

Local

MUSEUM HOLIDAY

The Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History, 1330 N. Burlington Ave., will offer a special holiday combo Friday, Saturday and Monday.

The combo offers the sky show, "Tis the Season," in the J.M. McDonald Planetarium; the family film "Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit," in the Lied Super Screen Theatre; and admission to all three floors of the museum for one discounted price.

The museum and theater will be open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday. The museum and theater will be closed Sunday for Christmas.

"With the kids out of school and holiday visitors in town, we wanted to offer an easy way to entertain them at a great price," said Sue Uerling, director of marketing for the museum, in a news release. "They can literally spend the whole day with us and enjoy all aspects of the facility."

"Tis the Season" will play at 2:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. Friday, at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Saturday, and 2:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday. "The Sky Tonight" will play in the planetarium at 1 p.m. on both Saturday and Monday.

"Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit" will play at 7:15 p.m. Friday, 3:15 p.m. Saturday and 4:30 p.m. Monday.

For information, call 461-4629 or (800) 508-4629, option zero.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

A Christmas dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday at the Crossroads Center, 702 W. 14th St.

The dinner will be provided at no charge to anyone who would like a Christmas Day meal.

Refreshments and a variety of food items will be on the menu, including turkey, ham, cranberry sauce, stuffing and desserts.

HHS DEBATE

The Hastings High School debate team competed Dec. 17 at the annual Holiday Tournament at the University of Nebraska at Kearney sponsored by Kearney High School and North Platte High School.

In Novice Lincoln Douglas, freshman Audra Zavodny placed second.

For Novice Congress, freshman Anthony Epp placed first, and freshman Anton VanMetter earned third as well as the Presiding Officer gavel.

Nominees included freshman Kalin Rodgers in Novice Congress, and senior Chris Witt in Varsity Congress.

Juniors Phil Hartwig and Caitlin Philipp placed first at the tournament in Public Forum.

UNMC GRADUATES

Nearly 300 University of Nebraska Medical College students received diplomas at commencement ceremonies in Kearney, Omaha, Lincoln and Scottsbluff on Dec. 12.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

DEGREE IN NURSING

◆ Kearney Division: Elizabeth E. (Laursen) Courtney of Deshler; Lindsay J. Smith of Franklin; Ashley L. (Rush) Schoenbeck of Geneva; Shannon B. Fisher of Hastings (with distinction).

◆ Lincoln Division: Brooke N. Marco of Doniphan; Gina M. Witt of Juniata (with distinction); Tamara L. Vavra-Fong of Milligan.

◆ Omaha: Jessica L. Hubl of Blue Hill (with distinction); Mary E. Bosshardt and Abbi G. Johnson, both of Hastings.

MASTER OF PHYSICIAN

ASSISTANT STUDIES

◆ Lisa A. VanderWerff of Hastings; Brandon L. McLaughlin of Hebron; Melissa C. Fagen of Minden; Angela D. Bedlan of Shickley

State

STORE SHOOTING

OMAHA — Two men were arrested Wednesday for a shooting outside a tobacco store that left a shop employee dead on Tuesday, Omaha Police said.

The Associated Press



David Taw (sitting) uses one of the many computers at his cousin Moses Kong's home in Superior Tuesday night.

BETH BOHLING/Tribune

Superior resident far from home again this Christmas

SUDANESE MAN HERE TO OVERSEE CHARITY'S WORK REFURBISHING COMPUTERS

BETH BOHLING
Hastings Tribune

SUPERIOR — Even Moses Kong's computer expertise will not enable him to send Christmas greetings to his family in South Sudan. Kong moved to Superior from Lincoln this month to oversee refurbishing of outdated computers for shipment to his homeland by the Superior Pawnee Computer Society. His house is filled with high-tech computer equipment that provides worldwide connections.

Visiting Kong recently, Guk Rut, who has made recent trips back to their common homeland, observed that his house is better equipped than the Ministry of Information in Sudan's capital city of Khartoum.

But since his parents and sisters live in a village in South Sudan where there is no electricity, all that equipment won't enable him to greet them at Christmas.

Nor do his relatives have telephones, nor mail service that would allow him to send them a card or package.

In any event, Kong said, a gift exchange is not a part of the Sudanese Christmas customs. "We give gifts," he said, "but not at any special time — and we don't wrap them all up."

In Sudan, Kong said, Christmas is an eight-day festivity, centered around the church.

People from his village church would go to a larger city church for evening services on Dec. 24 and a parade the next morning. The next several days would be filled with celebration, games and merriment. On Jan. 1 they would conclude with a church service welcoming the new year.

The following Christmas, the group would gather at another church for the Holy Days.

Kong said Presbyterian missionaries established a church in his village in 1912.

"Before that," he said, "my people believed in God, but we didn't know anything about Jesus Christ."

It has been 15 years since Kong saw his

family. In 1990, he fled from war-ravaged Sudan, fearing he would be forced to serve in the North Sudanese army against the Christians in the south.

The civil war that ended with a peace agreement in January already had been raging six or seven years by that time.

Kong was a member of a group that walked about 700 miles to reach Ethiopia, where they lived in a refugee camp. After eight years there, he had an opportunity to come to the United States.

He spent the first year in Georgia and Tennessee, then moved to Lincoln where he finished his education and developed expertise in working with computers.

