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SUMMER 2015

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Half Way Around
the World**



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Dear Alumni and Friends:

THIS EDITION OF *UNO MAGAZINE* focuses our attention on water — its impact, conservation and usage, and on UNO's role in ensuring that adequate future supplies are protected and available.

Quite an agenda for a seemingly landlocked metropolitan university, right?

But our state, as you may know, is located over the Ogallala Aquifer, one of the world's largest aquifers. It occupies an area of about 174,000 square miles and serves the drinking water needs of about 82 percent of those living in America's "high plains."

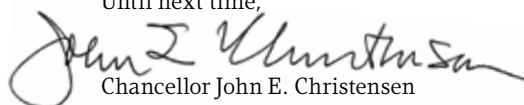
Like many of you, perhaps, I take our plentiful supply of water in Nebraska too much for granted. While (fortunately) the heavy rains of late have limited the need to water my lawn, I'm sure my personal conservation efforts leave much to be desired. I'm hoping that reading this publication cover to cover will give me some tangible and useful ideas.

As chancellor, I take great pride in the work of UNO's faculty, staff and students who are doing innovative and, in some cases, life-changing work. That happens at home as part of the Nebraska Watershed Network and in Peru, the island of Belize and other spots worldwide.

I commend the editorial staff of this magazine for covering this subject from every possible angle and vantage point. And I invite you to get to know UNO graduates and others who are using water resources to help us "lift our spirits" by brewing, distilling and promoting the many libations that begin as simple water.

And so, my friends, prepare to "drink up" this latest edition of the magazine. Let it refresh your spirit and your mind, and address your "thirst" for knowledge, knowing we haven't "watered down" the importance of the subject matter. At the risk of being thrown overboard ...

Until next time,


Chancellor John E. Christensen



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNO Magazine wants to know what its readers are thinking. Write us about the magazine or university. Letters must include writer's first and last names, address and phone number and may be edited for taste, accuracy, clarity and length. Submit a letter at unoalumni.org/unomag-led or write to the address on page 3.



On
Spring
2015

The Spring 2015 issue of *UNO Magazine* featured a large, illustrated pullout map of Omaha showing points plotting UNO's numerous community outreach efforts across the city. That included two programs involving Omaha Public Schools' Blackburn Alternative Program at 26th and Hamilton Streets. The first, "Reality Bites," pairs Blackburn and UNO students in a psychology course through which Nebraska Humane Society dogs are trained using conditioning behavior modification techniques. The second is UNO's "Food for Thought" project that then-Nebraska First Lady Sally Ganem honored in 2012 with the ServeNebraska Outstanding Community Partnership in Education award. The project has brought thousands of healthy meals to Adams Park Senior Center residents served by students from the Blackburn Alternative Program's Culinary Arts and Food classes.



The issue was a big hit at Blackburn, eliciting this Letter to the Editor and a sign posted at the school.

"I hope you can share with the writing staff how amazing it is to have service learning coverage. It means so much to schools, especially ours. You literally and figuratively put us on the map last month! We laminated it, posted it and celebrated it! The attached photo was posted in our library with a copy of the map. Thanks again for telling the rest of the story. The map and story were AWESOME. You never know the kind of impact you make. As for the magazine, we love it — it's super-high quality and I like sharing the puzzles with our students!

Cathy S. Nelson, Teacher Leader
Blackburn Alternative Program

EDITOR'S NOTE: A photo caption in the spring 2014 issue of *UNO Magazine* incorrectly identified Marvin Dvorak, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska Board chairman, as Carl Ameringer, BCBS Chair of Health Care Administration and Policy at UNO's School of Public Administration. We regret the error. A correction has been posted in the online versions of the magazine.





HAVING GROWN UP ON the river, this issue of *UNO Magazine* focused on water has special meaning to me.

OK, my wife says I have to clarify. She gives The World's Greatest Eye Roll whenever she hears me tell people I grew up on the river, hinting at some modern-day Huck Finn childhood. "Technically," she might have a point.

Until I was 13, my family lived in Karen Western Neighborhood spreading north and west from 60th and L streets. A 6-foot chain link fence bordered our backyard.

Beyond it was ... Little Papillion Creek.

My friends and I would hop the fence, side-wind down the grass-covered bank

and play in water typically no more than knee-high and 10 feet across. We'd collect rocks and build mini-dams. We'd play with treasures recent storm runoff had left on the banks. Once, that included a rusty gas tank from some car. My cousin Andre (also a UNO grad) and I nailed a sheet of plywood to its top in hopes of rafting downstream to the Missouri River.

Fail.

Sometimes we'd fish the creek. If it was a hot day, we might just sit in it.

Grossed out yet? Hey, it was the free-wheelin' '70s, baby.

Turns out the Little Papio isn't exactly ... pristine. Nor are the Big Papillion and West Papillion Creeks, the two other tributaries that make up the Papillion Creek Watershed covering 402 square miles where one-third of Nebraska's population lives.

But the watershed is sick.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality has listed its waters as "impaired" based on unacceptable levels of things such as fecal coliform bacteria (commonly found in human and animal feces); cancer-causing PCBs; agricultural runoff used in insecticides; and pollutants including oil, grease and toxic chemicals.

UNO is doing its part to help. In 2013, UNO students joined students from Omaha North High School to test samples at 50 locations along the Big Papio. UNO Biology Professor Alan Kolok, director of the Nebraska Watershed Network, says it's likely the network will build a research station on the creek. Similar facilities exist on the Elkhorn and Missouri Rivers.

I still see the Little Papio regularly, riding alongside it when I bike the Keystone Trail between my home in Papillion and UNO. On occasion, I see people fishing its waters.

Disgusting.

But who knows, thanks to the work of UNO faculty and grads, maybe one day I'll be able to take a dip again.

Anthony Flott

Anthony Flott
Managing Editor



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Catering Change Made at Thompson Center



Photo: Thompson Center Director Steven Summers, Jennifer and Jeff Snow, UNO Alumni Association President Lee Denker.

THE THOMPSON CENTER IS pleased to announce a new exclusive catering partnership with Catering Creations effective July 1. It is the first of several changes coming to the Thompson Center, voted Best Reception Facility in the 2015 Best of Omaha Magazine reader survey.

Catering Creations prides itself on innovation and delighting guests with flavor, presentation and flair, no matter the event size. A family company, it is owned and operated by Executive Chef Jeff Snow and his wife, Director of Operations Jennifer Snow. Chef Snow has a degree from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., and was inducted into the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame in October 2013. Jennifer is a UNO graduate.

The Snows launched Catering Creations (cateringcreations.com) in 2002 and have grown it from a three-person operation to one with 18 full-time and 130 part-time staff. The company offers a talented culinary team, well-trained and courteous serving staff, and efficient, client-oriented event planners.

Catering Creations has been voted Best Caterer in the Best of Omaha Magazine reader survey every year since 2010. It also was awarded the Prestigious National ACE Award by Catersource Magazine as the Best Midwest Caterer in 2013.

Catering Creations menus for the Thompson Center are available online.

Other changes are coming to the Thompson Center beginning with renovations that start

in December. That will include new wall coverings, carpet, light fixtures, furniture and banquet seating. The audio/visual system also will be upgraded, providing customers with enhanced features.

"This is an exciting time for the Thompson Alumni Center with a fresh, modern atmosphere arriving in 2016," Director Steven Summers says. "We are moving from a great event space to an elite event destination, competitive on every level. We cannot wait to show guests the fantastic new look that complements perfectly the Thompson Center's timeless architecture."

For information about any of the changes at the Thompson Center, contact Summers at 402-554-3368 or ssummers@unoalumni.org.

SAVE THE DATE: 2ND ALUMNI NIGHT OF HONOR SET FOR NOV. 4

The UNO Alumni Association will host the second Alumni Night of Honor Wednesday, Nov. 4., at the Thompson Alumni Center.

Sponsored by First Data Resources, Alumni Night of Honor highlights achievements by members of the worldwide UNO alumni network. It will celebrate 2015 UNO Athletics Hall of Fame inductees, Young Alumni Achievement Award recipients, Alumni Achievement Award winners, and other distinguished graduates who have earned special recognition for service or professional accomplishments.

Details will be available in the coming weeks at unoalumni.org/nightofhonor. Direct questions to Elizabeth Kraemer at ekraemer@unoalumni.org or 402-554-4802.





Young Alumni Academy Class of 2015 graduates For Whom the Bells Toll

THE BELLS OF HENNINGSON Memorial Campanile rang for members of the UNO Young Alumni Academy Class of 2015, who ended their eight-month leadership development program April 30.

The award-winning academy, designed for alumni 35 and younger, facilitates peer networking and professional growth. The group's capstone session included a tour of UNO's 168-foot-tall campanile followed by a ceremony at the Thompson Center.

Carillonneur Dr. James Johnson serenaded the group with several songs during its 30-minute stay high above campus. Members also took a turn playing, including Carly Beckman's take on "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" and renditions by several others of "Chopsticks."

The campanile tour was one of eight sessions held at unique locations on and off campus. That included a behind-the-scenes tour of the CenturyLink Center and time flying in the cockpit of UNO's Flight Simulator. UNO leaders also

addressed members on topics such as athletics management, student focus and community engagement.

Nearly 180 young alumni have taken part in the program, which begins its sixth year in September. Applications for the 2015-16 UNO Young Alumni Academy are being accepted at unoalumni.org/unoyoungalumni

Class of 2015 members and their place of employment are listed below.

Direct questions to Elizabeth Kraemer at ekraemer@unoalumni.org or 402-554-4802.

Young Alumni Academy Class of 2015:

Elizabeth Akert, *Union Pacific*;
Rebecca Armstrong, *Goodwill Industries*;
Carly Beckman, *Omaha Grain Inspection Service*; Anna Berg, *UNO*; Dan Cheuvront, *RE/MAX Results*; Christopher Cheuvront, *Community Alliance*; Mallery Choiniere, *NAI NP Dodge*; Robert Clines, *The Nebraska Medical Center*; Christine Dunn, *Redstone*; Kailey Dwyer, *ConAgra Foods*; Natalia Fairchild, *ConAgra Foods*;

Phillip Foster, *UNO*; Ryne Higgins, *Sojern*;
Christa Hillmer, *Carroll Communications*;
Tiffany Kelly, *Service Learning Academy*;
Derick Lewin, *P.J. Morgan Real Estate*;
Cassy Loseke, *Godfather's Pizza*; Kasey McAllister, *Swanson Elementary*;
Derek McBride, *UNO*; Joseph McCampbell, *Omaha World-Herald*; Marshal McGovern, *Interpublic Group*; Tyler Micek, *Scott Residential Management*;
Amanda Monzingo, *Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska*; Ciera Mosley, *Iowa Western Community College*; Mollie Myers, *Precision Vision*; Kate O'Dea, *AccuQuilt*;
Courtney Otte, *Modern Hive Design Studio*;
Michael Perdunn, *UNO*; Jimmie Pinkham III, *Douglas County Attorney*;
D'Antae Potter, *UNO*; Tricia Prossoki, *Sojern*; Sarahi Real y Vasquez, *Omaha Public Schools*; Grant Runyan, *Mutual of Omaha Financial Advisors*; Pyper Russell, *stay-at-home mother*; Kelsey Sevensen, *Magnetic Media Online*; Kanad Sharma, *Splunk*; Jacqueline Skarda, *UNO*;
John Steier, *Bank of the West*;
Kristin Webb, *Emspace Group*.



Brock Lewis, student president

Installed

THE UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'S longstanding support of the university's student government leadership continued in April during installation of the student body president/regent and vice president.

Association President Lee Denker presented certificates to Brock Lewis, president/regent, and Amanda Chapin, vice president, recognizing scholarship support the association will provide to each.

Lewis and Chapin ran unopposed in the March election. Both serve one-year terms. The student president serves as an ex-officio member of the UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors and reports on student affairs at its quarterly meetings.

Since 1983, the association has provided nearly \$65,000 in scholarships to UNO's president and vice president.



Association Bestows Highest Honor on Omaha City Council President Pete Festersen

THE UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION bestowed its Citation for alumni Achievement award upon UNO graduate Pete Festersen as part of the university's May Commencement ceremonies on May 8.

Festersen, president of the Omaha City Council, received the award at the conferral of degrees ceremony.

Inaugurated in 1949, the citation is the association's highest honor. It encompasses career achievement, community service, involvement in business and professional associations and fidelity to UNO. Festersen is the 168th UNO graduate to receive the award.

Festersen, 44, was elected to the Omaha City Council in 2009 representing District 1 in Omaha. He was re-elected in 2013. He also is president of his own company, Strategic Business Development. He previously held senior management positions with the Peter Kiewit Foundation, the Omaha Mayor's Office under Mike Fahey, the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce and Alegent Health. He also served as chairman of the Omaha Planning Board for three years and served on various community boards/committees, including those for the Omaha Children's Museum, College World Series, Aksarben Future Trust and United Way of the Midlands.

Born and raised in Omaha, Festersen graduated from Omaha Central High School in 1989. He earned a bachelor's degree in history from Connecticut College in 1993 and a master's degree in public administration from UNO in 1999.

Festersen is a graduate of Leadership Omaha and has been recognized for his work as a business leader by the Midlands Business Journal. He also received the Excellence in Public Service Award from the UNO College of Public Administration and Community Service in 2012. In 2014, the Nebraska chapter of the American Society for Public Administration named him its Elected Official of the Year.

Festersen and his wife, Paige, have two children, Anna and Caroline. The family attends Dundee Presbyterian Church. A lifelong musician, he also plays drums in a local rock band.

PARTNERSHIPS

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- Are you in need of home, life, auto, health or life insurance?
- The UNO Alumni Association offers graduates insurance for these and other needs at discounted rates.
- See all the coverage available at unoalumni.org/insurance.

Travel

- The UNO Alumni Association is pleased to offer alumni discounted travel opportunities through a partnership with travel provider Go Next!
- Join fellow graduates on one of these upcoming Oceania Cruises:
 - Jan. 23-Feb. 2, 2016 — Island Paradise
 - May 4-12, 2016 — Sultans & Palaces
 - June 13-24, 2016 — Regal Routes

- Sept. 17-25, 2016 — Great Pacific Northwest
- For more information, including detailed brochures for each trip, visit www.unoalumni.org/travel. Additional cruises are added periodically, so check the site frequently. To receive a brochure for any of our trips by mail, call the association toll-free at UNO-MAV-ALUM (866-628-2586).



Making the Call... for UNO

THE UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION and University of Nebraska Foundation are asking you to answer the call!

