

"Was God present? You can't explain it any other way," he said. "We should have jumped into the ditch on the right side where we parked, but inexplicably, we went across the road. Our car was lifted up and dropped so hard it buried 12 inches into the ground–right where we would've laid down."

The episode became legend in their home church. A national inspirational magazine made it their cover story. Travers referenced it in sermons, counseling sessions and other acts of daily ecumenical life. And it wasn't far from his mind in 2003 when his doctor diagnosed the robust 35-year-old with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

What followed-surgery, chemo, radiation-was survived largely by focusing on what happened in the storm. The muscle memory of doggedly hanging on. As his hair fell out, his body convulsed and all food (continued)



Travers (#20) and the author (#25) built a friendship that ran through junior high basketball and high school graduation to NWU and beyond.

tasted like rat poison, Travers recalled the cloud. The wind. And after, the eerie calm.

"God helped me through a tornado. Surely He will help me through this," he said. "Things might be very difficult, but God has a vantage point we don't. He always sees what's coming next."

What came next was a seven-year remission. Travers settled into a happy routine. His hair grew back. He fattened up, watched his son grow tall and his daughter grow lovely. He cheered Jacki's finishing pharmacy school, a longtime goal. Life became normal.

And when I looked up Travers on Facebook on a whim in 2010, normalcy is what I expected I'd find. What I found instead was a post that said his cancer was back, in all its Stage 4 savagery.

Travers was back in treatment. Knowing what to expect made it no less brutal. Worse, the body adapts over time, so medications gradually lose effectiveness. He once again found himself updating his children on the situation, though this time around they were old enough to know what the words meant.

"I can't say I've ever asked, "Why me?" Travers said. "I never felt angry with God, although I don't hold a grudge against those who do. It's very natural to feel that. But I never did."

Instead, he had an epiphany. His fear over the possibility of not being around to realize dreams was keeping him from dreaming at all. He was, in effect, merely treading water, waiting to die.

"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People says, 'Begin with the end in mind," he said. "Whatever anger I felt was actually fear. When you stop fearing something, you take away its power. When I realized that, it was life-changing."

Travers has held on—exhibiting a grip strengthened by faith. Now in remission a second time, Travers has put his new perspective into action. He shed 70 pounds, dragged old dreams away from old excuses and put them on a timetable. Instead of hoping he lasts two more years, he envisions walking Zoe down the aisle. He doesn't miss an opportunity to tell those he loves how he feels. His face radiates to match the vibrancy of his vestment.

Before we said goodbye he told me, "You know, the assumption is the cancer will return. But I believe God is powerful enough to make me the exception. If I'm going to dream, I'm going to dream big." **1**



'W' Club GOLF TOURNAMENT

May 31, 2013 HiMark Golf Course 8901 Augusta Drive, Lincoln, NE

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