In Superior, Kong shares his home with a cousin, David Taw, who is enrolled in sixth grade at North Ward school. David's father, who works with an oil company in San Diego, currently is assigned to Sudan.

Another Sudanese family is expected to move to Superior next week. The family will include Komach Dey, who will be helping with the computers; his grandmother; and two small sons.

Kong and his nephew plan to go to Grand Island for Christmas, where the Sudanese community worships at the Evangelical Free Church. He said they would be having a parade on Christmas Day.

Kong said he hopes to return to Sudan someday.

"I really miss my parents," he said. He stays in contact with one brother in Ethiopia. That brother sometimes sees their parents, so they are not completely out of touch.

In the meantime, he feels close to his homeland as he works at the SPCS workshop on Central Avenue here. The computers he is refurbishing are destined for helping Sudanese to move into the computer age as they rebuild their war-torn country.

"It's a terrible life over there," Kong said. "If you were there you'd see it is really a bad situation."

The Superior Pawnee Computer Society is a nonprofit organization that helps place used computers in the hands of individuals in need.

For more information visit the World Wide Web at www.spcsne.org.

HHS: Students bake up German tradition

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Among this year's front-runners were a home made house by sophomores Gavin Raitt and Charlie Lainson fashioned after Michael Jackson's fabled Neverland Ranch, which included photographs of the pop singer; a winter wedding chapel; a Michael Jordan tribute house; and a ski chalet.

Junior Derek Rasmussen and classmate Jamison Murphy whipped their Jordan-themed sports house together in about three hours after spending about 1 1/2 hours baking the gingerbread base.

"It's pretty fun," Rasmussen said. "We did it two years ago and just used the same theme. The first one, we bought the gingerbread and stuck it together. This was our first year baking it."

Clearly, he was pleased with how their creation turned out this time around. A first-place finish, he joked, seemed imminent.

"I think we got it," he said with a smile, drawing a smattering of laughter from his classmates.

Junior Jillian Andresen and her co-architect Lindsey Stark waited until Tuesday night to assemble their log cabin design.

Their creation was concocted using pretzels as logs and cotton balls topped with powdered sugar as snow. The skiers were made out of red licorice and gummy drops, with Kit Kat chocolate bar pieces filling in as skis.

Andresen said it didn't take long for her and Stark to sink their teeth into the creative process.

"It takes a lot of time, but once you do it it's really fun," she said. "You get to be creative. I learned how to be patient when your roof falls off. You have to be really patient with it because it doesn't stick together the first time. Putting it together was the hardest."

Andresen even used a power drill to help secure the roof to the gingerbread walls.

The finished product was satisfactory, she said, even if it "didn't come out like they do in the magazines."

Junior Katherine Lessor teamed with Cally Thompson on a colorfully striped design that took the pair about three hours to decorate. Accents included multi-colored icing

Winners

Winners of the gingerbread house contest were announced late Wednesday afternoon.

Charlie Lainson and Gavin Raitt took top honors for their submission, "Neverland Ranch." Second place was awarded to Jill Abbott and Abby McConaughay for their "Winter Wedding Chapel" entry. Third-place finishers were Katherine Lessor and Cally Thompson, whose festively designed house featured multi-colored stripes of homemade icing layered across the roof.

on the roof, ice cream cone accents, Legos and a bow.

"It is a ton of work to make the gingerbread," she said. "It gets kind of repetitive to make three batches for the house. That was the boring part."

"But once you get to the decorating part it gets pretty fun. It's different than anything we do, and it really puts you in the Christmas spirit."

Junior Abby McConaughay and Jill Abbott gave their house a romantic twist, turning it into a white wedding chapel complete with bride and groom and get-away car.

"We used lots of sparkly stuff, iridescent, lots of lace, little lights, a lot of frosting and marshmallows,"

McConaughay said. "We probably decorated for 8-10 hours. It was a long time."

"It was a lot of fun. I love decorating and so does Jill, so we had a really good time doing that together."

Learning, she said, was in the details.

"I think I learned a little bit about teamwork and a little bit about tedious work, like details and that," McConaughay said.

The timeliness of the Yuletide activity added to the spirit of the project, she said.

"It's fun, it's Christmas and it's festive," she said. "I like it."

TRIBUNE CLASSIFIEDS WORK!

"Aurora Doctor Reveals Jealously Guarded Secrets for Eliminating or Reducing Hand & Wrist Pain"

Hand & Wrist Pain sufferers...

If you suffer from relentless pain in your wrist, please read this article because a local doctor is finally blowing the whistle and revealing the truth about Carpal Tunnel Hand/Wrist pain many doctors don't know. Find out why most wrist pain victims will never get rid of their wrist pain no matter how many pills they take, shots they get or surgeries they have!

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this location, then all the treatments in the world on your wrist will never get you out of pain.

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Diva Night

Thursday
Dec. 29th
6:00-9:00

Only \$5 person, plus the cost of Pottery! Reservations Required!

This is the ultimate "girls night out"! We'll be playing fun female-only music, great door prizes, special prices on selected pottery and a fabulous dessert bar.

Call your girlfriends & spend a night full of food, fun, laughter & pottery painting!

Also!

Little diva's in training, come dressed up in your favorite Princess or Diva costume and enjoy 2 full hours of crafts and pottery painting. Open to all 5-11 year olds. Friday, Dec. 30th, 1-3:00 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available!

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