This year, students hit the phones to contact UNO alumni in an effort to keep in touch with the worldwide UNO alumni network 104,000 members strong. Students are sharing news about campus, updating alumni records and building support for the UNO Annual Fund, which supports the association in its efforts to serve UNO.

Ruffalo Noel Levitz, a national leader in higher education calling programs, manages the calling. Program Center Manager Casandra Adams and a group of more than 40 students have worked diligently to reach UNO's alumni.

Adams says the program has a significant impact on UNO not only through alumni engagement and fundraising, but through the words of wisdom alumni have for student callers.

"I have the best of both worlds with this job," Adams says. "On a daily basis I get to watch the students genuinely interact with UNO alumni, and they really cherish the advice they receive. I have watched them grow so much from the very beginning until graduation, and the alumni of UNO really impact them even if they don't realize it."

Sadie Tunberg, a freshman psychology student, has spoken with dozens of UNO alumni so far this year. She said she embraces her role in helping inform and engage alumni, and she also has been inspired by the success of UNO's graduates.

"It is very reassuring to hear alumni share their stories and how they have turned their degree into a career," she said. "It is great to talk with alumni to see that they are actually utilizing their degrees and living life so happily after college."

Adams encourages all alumni to pick up the phones and share their UNO memories with the student callers.

"I get to watch this beautiful university advance, and I know it is largely because of the relationships that these students build with UNO alumni," she says.

To learn more about the UNO Annual Fund, or to make a gift to support UNO, visit unoalumni.org/makeagift



Biology Professor Rick Stasiak

receives College of Arts & Sciences teaching award

UNO BIOLOGY PROFESSOR RICK Stasiak received the College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award in April, honoring a career that spanned 43 years and 25,000 students.

Before recently retiring, Stasiak's primary research area was the ecology of fishes and aquatic communities in central North America. He taught a variety of courses in Zoology and Aquatic Ecology, published more than 25 papers and recently authored a book, "A Field Guide to the Fishes of Nebraska."

Stasiak received grants from the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service and the Corps of Engineers during his career. He mentored more than 20 master's thesis students and more than 25 master's non-thesis students at UNO.

Former student Marlo Jeffries, now an assistant professor of biology at Texas Christian University, fondly recalls department parties Stasiak and his wife, Diane, would host.

"He would have an amazing smorgasbord of wild game meat and smoked fish that he had hunted and fished, along with homemade elderberry wine," Jeffries says. "He would give us tours of his basement where he has a vast taxidermy collection obtained during trips to South Africa, Canada and various regions of the U.S. He would tell stories about his safari trips and the time he met Babe Ruth as a kid."

"I knew that each time I went to Dr. Stasiak's house that I would try something new and learn something about the world I didn't know before."

He would tell stories about his safari trips and the time he met Babe Ruth as a kid.



Senior MOMENTS

The UNO Alumni Association celebrated commencement with more than 800 graduating students during the 2015 Senior Send-Off May 7 and 8.

Seniors were given free UNO Alumni Cards and UNO Alumni pins and had their pictures taken in front of the UNO Alumni banner. Photos were posted on the Association's Facebook page and emailed to participants.

More than 1,900 students graduated from UNO, pushing the worldwide alumni network to more than 104,000 living graduates.





From left, Jacob Saddler, Robert Kring, Joshua Komyathy, Jason Komyathy, Colten Holden, Mark Byrne (Creighton), Andrew Butler.

FOR SIX UNO SENIORS in the U.S. Air Force ROTC program, getting their degrees in May was as good as gold — literally.

On May 8, The UNO Alumni AFROTC Chapter presented the six graduating cadets and three others from participating colleges with their gold second lieutenant bars and the epaulet rank worn on the shoulder of their uniforms. The seniors also took their oath of enlistment from a military officer during a ceremony hosted in the Thompson Alumni Center. Afterward, family members pinned the bars on the newly commissioned officers.

This is the seventh class of graduating cadets the chapter has provided with the second lieutenant commissioning sets.

In April, at its annual awards ceremony, the chapter presented Cadet Kyle Schumacher with

a \$500 scholarship for the 2015 fall semester. Other scholarships recognized at the ceremony:

Cadet Danielle Crone received the \$500 Syntha Essex Angel Flight Scholarship, awarded annually to a cadet who best serves as an ambassador for Air Force ROTC by engaging in other UNO activities. Essex was the first leader of Angel Flight, an all-female organization founded at the University of Omaha in 1952 to support and promote the activities of Detachment 470.

Cadet Jenna DeWilde received the Ilse and Marcel Kahn Detachment 470 Air Force ROTC Scholarship Award, \$500 issued each year to a junior or senior cadet in good standing. Kahn is a 1954 UNO AFROTC graduate. DeWilde also received \$1,000 from the Colonel Wood Memorial Scholarship. Duane Post ('54) and his wife, Joan, established the fund to honor the memory of

UNO Alumni AFROTC Chapter Honors Graduating Cadets

Col. Allen H. Wood, the first Detachment commander of the Wolfpack.

Cadets D.J. Carlson and Schumacher received \$500 dollars each from the Col. and Mrs. Hartranft endowment for a deserving UNO cadet who desires to pursue a career as an officer in the U.S. Air Force.

This year, the Air Force also provided five UNO first- and second-year students with scholarships. AFROTC has been at UNO since 1951. Students from UNO, Creighton, Bellevue University, UNMC, IWCC and College of St. Mary participate in the program at UNO.

For a list of 2015 graduating cadets and their upcoming assignments in the U.S. Air Force, visit unoalumni.org/afrotc

TEACHING AWARDS

THE UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION celebrated the 19th year of its Alumni Outstanding Teaching Awards program when it presented the honor to nine faculty members during the UNO Faculty Honors Convocation April 16. Association President Lee Denker presented the awards, established in 1997 to honor distinguished teaching in the classroom.

Peer committees in UNO colleges chose recipients, each of whom received a \$1,000 award. Denker presented recipients with commemorative plaques during the reception, hosted in the Thompson Alumni Center.

With the 2015 awards the association has issued \$167,000 through the program. For bios of each recipient visit unoalumni.org/aota2015



2015 UNO Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award Recipients

From left pictured with Chancellor Christensen (at far right):

ALAN GIFT, Chemistry

PAUL LANDOW, Political Science

HOLLY MILLER, School of Communication, Communication

ERIN PLEGGENKUHLE-MILES, Marketing & Management

ROBERT BLAIR, School of Public Administration

WILMA KUHLMAN, Teacher Education

YAOQING (LAMAR) YANG, Electrical & Computer Engineering

DOUGLAS DERRICK, School of Interdisciplinary Informatics

ANGIE HODGE, Mathematics (not pictured)



From left, Schonewise, Sutfin, Ewing, Kardell

Association Appoints New Board Members, Executive Committee at Annual Meeting

THE UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION conducted its 103rd annual meeting May 19, confirming a new executive committee and electing new members to serve on its board of directors.



The meeting was held at Gordmans Corporate Headquarters near UNO's Center Campus.

Sarah Waldman (BA, 1994) will direct the association as 2015-16 chairman of the board.

She will be the 92nd graduate to chair the board. Waldman is senior vice president of administration for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE).

Previously a staff attorney for BCBSNE, Waldman is active in community service and currently serves on several boards. She was a member of Leadership Omaha Class 29 and a 2007 recipient of the Midlands Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Award.

Waldman will lead the following executive committee: Chairman: Sarah Waldman; 1st Vice Chairman: Scott Durbin; 2nd Vice Chairman: Al Hansen; Treasurer: Shari Munro; Legal Advisor: Randy Stevenson; Secretary: Laurie Ruge; Past Chairman: David Craft.

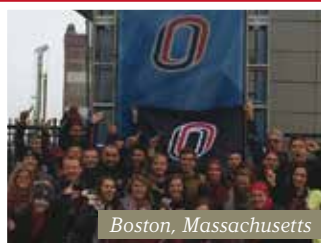
Four new board members were elected to serve three-year terms: Viv Ewing (1983, 1986), president and CEO of Alzheimer's Association of Nebraska; Matt Kardell (1990), senior vice president of sales and relationship

management at FirstData; Enid Schonewise (1996, 2001), assistant superintendent at Westside Schools; and, Jim Sutfin (1993, 2002), superintendent at Millard Public Schools.

Chris Denney (2005), senior project analyst at Nebraska Medicine, and Steve Schmitz (1995, 2008), manager of Nuclear Projects at OPPD, were elected to second three-year terms. A complete 2015-16 board roster is provided at www.unoalumni.org/board

Also at the meeting, Director Appreciation Awards were issued to outgoing board members John Jesse III (Creighton University) and Susie Melliger (Aldrich Elementary).

Still Showing



Boston, Massachusetts



Death Valley, California



Ecuador



Kamakura, Japan

Maverick Nation has flown the O flag in nearly every state and all over the world, but the O is still showing.

Launched in 2013 to celebrate the UNO Alumni Association's 100th anniversary, Show the O emphasizes the spread and stature of the worldwide UNO alumni network — now numbering more than 104,000 graduates worldwide.

The campaign provides alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends with "O" flags to display in photographs where they live or travel. Photographs are displayed on an interactive world map at showtheo.com.

Request a flag at showtheo.com — we'll send one for free and pay for its way home.



Alan Kolok was a Fish as a Kid

by Colleen Kenney Fleischer

He grew up on the East Coast, in a home just a mile off Long Island Sound, and spent his summers swimming, boating and fishing.

“I was in the water all the time,” he says.

He became fascinated with water and fish and that led him to his mission in life as an aquatic toxicologist, one whose name in the field now is known throughout the world. And that fascination led him to one of the best places in the world to do his water research — Omaha.

The academic ecosystem for water research is especially healthy now, says Kolok, who came to UNO almost 20 years ago. Why?

From left, Kolok with UNO students Ryan Krysl (MS Biology); Jonathan Ali, UNMC Ph.D. (College of Public Health); and Ashkan Banan (Iranian Ph.D. student on a 6-month research visit to UNO.)

Here are a few reasons:

- **The Elkhorn River Research Station**

The innovative station, which UNO built three years ago near 245th and Q streets, gives Kolok and his students a focal point from which to study toxicity levels in the river. It also creates opportunities for community outreach and engagement. "The day of the inauguration of the station, I really had the feeling that it was like my debutante ball, like my coming out party, where everything was now in place for us to take river research to the absolutely highest level."

A second research station is set to open soon on the Missouri River in Bellevue at American Heroes Park.

- **The University of Nebraska's Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Institute**

Since opening five years ago in Lincoln, the institute has put the University of Nebraska on the map as a world leader in addressing water issues. That rising tide has lifted researchers like him throughout the NU system. The institute's goal is to help the world achieve food security by finding better ways to manage water in agricultural and food production. The institute encourages collaborations among the four campuses, he says, and that has opened new ways of looking at things scientifically.

"It's just been such a great position to be in to be able to interface with incredible faculty across the campuses."

- **The vision of UNO leaders**

Kolok credits Chancellor John Christensen and other top administrators for creating an environment where researchers can thrive and dream big. One example: The leadership pushed for UNO to attain the Carnegie Doctoral Research University status, and now UNO is in part of that rather select group of universities. "It's a fundamentally different place than when I first arrived here," Kolok says. "The administration at UNO, my dean, the senior vice chancellor, the chancellor – they absolutely understand what that means and they're absolutely committed to making UNO be the best research institution at its level that it can possibly be."

Kolok has a joint appointment with the University of Nebraska Medical Center's College of Public Health. He spends about 75 percent of his time at UNO, 25 percent at UNMC. He has an office on each campus. He also is director of the Nebraska Watershed Network, which has space in UNO's new, cutting-edge Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center — another example, he says, of the vision of leaders at UNO.

"The administration at UNO, my dean, the senior vice chancellor, the chancellor... they're absolutely committed to making UNO be the best research institution at its level that it can possibly be."

This is not your grandfather's UNO.

"We are doing things today that are absolutely novel and innovative and that directly feed back into the community."

Kolok has been appointed as a faculty fellow with the Daugherty Water for Food Institute, which has helped fund some of his latest research — studying a fish that's found only in Chile.

He was in Chile this past January collecting tissue samples of the fish, called a pencil catfish. The species has taken over the ecological niche of a salamander, living in the cracks and narrow gaps of rocks in the country's mountain streams.

Sediment collects in those spaces. You can learn a lot about the toxicity of a stream by studying its sediment, Kolok says, so those pencil catfish are the perfect sentinel organism to monitor water toxicity.

The fish tissue is stored in a freezer. A Ph.D. student from UNMC's College of Public Health who's also being funded by the Water for Food Institute will analyze it.

"So there it is again – that cross-communication between the campuses that is just so very, very fortunate," Kolok says.

The last day he was in Chile, Kolok stood on the rim of what used to be a volcano. Condors, the largest birds in the world, soared overhead as he looked across the crater, which was filled with water.

It was a moment, he says, where he just had to stop and be grateful and appreciate the "cosmic karma" of living a life so tied to the water.

A life that has led him to some of the best places in the world to study it.

Like Chile. Like Omaha.

"Sometimes I have to pinch myself," he says, "because I can't believe how far this has all gone."

The support of private donors has played an important role in the career of Alan Kolok and other UNO researchers. The creation of Daugherty Water for Food Institute, the Elkhorn River Research Station and the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center are just a few examples of the good donors do.

If you also would like to help UNO researchers continue to do amazing things in the world, please contact the University of Nebraska Foundation at nufoundation.org or 800-432-3216.

Xeriscaping

XERISCAPING ISN'T SOME NEW celebrity beauty treatment. Rather, it's a sustainable approach to landscaping — one UNO uses to great effect.

"It's a type of landscaping that can tolerate drought conditions," says Steve Rodie.

In 2001, two turf lawns on campus were replaced with native junipers and gravel mulch. This has saved the university time and resources because junipers keep their foliage year-round and do not require water once established.

At first, Rodie says people were skeptical due to the unusual look of the space, but perceptions are now changing.

"For people to accept the aesthetic of xeriscape, they need to be taught that it has all of these environmental values in it, or it needs to look like it is being taken care of," he says. "I would say that universally everyone (on campus) wants to do it. Why would you not want your landscape to look better, and to use less pesticides and have it cost less?"

Lowell Neuhaus, manager of Landscape Services at UNO, said xeriscaping is being used more often on campus.

"We are starting to re-evaluate areas where turf lawns do not serve a purpose," he says. "The xeriscaped areas near Kayser and Arts and Sciences halls have not cost any money to maintain since they were put there 15 years ago."

Says Rodie: "So many students today see sustainability as integral to their lives. They know that there will be a high demand for jobs that take sustainability efforts into account and having those experiences here at UNO and in the Omaha community are going to be vital to them finding the best employment opportunities when they graduate."

— Nolan Searl, University Communications

Holy Water

WHETHER REPRESENTATIVE OF THE gods themselves or illustrating the holy state of major religious figures, water has played an integral role in worship throughout human history, as witnessed in artwork dating to antiquity.

Dr. Bridget Sandhoff, professor of art history in the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media, explains that water was an essential, primal element for many ancient cultures, including Egyptians, Greeks and Romans.

"These cultures did not consciously acknowledge water," she says, "only because it was so integral to them."

"It was the source of life facilitating trade and movement of people."

Early Mediterranean cultures struggled to depict water naturalistically, Sandhoff says, so they opted for abstracted and stylized representations—usually spiral motifs such as the "key pattern," based on the Meander River in Anatolia.

Water also was a major component of the Egyptian creation myth, in which a mound of Earth rose from a mass of water. The gods then self-generated on this mound.

Egyptians dedicated acts of worship to the Nile River, the body of water around which they structured their way of life. The river took on a duality of life and death, providing rich, fertile soil for planting crops, but also threatening life with unpredictable flooding and the potential to drown.

Sandhoff says this duality was embodied in artistic representations of an androgynous god — a male figure with pendulous breasts.

Greeks and Romans also ritualistically personified water in artwork, showcasing depictions of Poseidon, god of the sea, as well as nymphs and other deities. The Column of Trajan in Rome, which visually commemorates Emperor Trajan's victory in the Dacian Wars, features Roman soldiers crossing the Danube River, which is illustrated as a god-like human figure rising from the waters.

Water also was a crucial symbol in Christian artworks from the Renaissance period, says Dr. Amy Morris, professor of Art History in the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media. The element was more literally interpreted in these works, indicating cleanliness, godliness, youth, life and fertility.

"Most people living in the medieval and Renaissance world associated water with the sacrament of baptism," Morris says. "Baptism represented the moment when a person was initiated into the Church. It also meant dying to an old life and being reborn. Because St. John the Baptist baptized Jesus, images of his life frequently portrayed that moment."

Water also was closely associated with the Virgin Mary as a symbol of her purity, Morris says. Artists such as Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden frequently painted a clear glass vessel filled with water in close proximity to the Virgin, indicating her untainted state.

Leonardo da Vinci said, "In rivers, the water that you touch is the last of what has passed and the first of that which comes; so with present time." Much as the flow of the river simultaneously embodies past and present, locating and understanding symbolism in artwork offers insights into the religious practices of long-gone peoples and cultures, so as to better understand the current state of worship and spirituality.

— Noelle Lynn Blood, Communications Specialist,
College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media



Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci;
The Baptism of Christ; 1742-45; Public Domain.



Omaha U. biology students at the Glacier Creek Preserve lake in 1963.

Draining Resources at Glacier Creek

FOR THE MOST PART, Tom Bragg is all about saving the past at Glacier Creek Preserve, UNO's 320-acre outdoor classroom spreading north and west from 144th and State streets. To do so, however, he had to get rid of the present — specifically, two one-acre man-made ponds built there in the 1940s. The preserve today is a snapshot of what westward settlers might have seen when camping here in the late 1800s. But that didn't include a lake. Arthur and Antonietta Allwine, who in 1959 deeded land here to the biology department, had created the ponds by damming a spring-fed creek on the property. Students used the ponds for research and projects. Eventually, volunteer trees came to dominate the pond banks. That changed in 2000 when UNO, with support from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, drained the ponds over the course of a few days as the first step in recreating the stream channel. In 2001, the five acres of lowland that contained the ponds were graded to remove earthen dams and to recreate the historic creek channel. That year and the next the graded site was seeded to locally collected native lowland prairies species. Today Glacier Creek flows along its historic channel where the farm ponds once stood. Glacier Creek is fed by seeps emanating from glacial till, a type of soil developed from material deposited from glaciations. It is the only known prairie headwater creek representing those that once fed into the Missouri River and it is ranked as the highest quality creek of any type in Douglas County. Bragg, a UNO biology professor who has managed the preserve for 35 years, says "Replacing farm ponds with a prairie creek — running water replacing standing water — provides a glimpse into one aspect of our all-but-vanished historic prairie heritage."



Rain...er, Drought Dance

LAST SPRING THE COLLEGE of Education and College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media collaborated in a nationwide environmental initiative. The live-streamed, interactive event involved more than 1,200 students from 80 institutions.

Thirty dancers from UNO's The Moving Company, under the direction of Professor Josie Metal-Corbin, performed "Drought" for National Water Dance Day, an initiative designed to bring attention to the fragility of U.S. waterways.

The dance, choreographed by Jeff Curtis, took place on the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge. UNO's Ensemble 768, under the direction of Dr. Christie Beard, also participated, along with student dancers from South High School, Beveridge Magnet Middle School, the Omaha Academy of Ballet and the Adair Dance Academy.

Excerpts from the performance also were performed at the Joslyn Museum as part of the "Poseidon and the Sea" exhibition.

The next National Water Dance is slated for spring 2016.

— Nolan Searl, University Communications

Hydration Stations



SOMETIMES THE SIMPLEST ACTION contributes to a sustainable cause. Hydration stations are just one small way UNO is getting the water sustainability conversation started.

UNO began installing hydration stations on campus almost two years ago. The stations fill a bottle three times faster than a traditional fountain. A digital counter keeps track of the amount of plastic bottles saved.

Currently, hydration stations can be found in Roskens Hall, Kayser Hall, Library, Community Engagement Center, HPER, Eppley Administration building and Mammel Hall.

Rick Yoder, chief sustainability officer at the UNO College of Business Administration, says that hydration stations provide a great jumping off point to several sustainability threads: the importance of prevention over recycling; the power of purchasing for the planet; a personal action view that reinforces how small local actions have community impact, and a systems view with a water-energy nexus discussion.

Jean Waters, energy and environmental engineer for the Nebraska Business Development Center and chair of CBA's

Green Team, says recycling plastic bottles still requires a significant amount of energy.

"The energy associated with producing and shipping bottled water is 85 percent greater than for tap water," Waters says. "Even if the bottle is recycled, 65 percent more energy is used."

There is another benefit of drinking water from the hydration station: the taste.

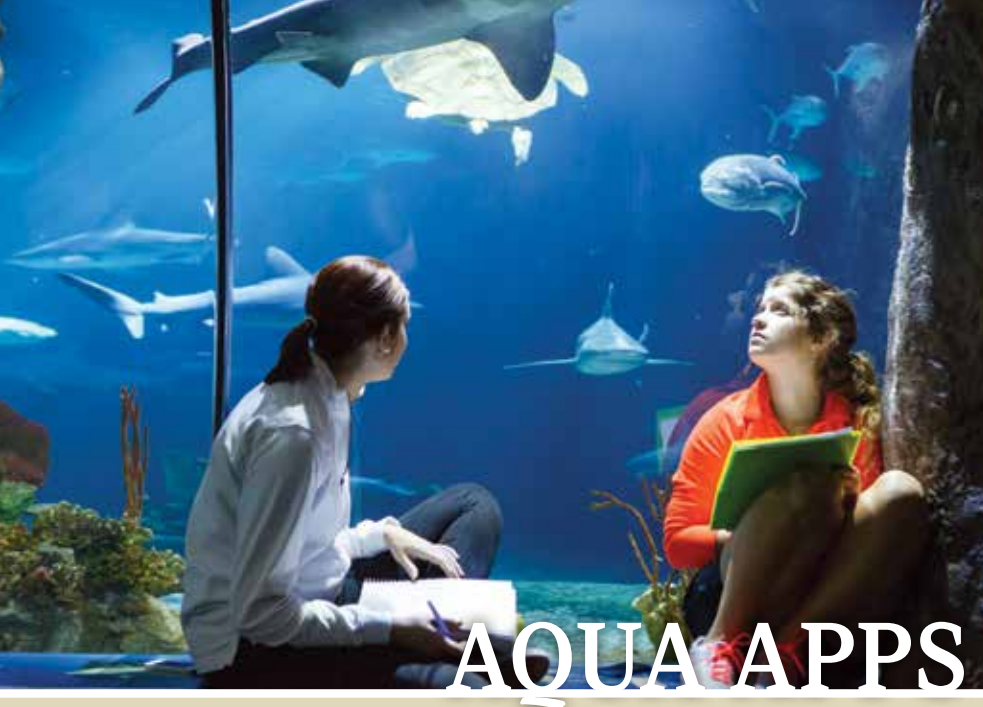
In 2013, the Green Team conducted a water taste test during CBA Welcome Week. Volunteers were asked to taste tap water, bottled water and filtered water from the hydration station. Out of 182 participants, 64 percent preferred tap water or filtered water over bottled water.

"The hydrations stations are an example of something that can help individuals down the path of sustainability," says Waters.

Yoder adds that the hydration stations are part of a larger picture that will promote sustainability on campus.

"The sustainability plan is to include a lot of new water technologies that will change people's behaviors."

— Nolan Searl, University Communications



AQUA APPS

*IS&T students help
area youth develop
mobile games for
Henry Doorly Zoo*

THERE ARE APPS FOR pretty much everything these days, so is it really any surprise that apps exist that can teach you about the lifespan of jellyfish or how coral defends itself against predators?

In 2014, five high schools and one junior high school partnered with students from UNO's College of Information Science & Technology to provide fun and educational mobile games that could be utilized by Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo.

"The zoo is one of Omaha's biggest attractions, and we had been looking for ways to collaborate, especially in the STEM arena," says

Zac Fowler, IT outreach coordinator for the College of IS&T. Two of the projects, "Coral Combat" and "Jumpin' Jellyfish," examined some of the ocean's most popular lifeforms.

In Coral Combat, designed by five students from Gretna High School, users act as a piece of coral that needs to defend itself against predators. Enemies spawn randomly so it's up to the user to fight the enemies using the coral's natural defenses.

Jumpin' Jellyfish, designed by Papillion Junior High School students, users tap the screen as fast and as many times as they can to get a jellyfish as high as it can go in the ocean. Reaching goals unlocks a variety of jellyfish facts.

More information about these and other apps is available at zoo.ist.unomaha.edu/final-projects.

"The students had to learn and practice technical communication and presenting their ideas," Fowler says. "They spent a lot of time with zoo staff getting feedback on their work."

UNO's IS&T students guided the student groups throughout the process.

"Our IS&T students were able to work out some pretty challenging technical concepts with the groups," Fowler says. "One group learned how to make HTTP calls to store and retrieve messages from the Internet, while another group learned how to manage crowd-sourced data to indicate how active an animal exhibit may be at any given time."

— Charley Reed, assistant editor



The UNO campus goes through a lot of water

97 Million Gallons and Counting

LAST YEAR, UNO USED 97 million gallons of water — enough to fill 147 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Where is all that water going? The answer is no secret. According to the published UNO Sustainability Master Plan, residence halls account for 39 percent of all water use, most on campus. Campus buildings use 27 percent, irrigation 21 percent and the central utility plant 12 percent.

Of all the buildings on campus, HPER uses the most water (700,000 to 800,000 gallons are needed to fill the pool). Next is Allwine Hall, the Milo Bail Student Center, Durham Science Center and Sapp Fieldhouse. Even the occasional water slide on campus is factored into usage.

Over the past decade, UNO has made strides in preventing overuse of water by implementing a number of changes to campus buildings and the land on which they sit. Part of the push is due to a 2008 University of Nebraska Board of Regents policy that mandates remodels and new construction across the system be LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certifiable.

UNO's Mammel Hall, opened in 2010, met those standards inside and out. Inside Mammel Hall are automatic sensors for

faucets and toilets, which help limit water flow. Outside are five bioretention garden plots that help absorb and retain water runoff from the building or from storm water.

"One of the problems with the combined sewer and storm water system is that heavy rain events can cause the treatment plant to be overwhelmed and raw sewage released into the river," says Jean Waters, program services manager at the Nebraska Business Development Center and part of the College of Business Administration's "Green Team."

"By retaining some water in the garden, the total volume going into the treatment plant is reduced."

Larry Morgan, assistant director of facilities management and planning, says UNO already has several devices in place to save water in residence halls and campus buildings. But with more than two-thirds of campus water usage coming from individuals, Morgan says the most important thing is changing people's behaviors.

"If we really want to see a reduction in water usage, whatever that is, it'll only change when everyone's patterns change," he says. "We need the help of the entire community."

— Nolan Searl, University Communications

Aquaponics project
named among nation's
best technology initiatives

Floating to the Top

LAST DECEMBER, UNO EARNED the nation's Presidential Award for Economic Opportunity. The recognition, part of the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, certified UNO's unrelenting commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement.

In addition to educating students, the university has committed itself to supporting the surrounding Omaha community — and it is a community in need.

According to data from Feed America and Live Well Nebraska, more than 34,000 children are “food insecure” in Omaha and more than half of those in food insecure areas rarely eat fresh fruit and vegetables.

To help stem the tide of such impoverishment, the UNO Service Learning Academy's P-16 Initiative introduced Aquaponics, an innovative farming technique that combines elements of aquaculture (raising fish) with hydroponics (growing plants in liquid) to grow food. To do so, the academy partnered UNO students

with middle school students from King Science and Technology Magnet Center Middle School and Whispering Roots, an Omaha-based food education nonprofit.

The technique recycles wastewater from fish tanks, pumping it into plant grow beds lined with clay that acts as a natural fertilizer for the plants. As the plants filter out nutrients, the resulting clean water is returned to the tank. The technique produces up to 30 percent more crops while using 90 percent less water than traditional growing methods.

After learning about Aquaponics at a 2013 Robert B. Daugherty Institute Water for Food conference, UNO Urban Studies Associate Professor Dr. Barbara Hewins-Maroney brought the idea back to campus.

Julie Dierberger, P-16 coordinator, says the aquaponics service learning project is an innovative way to pair students with sustainable agriculture and nuanced educational practices.

“These faculty members, teachers, and community partners came together genuinely and collaboratively to help make students, in this community, experts on cutting edge technology around water and sustainability.”

Throughout the project, students were taught how to raise seedlings, monitor pH levels and study the various impacts on the ecosystem depending on the different fish species used. Students were partnered with UNO students from a variety of backgrounds, including chemistry, biology and urban studies. The goal was to grow produce that could be donated to local food banks.

In 2014, Aquaponics was named one of the top 15 technology projects in the nation as part of the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow competition and received the Outstanding School Volunteer Program Award at the Nebraska First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards luncheon.

— Matthew Barros



Moving Water

NO, THAT'S NOT A giant Slip N Slide outside the Peter Kiewit Institute on UNO's Pacific Campus. The iconic sculpture is “Waterworks” by sculptor Alice Aycock. Made of aluminum, steel, concrete and ... water, it has graced PKI grounds since the building opened in 1999. But that's not its original home. Waterworks originally was installed outside the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 1993 as a Health Care Project Art Work.



UNO's business development center helps innovators find funding, partnerships

The Business of Water

FOR BIOLOGY PROFESSOR ALAN KOLOK, water quality is anything but a dry subject.

As director of UNO's Aquatic Toxicology Laboratory, Kolok leads research that explores the links between aquatic contamination and human health.

The conduit?

Fish.

"To test water for contaminants, aquatic animals are the perfect sensor," he says.

The challenge, however, is how to control the exposure in less-than-ideal environments — in an underground pipe or shallow stream, for example. Kolok needed a portable, inexpensive and versatile tool.

In summer 2011, he and a colleague came up with a promising design. After six months of fine-tuning and prototyping, the mini-mobile environmental monitoring unit — MMU for short — was born.

"We were able to make a system that's really simple but works fabulously," Kolok says.

Kolok then turned to the Nebraska Business Development Center to gauge MMU's potential for commercial success.

Housed in UNO's College of Business Administration in Mammel Hall, NBDC serves small businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators, supercharging economic growth statewide. The center gave Kolok information about funding strategies and business partnerships.

"We facilitate opportunities for partnerships to develop," says Marisol Uribe Rodriguez, director of

NBDC's technology commercialization program. That means connecting researchers and business owners to see if there's a match and potential to propel the project.

Right now, Kolok says, he's still lacking the research and development — as well as the cash — needed to really make a splash.

Rodriguez says one funding source for small businesses' R&D efforts is federal grants — to the tune of \$2.5 billion. But the application process is demanding and competitive. Applicants must show they have a long-term plan and market for their product and prove their innovations will have social benefits. Rodriguez juggles about 20 clients each month who rely on NBDC's expertise to improve their proposals.

Grant assistance

And Kolok isn't the only University of Nebraska scholar with water on his mind and an innovative idea to pitch.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln researchers Mehmet Can Vuran and Xin Dong developed an underground wireless sensor that monitors soil conditions to help farmers boost yields while conserving water.

Rodriguez helped Vuran and Dong, who formed Wildsense LLC, apply for a Small Business Innovation Research grant through the National Science Foundation. They secured Phase I funding for feasibility and prototype testing.

UNL soil and water chemist Steve Comfort achieved similar success. Comfort developed a simple, inexpensive method for cleaning contaminated

groundwater. He partnered with a former graduate student to form AirLift Environmental LLC and, with NBDC's guidance, received a Small Business Technology Transfer Phase I grant from the National Institutes of Health. Comfort recently applied for a Phase II grant, which funds up to \$1 million for a full research and development program.

Applying for these federal grants is a big deal, Rodriguez says, because of their complexity and the competition. In 2014, NBDC helped 80 small-business clients seeking to commercialize their high-tech innovations. More than half submitted SBIR/STTR applications, and 13 won federal awards totaling nearly \$3 million.

Through efforts like these, NBDC clients created or saved 1,061 jobs, helping Nebraska avoid more than \$2 million in unemployment compensation payouts, according to the center's 2014 annual report.

"Our goal is to increase the funding our state receives and continue helping innovators commercialize their technologies," Rodriguez says. The center hosted a special workshop at UNO this March to educate clients about the SBIR/STTR application process and is planning additional networking events.

As for Kolok, he still needs the right partnership, or a new research application, to move his innovation upstream. He says his target market is fairly small and hard to reach, but the product does have utility.

"I have four units in the lab just waiting for the right project to come along," he says.

— Chelsea Bailey
Director of Marketing and Social Media, CBA

Looking for Leaking

ON A CAMPUS AS large as UNO's, all those drip, drip, drips of a sprinkler head or leaks around toilets can add up to serious water waste.

To avoid possible leaks, a series of sensors are being installed in the irrigation system that will feed information to a computer program that can alert facilities staff of a problem.

Lowell Neuhaus, manager of Landscape Services at UNO, says once the system is in place, his team can get a baseline reading for how much water is used in each area of campus. When that amount spikes in a particular area — 5 percent or more beyond average — the system will send out an alarm.

"The only reason that it would go over is that we have a [sprinkler] head off and it's shooting water like a geyser or I got a zone line break somewhere causing a problem," Neuhaus says.

Currently, the only way to identify water leaks or other problems in the system is if someone visually sees it and reports it.

"Right now it's just campus security going around and telling me, or it's us sending two people to go to the zone and check each head, which is very time-consuming," Neuhaus says. "This should help quite a bit with those kinds of things."

Larry Morgan, assistant director of facilities management and planning, says UNO has very few leaks inside campus buildings and those that do happen mostly come from faucets that just aren't turned off tightly enough.

"We get a lot of those types of calls, mostly because people just don't stop to check," he says. "But it's an easy fix."

"If a leak goes unchecked for too long, it can cause a lot of damage. Better to address it before it can lead to more problems down the road."

— Charley Reed, assistant editor

Bioretention Garden

WITH EVERY SUMMER STORM comes the possibility that homes and streets may flood. For Steve Rodie, UNO's Urban Sustainability Center director, the solution isn't building bigger sewers.

It's building gardens.

In 2012, Rodie helped oversee construction of a new bioretention garden on the UNO campus. Bioretention gardens are landscape projects similar to but more complex than rain gardens. They are designed to avoid storm water pollution and run-off by collecting the water in a way that supports plant life.

UNO's garden received international recognition in 2014 as one of Storm Water Solution's 10 best projects for 2014.

"The project has successfully accomplished all of the goals set for it," Rodie says. "It manages thousands of gallons of storm water from the Welcome Center roof and surrounding landscape, provides excellent learning opportunities for design and plants courses, serves as a beautiful and sustainable 'front door' to campus, as well as a healthy habitat for butterflies, insects, birds and people alike."

Rodie, also a professor of environmental studies at UNO, has used the garden as a site for his students to learn about Nebraska's native plant population and how to create a positive ecosystem for different types of plants and grasses.

The project was designed by Rodie and Big Muddy Workshop and includes plants from the Papio Valley Nursery, the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and Great Plains Nursery.

Rodie received grant funding from the Nebraska Forest Service and City of Omaha to design and build the garden while UNO maintains the garden. Discussions are underway to replicate the project across the state of Nebraska. That includes bioretention garden is planned for the Baxter Arena, which will open in October 2015.

— Charley Reed, assistant editor



Whatever Floats Your Boat

Looking to get away? UNO's Outdoor Venture Center can help you get there — even if by boat (OK, canoe or kayak).

The OVC offers outdoor adventure opportunities every semester, those ranging from one-day getaways that teach basic survival skills to 10-day excursions far from civilization.

This summer that includes a trip north to Wisconsin's Apostle Islands. Participants will paddle between the inside islands and spend two evenings on each of the Sand, Oak and Stockton islands. Participants will explore sea caves and the islands' many renovated lighthouses. The only things participants need to provide for the trip? Food and Clothing.

"That's the general outline of all of our trips," says Assistant Director Joseph Hanseling. "We'll provide the nuts and bolts to make it happen. You feed yourself and clothe yourself and you can come along on the trip."

UNO student Ben Prescott has worked for OVC for almost three years and says his experiences will last him a lifetime.

"I have gotten to go on trips and I've met people here that I feel will be friends for the rest of my life," Prescott says. "It is a great community. Overall it's a great place and I've become a better student because of this place."

OVC also offers trips closer to home and other water-based activities. This March that included a two-week stand-up paddleboard workshop in the HPER Building's Olympic-sized pool.

UNO students, faculty and staff can also rent equipment from OVC, including tents, sleeping bags climbing gear and other equipment. Hanseling says the most popular rentals are aquatic items like canoes, kayaks and paddles, which rent for \$16 to \$20, depending on size. OVC also provides whatever is needed to transport the vessels.



Leahy, Da Silva and assistant baseball coach Evan Porter.



Former Mav volleyball player Chelsea Snyder with Foiles and Claussen.

More than 600 attend Maverick Awards Banquet

Honoring their Own

SENIORS JENNA FOILES AND Felipe da Silva won UNO Athletics career achievement awards, capping the Maverick Awards Banquet held April 27.

More than 600 people, the largest gathering for the sixth annual event, turned out at Embassy Suites La Vista to see 11 awards presented.

Foiles, from the UNO swimming & diving team, earned the Connie Claussen Senior Career Achievement Award recognizing outstanding career athletic, academic and community service achievement of a female student-athlete. Da Silva from the UNO men's soccer team, won the Don Leahy Senior Career Achievement Award recognizing a male athlete with the same sterling career at UNO. Da Silva became

the first male student-athlete other than a basketball or hockey player to win the award.

Junior Haley Shelton of the women's soccer team earned the ACE Award, given to student-athletes who complete their time at UNO with a career 4.0 grade-point average. The ACE — Academic Career Achievement — has been presented two straight years, both times to a women's soccer player.

Sophomore Mikaela Shaw earned the Marian Ivers Female Athlete of the Year Award. Shaw won the Newcomer of the Year Award as a freshman. Ryan Massa was named Male Athlete of the Year after his record-setting season in goal for the UNO hockey team.

Junior Kelley Wollak of the volleyball team earned the Bob Kruger Commitment Award for outstanding community service.

Kat Barrow of the softball team earned the Dr. John Langan Phoenix Award for outstanding achievement in the face of adversity. Omaha track & field athlete Stephanie Ahrens was named the Female Newcomer of the Year while Tyler Vesel of the hockey team was Male Newcomer of the Year. Diane Banderas of the volleyball team and Justin Parizek of the hockey team earned Maverick Muscle Awards, sponsored by Pharmaceutical Technologies Inc., recognizing consistent achievement and motivation in the weight room.

Mike'l Severe of the Omaha World-Herald hosted the event.

Running, Walking to \$103,000

A record number of runners and walkers took part in the 2015 Claussen-Leahy Run & Walk April 25 at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village.

More than 1,950 participants took part in the 10K and 5K runs and 2K walk, raising more than \$103,000 for scholarships and program enhancements for all 15 UNO teams.

The Run & Walk, now in its fourth year, is an outgrowth of the former UNO Women's Walk, which began in 1986 as a way to raise money for women's athletics at UNO. Since then, the events combined have raised more than \$4.6 million for UNO Athletics.

Bill and Colleen Barstow of Aksarben Cinema, a corporate partner of UNO Athletics, chaired the 2015 Run & Walk. The event, in its third year at Aksarben Village, began with an 800 meter Kids Race and Elders Walk on Aksarben Drive.

UNO student-athletes also conducted mini sports clinics for all Kids Race participants. Members of UNO's athletic teams, athletic department staff and UNO faculty cheered on runners and walkers. KETV NewsWatch 7 meteorologist Matt Serwe served as the emcee with UNO head volleyball Coach Rose Shires.





More Cowbell, Please

ALL THE EXCITEMENT WAS supposed to come next season when the UNO hockey team christens the newly-named Baxter Arena.

But the Mavericks gave fans plenty to cheer about in 2014-15, ending the season with their highest ranking ever after a berth in the Frozen Four.

The Mavericks were ranked fourth in the final USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine poll and in the USCHO.com poll. That came after their first-ever appearance in the Frozen Four in Boston. UNO lost to eventual national champion Providence 4-1 in the semifinal opener.

UNO had advanced to the Frozen Four with a 4-0 win over RIT in the Midwest Regional finals. That followed a 4-1 win over Harvard in the regional opener.

UNO ended its season with a record of 20-13-6, its third 20-win season during Dean Blais' six-year tenure as head coach. It was a school record for fewest losses in a season.

UNO took third place in the National Collegiate Hockey Conference, finishing with a league mark of 12-8-4-3. The Mavs were one of six NCHC teams in ranked in the top 10 in the USCHO.com poll.

The Mavericks begin the 2015-16 campaign Oct. 9 and 10 at Minnesota State followed by games Oct. 16 and 17 at Vermont. They play their first game in the Baxter Arena Oct. 23 against Air Force.

Taking a Dirt Shower

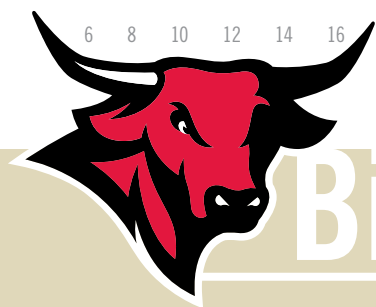


Water — at least a severe lack of it — played a factor in at least two Omaha University football games during the drought-stricken 1930s. In 1936 the then-Cardinals played Iowa State Teachers College to a 7-7 tie during a dust storm in Omaha. "The game was exceptionally clean as far as team play was concerned," reported *the Gateway*, "but all players left the field covered with dust."

It was more of the same in 1937 when OU beat Wayne 19-6 at Benson Stadium. According to *the Gateway*:

"At times the dust was blowing so thick that spectators could hardly distinguish the two teams. Players that came off the field were hardly recognizable and gave the impression of minstrel players who had just run through a shower."





Bits of the Bull

New Members — Pursuit of Summit, Division I Titles Begins For Mavericks

Like children in a long car ride, the UNO Mavericks have been wearing out the phrase, “Are we there yet?”

Finally, they are.

After a four-year wait, the Mavericks at long last have arrived at full Division I status, eligible to compete for all Summit League and NCAA championships after playing through the reclassification process mandated by the NCAA. In August, UNO’s fall teams will be the first to usher in this new era in UNO Athletics, competing in men’s and women’s soccer, cross country, men’s and women’s golf, and volleyball.

None are strangers to Division I competition, having played such teams regularly since 2011. Now, however, they play for crowns.

Following is a preview of what’s to come.

Men’s Soccer

The 2014 season was a year of firsts for the UNO men’s soccer team. The Mavericks set the program record for most wins (10) and clinched a share of their first Summit League title.

Entering 2015, Coach Jason Mims has the bar set even higher. He is looking to secure the first Summit League tournament berth in program history and a shot at the NCAA tournament.

“Last year was a great season,” Mims says.

“We have set standards for our program to have double-digit wins, winning the conference and playing a challenging schedule. The goal is to make the program stronger as a whole

and the only way to do that is to put ourselves in a position to make a run at a conference championship every year.”

UNO returns eight players who started at least nine games last season, including All-Summit League First-Team midfielder Mark Moulton and a pair of second-team performers in Felipe da Silva and Emir Alihodzic. Goalkeeper Joseph Ghitis and defender Michael Jaime earned spots on the Summit League All-Newcomer team. Logan Mendez, the program’s all-time assists leader, had a goal and six assists as a junior last year.

The Mavericks return both goalies from a year ago in Ghitis and Josh Christiansen.

Ghitis started all nine games he saw action in and surrendered 10 goals while turning away 28 shots. Christiansen started eight games and totaled 29 saves while giving up four goals.

UNO must replace three starters from last season’s squad, including the program’s all-time leading goal scorer, Vance Rookwood. Rookwood scored 19 goals and had 45 points in his four-year career with the Mavericks. Moulton, who ranked fifth nationally with 10 assists, will be asked to replace some of those goals. Mims also has added a potential scoring threat in transfer Kevin Correa from New Mexico. Correa, a 6-foot-1 forward, was an NSCAA Third Team All-American after scoring 13 goals and adding six assists while playing for Saint Francis (N.Y.) in 2013.

Besides the always-challenging Summit League slate, the Mavericks also will have contests against several quality non-conference

opponents. The 2015 season gets going Friday, Aug. 22, with an exhibition against PAC-12 member Washington. Last season, the Huskies advanced to the third round of the NCAA Tournament.

Opening weekend features matches against Kansas City (Aug. 28) and Pacific (Aug. 30). Another NCAA tournament qualifier, Cal State Irvine, visits Omaha Sept. 6. UNO’s home Summit League schedule this season includes Fort Wayne (Oct. 3), Western Illinois (Oct. 10) and Oral Roberts (Oct. 28).

Women’s Soccer

Head Coach Don Klosterman and an experienced UNO women’s soccer team will look to improve on a 2014 season that saw the Mavericks go 5-12-2 overall, including a 3-3-2 mark in the Summit League.

The Mavericks return 11 starters from last season. Leading the cast of returnees is Summit League Defensive Player

of the Year Hannah Wampler and Summit League First-Team selection Chelsi Rohloff, both seniors. Wampler led a UNO defense that had a 1.65 goals-against average last season while scoring four goals to boost the UNO attack. Rohloff led the Summit League in scoring a season ago with 10 goals. She assisted on four others for 24 points.

“We are moving into a new phase for our program now that we are eligible for postseason play,” Klosterman says. “For our seniors, it’s their last chance to make an impact on the program by competing for the first championship now that the transition is complete. We have put in a lot of work over the past two years to get to here.”



Juniors Ava Doetsch, Lauren Lawler and Morgan Westenburg join Wampler to give the Mavericks stability on the back line. UNO also returns three goalkeepers who saw action last season. Junior Haley Shelton, a converted defender, set a program record last season with 101 saves after being pressed into service due to injuries to both Katlyn Schochenmaier and Meaghan Clark.



The Mavericks will look to find another goal scorer to complement Rohloff. Juniors Kyla Booker, and Courtney Neville each had a goal and three assists last season while fellow junior Layla Ashouri had a goal. Sophomore Lydia Holtmann earned Summit League All-Freshman honors with a goal and three assists a year ago. Center midfielder Marquette Pick returns for her senior season. Pick played more minutes than any other Maverick midfielder and had six shots on goal.

UNO opens the 2015 season with a road game against Iowa on Aug. 23 then opens the home schedule on Aug. 28 against Northern Iowa. Other notable non-conference home matches are against Drake (Sept. 11), Colorado State (Sept. 18) and Missouri State (Sept. 22). The Mavericks open Summit League play at North Dakota State Oct. 2. Omaha hosts Summit League foes IUPUI (Oct. 9), Western Illinois (Oct. 16) and South Dakota (Oct. 18).

Volleyball

The name of the game for the UNO volleyball team is veteran leadership in 2015. The Mavericks are prepared like never before, as five of its six seniors bring starting experience to the lineup: middle blockers Megan Schmale and Diane Banderas, outside



hitter Kelley Wollak, rightside hitter Michaela Schimmer and libero Kimberly Bailey. Omaha also returns a pair of starters in sophomore setter Sydney O'Shaughnessy and sophomore outside hitter Mackenzie Horkey, both of whom were named to the 2014 Summit League All-Freshman Team.



"Having all our starters back allows us to build on the experience, drive and competitiveness that we established last season," says Head Coach Rose Shires. "We've made great strides as a program, and having a senior-laden team couldn't have come at a better time. Everyone has court experience and knows what to expect in the Summit League, and now we're ready to make that push to win a conference tournament. "Blocking will be a strength again for us, but there's also been big development in our passing. Our middle hitters will be more involved in our offense now, and our offensive output has improved. We're just as solid a blocking team as we've ever been, but now we're coupling that with our ability to score."

The Mavericks proved to be on the upswing in 2014, doubling their win total from the previous season. They picked up one of the most significant road victories in school history at the Iowa State Challenge, defeating an SEC foe with a 3-0 sweep of Tennessee.

"There were a lot of points in 2014 that propelled us to the next level," Shires says. "We played some thrilling five-set matches against tough opponents. The Tennessee match in particular was meaningful with the opportunity to play an SEC team. We played to our strengths against their weaknesses and were able to out-block, out-hit and out-play them that night. To beat Tennessee in three was huge for our team, but it was also a confidence booster that helped us succeed the rest of the year."

The 2015 season will see Omaha have two homes as it closes the Sapp Fieldhouse era and moves to Baxter Arena — all with a new \$70,000 TeraFlex court identical to the one the U.S. Olympic Team trains on. Shires sees it as a marker of how the university has evolved and grown in her storied, 26-year coaching career at UNO, which has included more than 450 victories and the 1996 Division II national championship.

"We have this beautiful, new 8,000-seat facility to look forward to as we finish the season," Shires says. "We've won many championships over the years at Sapp Fieldhouse, but the genuine excitement of moving into an amazing new home facility is so special. It's building enthusiasm for our volleyball program, our athletic department and our campus, and that's really exciting to see."

UNO opens the 2015 campaign Aug. 28-29, facing Seton Hall, UNLV and Central Arkansas at the UNLV Tournament in Las Vegas.

Cross Country

The Mavericks have several runners who will be thrust into more prominent roles when the season begins in September. Gone are graduated seniors Ashley Kildow, who led the Mavericks in all seven events last season and was a second-team All-Summit selection, Kristin Rogers, Katarina Zarudnaya and MiKayla Peck.

"It will definitely be a building process," says Head Coach Chris Richardson. "Luckily those four have led by example and have helped our young runners grow quickly. I am excited to see who will step up and take on leadership roles."

The Mavericks return a group of runners who all scored last season and some of whom will be their core for the next couple of years. Senior Perla Gutierrez and juniors Kristen Carmichael, Catherine Davison and Karo Garcia all should play prominent roles. Sophomore Alyssa Averhoff and Kayla Sabotin also should benefit from a full year competing in both cross country and track & field to help the Mavericks' pack times this fall.

In addition, UNO has three incoming freshmen committed and three more who could come to campus in the fall.

Bits of Bull *Continued*

The Mavericks will compete in meets at Nebraska and South Dakota State among others before the Summit League Championship in Brookings, S.D. in November. NCAA regionals are scheduled for Madison, Wis., later that month.

Men's Golf

The Mavericks enter the 2015-16 season without three cornerstones of their four-year transition to Division I. Original team members Karl Krieser, Alex Holtan and Taylor Sidzyik all graduated in the spring, making the Mavericks a relatively young bunch.

"It was a fun ride with (last year's) seniors," says Seth Porter, men's golf head coach. "A player like Karl is virtually impossible to replace, but with his work ethic, he set the example and the other guys picked up on that. I expect the guys who are coming back to continue from where last year's seniors left off."



The Mavericks will benefit from the return of junior Mitch Ryan, who sat out as a redshirt last year. As a sophomore, he was UNO's

third-leading scorer and could start the new season as its No. 1 golfer. Sophomore Phillip Baumberger was UNO's fourth-leading scorer in 2014-15 and also could challenge for the top spot.

Sophomore Caleb Haight came on strong at the end of last season and, along with Baumberger, played in the Summit League Championship.

"It was huge for us to have two freshmen playing in the conference tournament last spring," Porter says. "That will pay big dividends for us down the road."

Porter also is upbeat about the five incoming freshmen who will join the team this fall.

"They'll all get a chance to compete," he says. "They are guys with the drive and determination, but the numbers will determine who plays."

"It will be exciting to have the ability to play beyond the conference tournament now that our

transition is over. And we will be competitive. We might not win, because there are some very good teams in the Summit League, but we'll be in the hunt."

The Mavericks open the season with their own tournament, the UNO Invitational, Sept. 14-15 at ArborLinks in Nebraska City. They'll also play in tournaments at South Dakota, SIUE and Drake before finishing the fall season at Old Dominion.

Women's Golf

The UNO women's golf team lost just one player from last season. Graduated senior Sophie Peters was the Mavericks' top scorer in the 2015 Summit League Championship, where they finished sixth.

"Overall, we finished where we should have," says 13-year head coach Tim Nelson, whose team had been picked to finish last among nine teams in the Summit League pre-season coaches poll. "With the new players we have coming in, I think we could climb up two or three spots."

Key returners for the Mavericks include senior Katie Kesti and sophomore Megan Vetrovsky. Kesti was UNO's leading scorer as a sophomore and was just behind Peters in scoring last season. She posted three top-five finishes. Vetrovsky was third in team scoring as a freshman and, along with Peters and Kesti, was one of three Mavericks with a scoring average under 80.



"I'm expecting a competitive team," Nelson says. "With three good players coming in, we've got a chance to move closer to the top teams in our league, like Denver, Oral Roberts and South Dakota State."

The Mavericks will play fall tournaments at Nebraska, South Dakota, Denver and Oral Roberts. They'll also play in Creighton's home tournament at Oak Hills Country Club where they too practice.

— By Dave Ahlers, Bonnie Ryan and Shad Beam — Omaha Athletics Communications



FAST FACTS

- It takes 12,000 to 15,000 gallons of water to create a 1-inch sheet of ice.
- The entire procedure to create ice takes three to four days.
- Competition ice is one-inch thick. The community ice sheet ranges from 1.25 to 1.5 inches thick.
- The floor of both rinks is gray concrete. The ice becomes white after a powder is applied to freezing water.
- A zamboni holds 277 gallons of water.
- To prepare for basketball and volleyball games an insulated floor cover is laid atop the ice, then the basketball or volleyball floor. The volleyball surface is a \$70,000 TeraFlex court identical to the one on which the U.S. Olympic Team trains. The transformation should take two to three hours.

Icing on the Cake

AS JUST ABOUT ANY UNO hockey player will tell you, not all ice is created equal. Boston U. and Western Michigan have good ice, say a few Mavericks.

“Colder arenas in colder climates,” says freshman defenseman Joel Messner.

As for bad ice, the worst of all might have been right in UNO’s backyard when the Mavs played North Dakota in an outdoor game at TD Ameritrade Park in February 2013. The temperature hit 49 degrees that afternoon and by the scheduled faceoff, puddles of water were everywhere on the temporary rink. The start was delayed more than two hours until the surface could refreeze. But that only helped a bit.

“The sun was beating down on it all day,” recalls junior forward Tanner Lane, “When it came to our game, the ice was bumpy, slushy and soft.”

How to make Ice

Don’t expect anything close to that in the newly named Baxter Arena that will host its first hockey game Oct. 23 when UNO plays Air Force.

Also home to UNO basketball and volleyball, the arena will feature two sheets of ice.

**The harder the ice,
the faster you can skate
and the more glide you have.**

One is guaranteed for community use at least 33 percent of the time and will support youth hockey, curling, figure skating and more. The Mavericks will skate on the competition sheet in the main arena, an NHL-standard rink 200 by 85 feet.

Getting the arena and ice ready for their debut is the responsibility of Michael Cera, associate athletic director and general manager of the arena, and Ryan

Weiss, director of operations.

Making the ice is no simple feat. It starts with 10 to 12 miles of piping. On top of that are two slabs of concrete — a “warm” slab and “cold” slab. Compressors pump ammonia through the piping to chill the floor to 16 degrees. After that, a thin layer of water is sprayed. Next, a white powder is applied to the surface. Another layer of water is sprayed, then lines and logos are applied. Templates for NHL lines help paint the goal-crease lines, circles and face-off dots.

A final layer of water is applied and allowed to freeze until the ideal skating surface, about 1 inch thick, has been created. The entire process takes three to four days.

Weiss will do a “black ice test” prior to installing the first competition sheet of ice to see how fast and how well the surface freezes.

Smooth Skating

Maintaining a stable temperature throughout the arena and regulating humidity is critical if the ice is to be as hard as the Mavericks want it.

“If the ice is too soft, you dig in more, it’s harder to glide and it’s more difficult to gain speed,” Messner says.

That sometimes was the case at CenturyLink Center, which UNO shared with the Creighton basketball team.

“Let’s say we played a game the same day they had a game, the ice would be pretty soft and harder to play on,” Messner says. “If Creighton was away or there was a break in events, the ice was harder and better quality.”

On site since June 2014, Cera and Weiss are excited for the grand opening in October.

“We couldn’t have asked for a better team to work with,” Cera says. “The leadership team has been extremely supportive of the project and this is one of the smoother projects we’ve been on.”

Hopefully, the same will be said of the ice.

— By Kimberly Bailey,
UNO Alumni Association Communications Intern



Courtesy of HDR Architecture

A FAMILIAR NAME WAS REVEALED AT A JUNE 3 CEREMONY TO GRACE UNO’S NEW ARENA — BAXTER ARENA.

Baxter Auto secured the arena naming rights through a \$400,000 annual value for a renewable 10-year term.

“The partnership between our family and UNO goes back to 1957 when our father, Tal Anderson, was a baseball and basketball player,” Baxter Auto President Mickey Anderson said. “UNO and

Omaha are special places and we are excited that Baxter Arena will serve as a venue for athletics, graduations, concerts and community events.”

Tal Anderson worked at the original Johnny Baxter during his time as a UNO student, eventually becoming the company’s owner in 1984. He received the UNO Alumni Association’s highest honor, the Citation for Alumni Achievement, in 1997. He passed away in 2009 after battling leukemia for more than a year.

Daughter Angie Quinn also is part of the family owned and locally operated business that today employs more than 1,700 people across 21 dealerships in Omaha, Lincoln and Kansas

City. Baxter Auto offers new and used cars from 19 different car manufacturers and is one of Nebraska’s largest employers.

“We are extremely pleased to partner with a business, and a family, that has been so influential to UNO and the Omaha community for the past 60 years,” NU Regent Howard Hawks said. “We could not have made Baxter Arena a reality without key supporters like the Anderson family.”

Baxter Arena will seat 7,500 people and officially open with the first UNO hockey home game Friday, Oct. 23, as UNO takes on Air Force.

Baxter Arena

UNO Professor
Bruce Johansen's daily
regimen in the HPER
pool has taken him...

One Year & Halfway Around the World

*By Mark Joekel,
assistant director marketing & external relations, Wellness Center*



Take a dip into the Wellness Center pool most any morning and you're likely to hear the faint sound of clanking metal under water. For decades, that sound has become as familiar as water to the pool's swimmers, student lifeguards and aquatic staff.

At first, some newcomers mistake it for a possible maintenance issue with the pool. But for those who have been around long enough they know what that sound means — Bruce Johansen is doing his morning laps.

A research professor in the School of Communication and in Native American Studies, Johansen (*left*) is an avid user of the Wellness Center pool, swimming laps almost every day it's open. All while wearing his trademark chain necklaces and other accessories.

Johansen has been doing so since 1982, swimming an estimated 300 days each year for almost an hour and 2,000 meters per session. That's more than 9,000 hours —

a full year in the water, and almost 12,000 miles — halfway around the world.

That doesn't even include the hours and miles logged during his days as a high school state swimming medalist in his native Washington.

"I find it relaxing and good exercise," Johansen says. "Over the years I've got to know the other regulars and the lifeguards. The HPER pool has a good temperature for distance swimming, too. Well...most days."

The HPER building renovation a few years back threw him a couple of curves.

POOL POINTS

- Built in 1980 as part of original HPER building construction
- The pool takes two days to fill, one day for chemicals to stabilize and three days for the temperature to stabilize
- The pool drains in eight hours.
- Renovated with new temperature control, filters and other technology during 2010 building renovation.
- At 50 meters long and 6 lanes wide is only indoor Olympic-size pool in Nebraska.
- Holds roughly 700,000 to 800,000 gallons of water — 4,000 times what's needed to fill most backyard pools.
- Served as a training facility for Olympic Swim Trials in 2008, 2012, and again in 2016.
- Home of UNO athletics, Marian swim team, Girls Inc. and other organizations throughout the year.
- Offers youth swim lessons, private lessons, lifeguard certifications, masters swimming and open swimming.
- Battleship is an annual homecoming event.

"There were times when the old technology didn't mesh well with the new technology," he says. "One day I arrived to find the pool down about three feet and dropping fast. Another time the heat had pumped the water up to about 88 degrees. Some things are just bound to happen over the course of time."

That's 35 years, to be exact. The 50-meter HPER pool opened with the building's start in 1980 and remains Nebraska's only indoor Olympic-size pool and one of the few in the Midwest. Thousands of swimmers have plunged into its waters for competitive swim meets, recreational use, lessons, camps, practices and even "battleship" contests by students in canoes.

Swimming in Omaha has grown in popularity in recent years, thanks in part to the city hosting the Olympic swim trials in 2008 and 2012 (and once more in 2016). During the trials, UNO's HPER pool served as a "cool down" area for Olympians after they qualified for the summer games.

"It was pretty surreal seeing world class athletes like Aaron Peirsol and other Olympic athletes use our pool," says Pat Philippi, assistant director for Aquatics and Fitness Instruction.

"It's events like these and the Mutual of Omaha competition that really show how great the

facility is and how lucky UNO is to have it."

Most HPER pool users aren't Olympians, of course. The pool is a great example of the Campus recreation motto "something for everyone." Regulars include UNO's own Division I team and swimmers from Omaha Marian High School and Girls Inc. It's also open to Campus Recreation members for the rigorous masters program offering participants personal training early each morning. The pool also is used for youth swim lessons, private lessons, lifeguard certifications and various programming and special events throughout the year. UNO Professor Mike Messerole also has his Adaptive PE class use the pool as they work with the Special Olympics swimming team.

Of course, any campus rec member with a swimming suit can take a dip during open swim hours.

Those who time it right just might hear Bruce Johansen ... going for gold.

For a complete list of all the programming and events offered through campus recreation visit



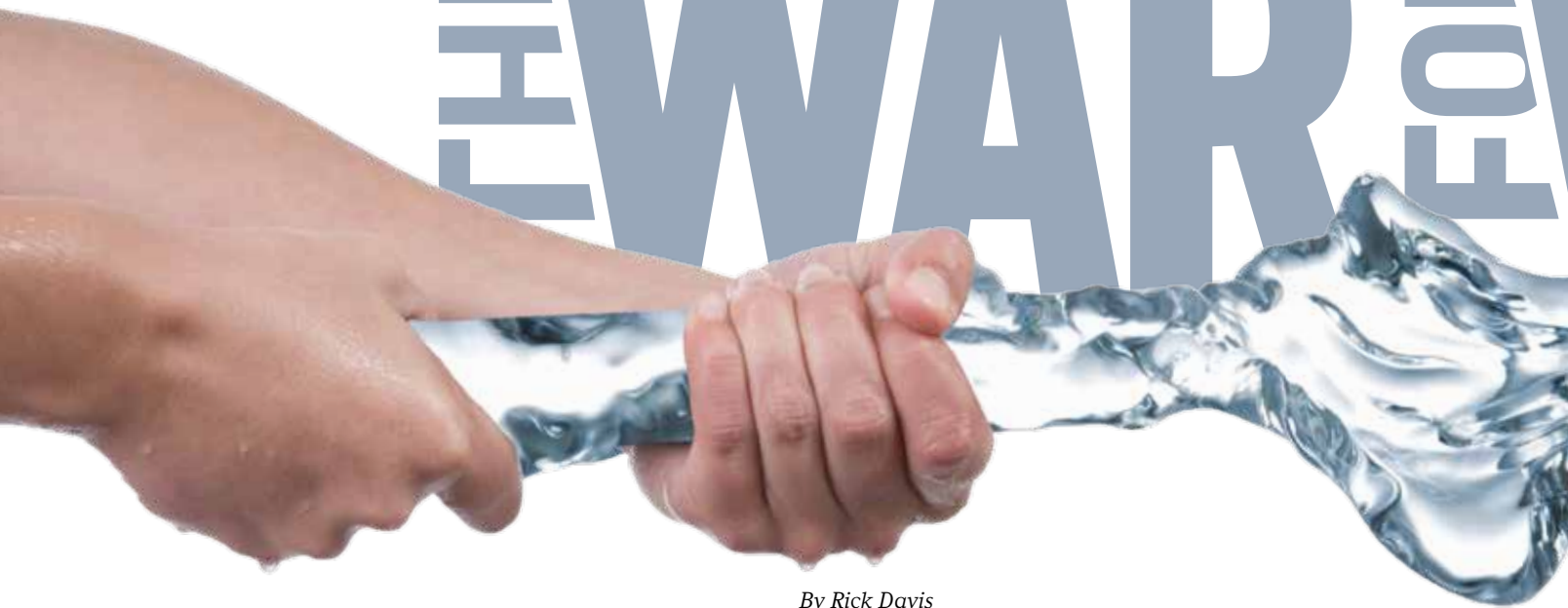
SWIMMING

- Swimming for an hour can burn up to 650 calories, which is more than an hour of walking or biking.
- The breaststroke is the slowest stroke. Freestyle is the fastest.
- Only 35 percent of Americans know how to swim.

BATTLESHIP



THE WAR FOR



By Rick Davis

*It's more precious than oil
or gold.*

*Without it,
life ceases to exist.*

*But who controls it?
And for what purposes?*

*Those questions
increasingly put water
at the center of conflict —
globally, nationally, locally.*

CONSIDER ETHIOPIA. In 2013 it began diverting the Blue Nile for construction of what will be Africa's largest hydroelectric dam. Ethiopia needs the power to support its rising economy.

But Egypt, Ethiopia's downstream neighbor, relies on the Nile River for almost all its water needs. And the Blue Nile is a major feeder.

Tensions escalated. Mohamed Morsi, then Egypt's president, declared "all options were on the table" and that "Egyptian blood" would substitute for every drop of lost water.

CLOSER TO HOME

Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas have been in a long-running dispute over water rights and usage regarding the Republican River, which flows through all three states. The conflict went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in February upheld a recommendation that Nebraska pay Kansas \$5.5 million in damages.

In small-town Mitchell, Neb., in the state's panhandle, a group of residents is rallying against an energy company's plan to inject water used in oil and gas production back into the ground, in an inactive oil well there.

These and other conflicts highlight the struggles over water between competing interests — which can include energy companies, farmers and ranchers, public water utilities, recreationalists, environmentalists and wildlife advocates.

In addition, there are the issues of global climate change and water contamination affecting and straining availability of this critical natural resource.

It all adds up to a complicated web that can strain relationships and boil over into conflict.

WATER



A GLOBAL, NATIONAL & LOCAL ISSUE



Patrick McNamara

“Almost everywhere there are some water issues,” says Patrick McNamara, a visiting political science professor who earned his doctorate in public administration from UNO in 2007 and who studies international water conflicts.



Whether they are issues of quantity of water or quality of water. Water is a hot topic everywhere.

McNamara’s research has focused on India. Under a 1960 agreement, India and its neighbor Pakistan share water from six glacier-fed rivers in the disputed territory of Kashmir.

The geopolitics can be complex, but at the local level, the story can sound very familiar.

“Farmers want water for agriculture, factory owners want water for industry, villagers want water to drink and environmentalists want water for wildlife,” McNamara says. “You can take that conflict and plop it down in almost any region of the world where scarce water resources are being competed over by different users.”

McNamara currently is working with a team at UNO, funded by the U.S. Institute of Peace and the Lounsbery Foundation, to examine transboundary water issues among Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan, looking at shared rivers. The team includes Tom Gouttierre, director of the Center for Afghanistan Studies and dean of International Studies and Programs at UNO; Jack Shroder, emeritus professor of geography and geology and

research coordinator for the Center for Afghanistan Studies; and Sher Jan Ahmadzai, coordinator for education and outreach programs for the Center for Afghanistan Studies.

Afghanistan and Pakistan both have threatened to build dams that would restrict water flow into each other’s country.

Afghanistan has had the additional pressure of dealing with sabotage from terrorist groups.

“The Kunar River Dam Project has had long delays because of security concerns,” McNamara says.

While the challenges are many and varied, the payoff for success can be great.

“Some estimates are that 40 percent of all populations in the world live in areas that have transboundary waters — shared waters between different countries,” McNamara says. “If we can succeed in bringing together water experts across these dangerous borders, we might have a model that can be applied in a lot of other places in the world.”

Perhaps even in the United States.

The U.S. and, closer to home, states such as Nebraska, are not immune to water conflicts.

The Republican River basin covers almost 25,000 square miles, from Colorado through Nebraska and finally on to Kansas. A 1943 compact governs use of the river's water giving Colorado 11 percent, Nebraska 49 percent and Kansas 40 percent. Kansas accused Nebraska of using more than its percentage, primarily for irrigation, leaving it with less water downstream.



Sara McClure

"There is very, very heavy pressure on the water in Nebraska," says Sara McClure, a 2010 graduate of UNO's Master's of Public Administration (MPA) program and director of major gifts for the Nebraska chapter of The Nature Conservancy, the world's largest conservation organization.

McClure emphasizes she is not a scientist, but her role does require her to keep abreast of water issues.

"Ninety percent of our consumptive water use in Nebraska is for agriculture, the vast majority of which is for row crops," McClure says.



We're part of America's breadbasket, so you just can't turn off the spigot. What I've learned is anybody who draws a line in the sand is doing it wrong.

The Nature Conservancy is working with Nebraska farmers in an effort to help them save about two inches of irrigated water annually through the use of technology. That can be a significant savings. Consider, for example, that corn grown in Nebraska typically requires from 6 to 14 inches of irrigated water per year beyond naturally occurring rainfall, according to the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources.

There would be additional savings to farmers on energy costs needed to operate their pivots, as well as reduced wear and tear on equipment.

The Nature Conservancy is interested to see, when adopted by farmers, what happens to stream flows and ground water recharge. Will the water savings benefit not just farmers but also the environment?

"It's too soon to tell what the ecological response to the water savings will be — that will take several more years," says McClure's colleague John Heaston, director of the Platte River Program Office for the Conservancy. "But one major finding is that there is greater interest in adopting this technology than assumed. We are also seeing greater water savings than we had estimated."

Adds McClure: "We love saving farmers water and money, but we're more interested in the science of what happens when you do that. Hopefully it's a win-win."

Major corporations and organizations, such as Coca-Cola, John Deere, the World Wildlife Fund and McDonald's Corp., have agreed to help fund the project.

Maggie Yancey, a 2014 graduate of UNO's MPA program, is the water resources campaign coordinator for the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) National Advocacy Center in Washington, D.C.



Maggie Yancey

Currently, the NWF has three major federal initiatives as it relates to water: strengthening and protecting the Clean Water Act of 1972, which governs water pollution in the U.S.; furthering habitat protection; and restoring the Gulf Coast, which includes restoration efforts related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill of 2010 and for the disappearing Louisiana coastline.

Yancey says it's sometimes easy to overlook the abundance of wildlife that relies on clean rivers, lakes and wetlands. The wonder of nature is brought into focus every March in Nebraska with the return on the Sandhill Cranes.

"The state of Nebraska has this amazing, incredible migration of the Sandhill Cranes," Yancey says. "I get chills thinking about it. It's such a unique phenomenon, and it might not have been possible if the Clean Water Act had not been enacted."

WATER, FRACKING & NATIONAL SECURITY

In addition to agriculture and wildlife needs, there is a growing demand for water for use in extracting oil and natural gas from tightly compacted underground shale rock — using a process known as hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking."

Hydraulic fracturing involves directional drilling, which allows operators to drill horizontally into the rock. Operators then pump in a mixture of water, sand and chemicals under extremely high pressure to open cracks in the rock and release oil and gas.

UNO's Erin Bass, assistant professor of marketing and management, and Harmon Maher, a professor in the Department of Geography and Geology, are collaborating on a study of fracking, with assistance from undergraduate student Nicholas Wage.

"A lot of the research that is done in this area is from the environmental science side," Bass explains. "But in my research, I look at the strategic side and how we own, use and leverage natural resources."

The United States is the world's leading producer of natural gas from shale rock, according to the Energy Information Administration.

"We have a lot of those reserves, and with the rising oil prices, they became economically feasible to explore and produce," Bass says. "We saw this huge influx of investment by domestic firms, but also by international firms."

This piqued Bass' interest, as her research has focused on foreign ownership of petroleum resources. Between 2003 and 2013, Bass says, foreign ownership of oil fields averaged .9 percent; by 2014, it had jumped to 15 percent.

In addition to oil and gas, fracking involves another precious natural resource — water.

And lots of it.

"The increase in hydraulic fracturing also means increases in the use of water," Bass says. "We're trying to identify per barrel of oil how much water is used. Then we're going to pair that with my data on how much of that oil is being produced by foreign owners. We can look at the tie between foreign ownership of these petroleum resources and how much of our domestic water resources they are using."

Bass is specifically studying fracking operations at two locations — called "plays" — in Texas.

Texas is an interesting case study. Ceres, a nonprofit organization advocating for sustainability leadership, in a 2014 report called Texas "ground zero" for water sourcing risks due to intense shale energy production in recent years and a projected doubling of hydraulic fracturing-related water use over the next decade. Noted the report: "All of this comes as over two-thirds of Texas continues to experience drought conditions, key groundwater aquifers are under stress and the state's population is growing."



Erin Bass

Combine that with foreign ownership, and Bass believes you have a national security issue.

"How we explore and sell the rights to our resources, we really should be strategic about that," Bass says. "I think that perspective has been overlooked or not brought to the forefront as much as it should."

Bass says there are a number of regulations and policies governing petroleum extraction. "But water you just buy, the way you and I pay for water. It's a little more complex than that, but that's kind of how we approach it.

"We are being more strategic about our petroleum than we are about our water, and they are both natural resources. And now we see this interdependence between them. I think it is an issue of national security."

Another issue with fracking: What do you do with the waste-water? This includes the fracking water and the salty formation water in the ground that comes up with the oil and gas, known as production water.

Often, this large volume of water is injected back deep into the ground, which can cause problems.

"There's a possibility of producing earthquakes," says Maher, the other half of the research duo.



In the Oklahoma area, that's probably where this discussion is the strongest. There has been a clear increase in the number of earthquakes happening where injection operations have occurred.

Storing the water above ground, in storage pools, also can be problematic, Maher says, with the possibility of leakage contaminating surface water and shallow groundwater. "There are instances where that has been documented," he says, although he added that it's a small percentage.

UNO Grads Bring Water to the World



BUEY RAY TUT: AQUA-AFRICA

Buey Ray Tut almost gave up on his dream to bring clean, accessible water to South Sudan villages when his nonprofit organization, Aqua-Africa, was attempting to drill its first well in 2011.

To be sure, rain, bureaucratic red tape and a broken hydraulic pump on the drill didn't help.

But being thrown in jail was nearly the last straw.

Tut and his drill operator were traveling to fix the broken pump when their truck was stopped by armed officers.

"They said we hit a cow along the road, and the farmer wanted to be reimbursed," Tut says. He felt they were being extorted for money, but they didn't dare resist arrest.

"When someone has a gun, you do what they say," Tut says.

They were taken to jail and were held for two days before the villagers posted bail. Tut wondered if he should continue. Was it worth it?

The answer came when the well was finished and fresh water was flowing for the village of 830 people. "It was an awe-inspiring experience," Tut says, "to see their joy and the smiles on their faces."

For Tut, water is just the beginning, the foundation. It meets a basic human need. But he believes it could also give root to advances in agriculture, literacy, commerce and political democracy.

South Sudan is his childhood home, and he wants to see its people flourish. (Tut immigrated to the United States with his family when he was 11.)

"We have a 15-year plan for the villages we work in," he says.

"We want to see these villages become thriving towns. That would make us incredibly proud."

Tut, a 2009 economics and political science graduate from UNO, founded Aqua-Africa in 2011 after several years of planning with childhood friend and Northwestern University graduate Jacob D Khol. Childhood memories provide the inspiration. Tut remembers walking miles to fetch fresh water for his family from the river.

So far, the organization has drilled 30 wells in seven villages — providing clean, accessible water to some 15,000 people.

To learn more, visit aqua-africa.net





MARK STEELE: PLANET WATER

UNO graduate Mark Steele walked away from a successful corporate career about seven years ago to bring clean drinking water to rural communities, primarily in the Asia-Pacific region, through a water filtration system he developed.

Today, his Planet Water Foundation has deployed about 550 of his Aqua Towers in 12 countries.

"We've brought clean water to about half a million people," Steele says. The foundation's goal is to help 5 million people gain access to clean drinking water and improved sanitation by 2020.

After graduating from UNO in 1989 with a double major in international business and Japanese, and a brief stint at Hughes Aircraft in California, Steele helped establish Asia-Pacific operations for ITT, a leader in water and wastewater products and services. He eventually was named president of ITT China before becoming chief operating officer at Tele Atlas Asia-Pacific, a digital mapping subsidiary of TomTom.

The experience that had the biggest impact on him, though, was leading ITT's emergency response effort in Sri Lanka following the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, bringing water purification systems to the affected areas. During the response, he had the opportunity to meet with former Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton.

"I saw how important simple necessities, such as water, are to people," Steele says. "For me, that was a life-changing moment. I wanted to go back and do more of that."

Over the next few years, Steele would develop his Aqua Tower — which can produce about 264 gallons of clean water per hour, enough to support the daily drinking habits of about 1,000 people. Steele says a tower can be installed in one day, it's eco-friendly, and the simple-to-maintain filters can last from five to seven years.

Planet Water installs its towers near schools. The first towers were installed in Cambodia in 2008 at four schools in Siem Reap. In addition to the towers, Planet Water provides a health and hygiene education program. "We have a partnership with Sesame Workshop. They develop multimedia content to support our programs in the schools," Steele says.

Planet Water's most recent initiative was Project 24, an effort to spotlight World Water Day in March. "We brought clean water to 24,000 people, in 24 communities, in a 24-hour day," Steele says. About \$250,000 was raised from corporate sponsors, and the projects were streamed live online. "It was pretty exciting."



HOW UNO FACULTY,
STUDENTS & ALUMNI
ARE MEASURING THE
CLEANLINESS
OF VALUABLE
RESOURCES

TESTING THE WATERS

By Susan Houston Klaus



KURT FRANTZEN

Even before Erin Brockovich was making news for her work on behalf of the citizens of Hinkley, Calif., UNO graduate Kurt Frantzen was making discoveries of his own in the area.

Back then he was a newly minted Ph.D. who in the late 1980s was brought on as a consultant to help Pacific Gas & Electric evaluate the ecological damage to area flora and fauna caused by hexavalent chromium VI. Frantzen made a key discovery: When chromium VI hits organic soil, it converts to a much less toxic form called trivalent chromium, or chromium III. His find made possible a remediation plan whereby PG&E would provide water for area farmers in the parched Mojave Desert to irrigate alfalfa crops. Twenty-five years later, PG&E is still pumping water there.

And Frantzen is still testing the waters. In the last quarter century he has helped clean contaminated properties, wrote environmental impact statements, helped with litigation matters, and continued working on water projects. His expertise has taken him around the country and abroad as a consultant for a New York-based environmental company and a sole practitioner of his own firm.

Looking back, says the 1978 biology grad, this kind of work is what he always wanted to do.

"I started out wanting to help the environment and I think I've accomplished that," he says.

"I've enjoyed going to work every day. I've stayed current on policies, and have stood in front of the public and explained things to them — even when they've been angry."

In all, he believes he's been successful helping his clients get things done faster and with better insight.

His UNO education plays a part every day in his work, he says. "From the technical side as well as the humanities side, it helped me learn how to convey facts and to help people understand and use the science. It also gave me an interest in always trying to improve myself."

Frantzen isn't the only Maverick testing the waters. UNO faculty, students and other alumni are dipping their beakers into waterways around the world to see what comes clean.



Elkhorn River



Chile

Near ...

Alan Kolok is an expert in aquatic toxicology — the study of how chemicals as well as natural materials have an affect on everything from tiny organisms to whole ecosystems. And the UNO professor makes important discoveries close to home and far away.

Nearby is his work at the Elkhorn River Station, where a cadre of UNO students works alongside an international Ph.D. student and another from UNMC.

His recent research at the Elkhorn River Station looks at the sediment load the river carries.

"The water is the color of chocolate milk in the spring," Kolok says, because it carries small grains of sand, silt and clay in high concentrations. That's significant because that sediment is important to the transport of chemicals. Even though surface water doesn't lead to an adverse impact on area fish, the sediment does.

Lately, Kolok has been interested in examining how fish might pass sediment through their digestive system. While research to date has never shown ingestion of the sediment, he and his team believe that very fine, potentially highly toxic particles are being captured in the gills of the small fish they have studied.

His look at local waters will expand to a new station being built at the Missouri River in Haworth Park in Bellevue. There, scientists will have access to real-time quality data.

They'll also be able to make direct comparisons of the 300-mile-long Elkhorn River to the much longer Missouri River, looking at how global climate change, weather patterns and storm events have an impact on both bodies of water.

And Far ...

Kolok's also is making important finds in Colombia, Chile, Kazakhstan and elsewhere.

In Colombia, Kolok studied water carried in the runoff from gold mining operations — sources that could carry mercury. With funding from a National Science Foundation grant, he and colleagues sampled fish from local mercados (markets) to look for concentrations of mercury. They found higher concentrations in whiskered catfish. Talking to local fishermen, they traced the fish to a geographical area.

The results of that study were published in a journal article in 2012 — generating much interest and being among the two most often cited papers he's ever published, Kolok says.

More recently, Kolok and a UNL counterpart traveled to Al-Farabi Kazakh National University to teach a 9-day workshop in ecotoxicology.

The curriculum was aimed at helping students better understand the similarities in water quality issues between the Syr Darya River basin in southern Afghanistan and the water basins in the Midwestern United States.

"We were able to introduce ideas in ways the students hadn't thought about before," Kolok says. "You're walking into an environment where you have a blank page in front of you, where you have the opportunity to effect change on a fundamental level."

What started as 20 students on the first day had grown to a curious group of 40 midway through the workshop.

"I have the utmost respect for the individuals at the university there. They had a desire to be competitive on an international level. It's a responsibility and an honor" to have taught them.

The experience at Al-Farabi KaxNU continues this summer as Kolok and an undergrad student conduct another, more in-depth workshop. He's also received a three-year grant from the Kazakhstani government to fund research on one of that country's rivers.

ALAN KOLOK

Professor of biology;
director, UNO
Aquatic Toxicology
Laboratory; Interim
director, Center for
Environmental Health
and Toxicology,
College of Public
Health, UNMC



ROXANNE KELLAR

Assistant professor of biology

Living Waters in Belize

One of Dr. Roxi Kellar's favorite words is "biodiversity" — literally, the variety of life.

In 2014, Kellar took a group of sophomores, juniors and seniors to Belize to study biodiversity and conservation of a tropical environment firsthand.

Their guides and hosts for the trip were locals who consider the water system a living organism. Kellar notes that these Belizans "are extremely focused on the value of water, the health of the water system and how it's being impacted by agricultural and industrial projects."

During their stay, the UNO group got an up-close view of how Belize citizens use local water for travel, food and irrigation. Their trip took them up in the mountains where water is carried all the way down to the sea, to a walk along the Sibun River where students examined the macroinvertebrates that live in the leaf litter of the river bottom.

On canoe trips, they saw specifically how gravel mining in the area is having an impact on the water, says Kellar.

"The river gets very cloudy on mining days and that clarity and flow is affecting the water and animals. Where the river meets the ocean the river is more briny."

The group also traveled to one of the cayes — or islands — of Belize to look at bleaching of the fragile coral reefs.

Kellar says she's happy about how the experience turned out and how motivated students were to absorb every bit of information along the way. She plans to take another group in 2018.



Digging into the California Drought

In California, every resident has had to adapt to extreme drought conditions.

James Hayes, assistant professor of geography, is particularly interested in how different stakeholder groups, like ranchers and other water users, perceive these changes in climate and water availability.

His study, "Coping with Change: Water Availability and Arid Land Management," is supported by a NSF Dynamics of Coupled Natural and Human Systems program.

The co-principal investigator on the project is Kimberly Kirner, anthropology professor at California State University, Northridge.

Hayes is focused on analyzing historical climate and vegetation change in the Owens Valley, on the east side of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Farmers and ranchers there are at the heart of conflict related to the California drought, fighting the City of Los Angeles. Before Los Angeles diverted water from the Owens River to the city, the valley was so scenic it was called an American Switzerland. Pictures of Hayes at work there show a desert-like landscape.

Looking at satellite imagery and collecting native plant samples, Hayes looks to see how the vegetation has changed and comparing that data to determine if those changes are related to climate change.

Another key part to the research is interviewing local water users to see how the drought conditions are affecting their decisionmaking and local management responses.

"I'm really interested in how people interact with their environment," he says. "I see places changing that people love, and our management decisions are affected by that."

This summer, Hayes and his graduate students are conducting more focused sampling on key sites in the area. They hope to have early results by August or September.

One of the goals of the research, Hayes says, is to share the findings with local management officials and decisionmakers at the local, city and county level.

"We want to create a better understanding of how these multi-level decisions interact."

JAMES HAYES

Assistant professor of geography

KRYSTAL HERRMANN

2015 UNO graduate; recent intern
at Nebraska Watershed Network



Not “Missing” a Thing

On a June day last summer, crowdsourcing met classic research. At an event called “Lil’ Miss Atrazine,” the Nebraska Watershed Network launched its first test of the waters along the entire Mississippi River for possible presence of the herbicide.

The NWN recruited about 200 participants from Lake Itasca, Minn., to New Orleans, La. That includes students from King Science Magnet Center to test downtown waterways. In one 24-hour period, the network collected 210

usable data points from these citizen scientists.

Research showed a “hot spot” of positive hits — with samples showing a concentration more than the EPA’s safe drinking water limit of 3 parts per billion — near St. Louis, where the Missouri, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers converge.

“It’s not clear if the presence of the chemical in that area is long term, or just happened to show up on that particular day,” says Krystal Herrmann, an NWN intern and recent UNO graduate. But the success in gathering so many people together who care about their local water quality was clear.

This spring, the NWN tweaked the study to test two geographically separate communities near Omaha and in Pontiac, Ill. — this time over 10 weeks. Groups of high school students from both states have participated.

As an intern for the NWN, Herrmann had an opportunity to create and maintain partnerships with both UNO organizations as well as groups around the Omaha area.

Lil’ Miss Atrazine is just one example of how the network is working to promote water quality awareness through education, outreach and research.

In May 2014, the City of La Vista, Neb., hosted a Bio Blitz to study the Thompson Creek watershed. The area has experienced flooding, bank erosion and property damage to property adjacent to the creek, all symptoms of urbanization over the years.

The Bio Blitz aimed to identify all the species in an area within 24 hours. It also provided an opportunity for professional scientists and the local community to engage with each other — while learning about the watershed, its benefits and urban water quality.

Peru — The Water is Not So Golden

The economy of Peru has blossomed, in large part because of the success of gold mining in the Andes Mountains. But with that has come a negative impact on the water that flows down from the range.

Couple that with the effect of the receding Andes ice sheets and by 2030 the capital city of Lima will be facing a catastrophic event, says assistant professor of biology Dr. Paul Davis.

Government officials in Peru reached out to Davis, colleague Alan Kolok and other UNO faculty and administrators to learn how to safely re-use the local water supply. The UNO team traveled to Lima in 2012 to establish a study-abroad and service learning experience.

“The biggest issue of infectious disease is in Lima,” Davis says. “To study this, we did a survey to see if water sources in the city were bad and if they were, how bad. We found a number of infectious organisms traceable to the water supply from one river.”

They presented their initial findings to the chief medical officer of Peru’s largest hospital and are

hopeful there can be a positive impact on the citizens of the area.

As part of their research, Davis and graduate student David Grothen developed a new way to determine microbes in the water, a method that substantially decreases the cost of study and increases the ability to determine what’s in the water.

PAUL DAVIS

Assistant professor
of biology



People who live in these contaminated areas think the river is relatively safe. It’s just flat-out not. Even the tap water in these areas is not safe. The health care workers can now tell people they have to boil their water.

Davis is proud of the work he and the team did on behalf of the people of Peru. He also sees value in bringing students to see a new situation.

“To see some of the problems other struggle with that we don’t here — they’re getting firsthand knowledge. It’s transformative and helps students to start thinking globally.”



DAVE BECKER

**1981 UNO graduate;
Geologist, U.S. Army
Corps of Engineers;
UNO Adjunct Professor
of Geology**

At the Corps of Cleanups

When Dave Becker first started at UNO, he was a pre-chemical engineering major then a civil engineering major.

"Each lasted about a semester," he says. He switched to geology after his freshman year.

"Little did I know I would end up in this career."

For 31 years, he's been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — for the last 24 years his job title has been geologist.

At the Center for Expertise, Becker and his team are a national resource for the USACE on environmental cleanup. They provide consultation, guidance and internal training for staff around the country. He's quick to point out that of the 52 employed at the center in Omaha, 10 are UNO grads.

His job has taken him around the globe, primarily working on cleanup of groundwater for Department of Defense sites. He's done a lot of work for the EPA and has seen some of the worst sites in the world.

One, the 30-year Phoenix-Goodyear Airport Superfund project, is addressing two major contaminated groundwater plumes that have threatened domestic and municipal drinking water wells in the area. A number of wells and treatment plans have been constructed at the site to pump contaminated water, treat it and return most of the clean water to the water table.

Becker consults with the EPA to review and advise on work conducted by firms responsible for the contamination. He pushed for a well to be installed

to investigate the source area. Today, it's marked by a sign at the site designating it the "Dave Becker Memorial Well."

Since the 1990s he's also consulted on the Lipari Landfill Superfund site in New Jersey — a landfill in a former sand pit that received more than 2 million gallons of industrial waste. Contamination at the site affected groundwater, a stream and a popular downstream lake.

Another significant EPA project for Becker has been the Newmark/Muscoy Superfund site in San Bernardino, Calif., where a large plume has affected municipal wells used by the city. To address the issue, the EPA installed two large systems to extract and treat more than 10,000 gallons of contaminated water per minute. Other career highlights include his work to support the Europe and Asia districts of the Corps of Engineers in Germany, Korea and Japan.

Though he's widely traveled, campus remains a place of work, too. About 15 years Becker began teaching at UNO. He started with a geohydrology class and over the years has added environmental geology and geophysics to his course offerings.

He aims to bring his personal experiences to those classes, he says, making them relevant for students.

For geohydrology in particular, he offers practical advice and wants to give students an opportunity to talk with prospective employers so they can hit the ground running.

"Water is such an irreplaceable resource and often in short supply. I want to give students a look at the opportunity they have to protect and restore groundwater resources here in our state."

Drinking in Research in Omaha

For more than 10 years, an outside-the-classroom experience has given UNO geology students and chemistry students a chance to get their feet wet — or at least their hands — in the area of research.

It's part of an intradepartmental exercise led by geology department Chair and Associate Professor Robert Shuster and assistant chemistry Professor Dana Richter-Egger.

Students from both departments work together on a project to study drinking water quality in the Omaha area. Geology students collect municipal and well water samples — both filtered and unfiltered, softened and unsoftened

— from their homes and from other area sources.

"Using real samples gets the students interested," Shuster says. "They have buy-in and it introduces them to a number of important ideas — how you sample something, how problems can arise in how you collect a sample, and how you determine if a number is wrong or right."

Then they bring their samples to the chemistry class, where the water is analyzed using a process called ion chromatography. At the conclusion of the project, students present their results.

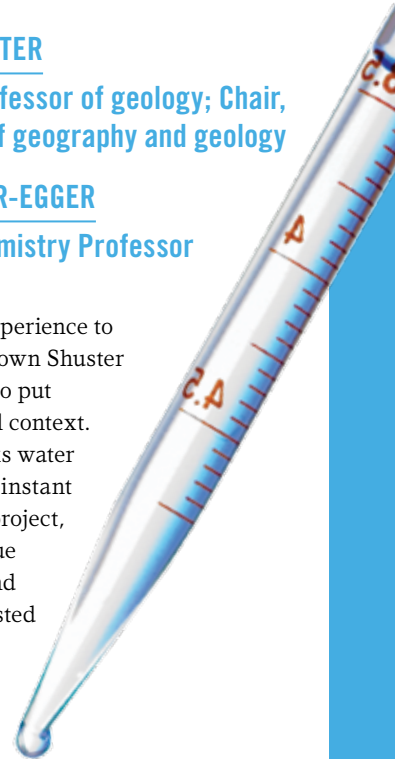
ROBERT SHUSTER

**Associate professor of geology; Chair,
department of geography and geology**

DANA RICHTER-EGGER

assistant chemistry Professor

Offering this experience to students has shown Shuster "it's important to put things in a local context. Everyone drinks water and that builds instant interest in the project, which may pique their interest and get them interested in a science career."



WATER IN TO WINE

By Greg Kozol

Actually, it's not that hard to turn water into wine.

Or Whiskey. Or beer. Or any other kind of spirit.

The hard part is turning it into the good stuff.

Those who can do so — and that includes plenty UNO grads — know good water is essential to whatever gets tapped, corked or bottled.

Winemaker Jim Shaw uses natural spring water from his rural Nebraska property. Distiller Ed Pechar uses limestone springs in Missouri. Brewmaster Jason Payne has his water trucked in from the Sandhills in western Nebraska.

PAYNE SAYS



“WHAT COMES OUT OF THE AQUIFER IS SOME OF THE BEST WATER IN THE WORLD,” PAYNE SAYS. “WE STRIP OUT ALL THE CHEMICALS. YOU DON’T WANT TO HEAD INTO THIS BUSINESS WITHOUT KNOWING THE SCIENCE.”

And the art.

Here’s a look at the alchemy of a handful of UNO graduates turning water into something a whole lot better.

TRENDING

TIMELESS AND

ED PECHAR, chairman and principal owner of McCormick Distilling Company, is familiar with trends in the alcoholic beverage industry. He's been involved in the industry one way or another for most of his career since graduating from Omaha University in 1963.

After a stint in the Air Force and service in Vietnam, Pechar worked in the purchasing department of a major liquor company, Schenley Distillers, while he attended law school.

He expected to join a law firm but was convinced to remain as one of the corporation's attorneys, eventually holding several executive positions, including company president.

"The rest is history," he says. "I have enjoyed every moment of being in this business. It's changing constantly, and it's not an industry so much as a number of people who know one another."

Pechar and his late business partner Mike Griesser were involved in a leveraged buyout from Schenley in 1987, when they acquired Virgin Islands Rum Industries, the largest bulk rum supplier in the United States. In 1993, they bought McCormick Distilling, a Missouri company that traces its roots to 1856 when Benjamin Holladay produced spirits to ship west via stagecoach.

At the time of the purchase, McCormick was selling about 1.7 million cases per year in 37 states. Today, the number has grown to about 4 million cases in all 50 states and 57 foreign countries.

"We try to provide a quality product at a reasonable price, with attractive packaging," Pechar says. "You don't need to be the highest or the lowest price on the shelves — we think the sweet spot is in the middle."

Pechar says McCormick, based north of Kansas City in Weston, Mo., embraces the past while responding to evolving tastes. The company's origins are tied to the purity of water found in limestone springs along the Missouri aquifers.



"There's certainly something to that," he says.

"The water is low in iron content, and alcohol does not react well with iron. You like purity to be part of the manufacturing process and part of the brand marketing."

These days, McCormick buys bulk alcohol of many types, then uses its water for filtration and to proof the alcohol content for its vodka, whiskey and other products. Another key to success, Pechar says, is keeping pace with consumer preferences. He says brown spirits, like Bourbon and Scotch, were popular for many years. Then consumer tastes shifted to lighter drinks like vodka, rum and even wine coolers.

These days, whiskey is making a comeback, so McCormick is broadening its appeal with a range of products, including Triple Crown Whiskey, McCormick's Irish Cream, Hussong's Tequila, Tequila Rose Strawberry Cream, and others. There's even an environmentally friendly, eco-luxury product, 360 Vodka.

Things Ben Holladay wouldn't have imagined in the Pony Express days.

The company is re-introducing distilling at its Weston location this year. "We're hoping to reinvigorate the history of the old-time, whiskey-producing company," he says.

PAGING DR. BEERMEISTER

JASON PAYNE went to college intent on becoming a doctor. That dream, you might say, went flat.



Photo by Joe Mixan

"I bailed on that career plan at the last minute," he says.

Payne got a biology degree, with a chemistry minor, from the University of Iowa. After graduation, the self-described "former hopeful premed student" found himself making a 45-minute commute to an industrial lactic acid plant in Blair, just outside Omaha.

Not exactly his dream job.

So Payne made an abrupt career change — one that involved mashing, boiling and fermenting, instead of MCATs and residencies. He went to work at Upstream Brewing Company in Omaha's Old Market and enrolled at UNO, eventually earning an MBA.

In 2008, he struck out on his own and opened Lucky Bucket Brewing Co. in LaVista, Neb. Six years after serving its first pint, Lucky Bucket makes 6,000 barrels of craft beer a year. Options range from seasonal creations, like Belly Flop Strawberry Blonde, to a new offering called Jug Thumper Malty Brown Ale.

Payne plunged into the business just as the craft beer craze was taking off in Nebraska. The state now ranks 15th nationally in the number of craft breweries per 100,000 people.

Payne hasn't looked back, and he doesn't regret the decision to forgo med school.

“IT FIT MY PERSONALITY BETTER. IT'S A COMMUNITY-BASED, SOCIAL INDUSTRY. THAT WAS VERY ATTRACTIVE. AS A WHOLE, THERE WAS A LOT OF OPPORTUNITY.”

The beer industry has changed from the days when a few companies mass-produced American light lagers. Craft beer now constitutes 11 percent of the U.S. beer market, with a dizzying array of choices available for those who crave something unique. Similar trends have upended the wine and distilled spirits industries.

"People are interested in small-batch stuff," Payne says. "That's a common trait you find, from beer to artisan cheeses. It's a movement that's rolling across the country."

Barrel by barrel.

**DAYS OF
WINE AND
NOW BEER**



PINT-SIZED



Payne isn't the only UNO graduate to capitalize on the trend. **JIM SHAW**, who received a biology degree in 1971, also used a background in science to divert his career path toward the beverage industry.

Shaw was an airline pilot who figured he needed a backup plan if he wanted to make it to retirement.

He opened what is now Soaring Wings Vineyard and Brewing in Springfield, Neb., after taking several courses on winemaking. He also honed his entrepreneurial skills at the Nebraska Business Development Center, where UNO graduates helped him develop a business plan.

It started slowly, of course — it usually takes three growing seasons for grapes to produce wine. Soaring Wings unveiled its first vintage in 2003 and since has expanded to offer beer.

The winemaking process starts in the winter, with the pruning of vines. Grapes are picked when they reach the right level of maturity then crushed.

White and blush wines are pressed to remove juice from the skins, and the juice is chilled and fermented. Red wines are

typically fermented on the skins to extract color and tannin, then pressed and placed in barrels for aging.

The process can be daunting, Shaw says, because one tank sometimes contains \$100,000 worth of hard work for the entire year.

"Beer to me is a lot easier," he says. "If it gets screwed up, I can make a new batch."

Younger consumers play a big part in the success of Soaring Wings, with many eager to try the next big thing. However, Shaw admits there's sometimes a mental hurdle when it comes to Nebraska wine.

"There's usually a perception Nebraska wine must be terrible," he says. "They are usually happy once they get past it."



Photo by Eric Francis

SUCCESS



Photo by Joe Mixan

KELLY (FITZGERALD) VOLLMER at 26 can't yet match the experience or expanse of Payne, Shaw or Pechar. But she sure likes beer.

The 2014 UNO graduate got hooked when a friend introduced her to craft beer about five years ago. Today, Vollmer works full time as an assistant property manager then returns to a home that's been converted into a small-scale brewery. There's a boil

kettle in the garage, taps in the dining room and a certain smell on brewing days.

"Honestly, on brew days, it smells to me like Cheerios," she says. "Once we get going into fermentation, it smells like yeast."

Other than entering an occasional competition, she makes beer primarily for family and friends, rather than as a business venture.



I LOVE DOING IT. IT'S GOING TO BE PART OF MY LIFE — IT'S TAKEN OVER MY HOUSE A LOT."

For Vollmer, the process is no different from a professional brewing company. She mixes grain with hot water in a mash tun to make a sugary liquid known as wort. Then, she boils the wort for about an hour, using a boiling pot and propane burner in her driveway. This is where she adds hops, depending on how bitter she wants the beer to taste. For instance, an IPA would get more hops than a pale ale.

After that, she uses a chiller made out of copper tubing to cool the wort. She adds yeast from a local brewery to convert the sugar into alcohol in the fermentation

process. She says fermentation, done in a large glass carboy, or jug, takes a week to 10 days.

Then, the beer is transferred to a keg, where Co2 is added for carbonation.

She estimates it takes about a month to make a single batch.

"I would like to do more," she says. "Since I do have a full-time job, I try to do one a month."

To her recollection, she's only had to throw out one or two batches of beer.

With a business degree and a concentration in entrepreneurship, Vollmer's goal is to start her own brewery some day.

"Every home brewer has the dream," she says. "It is a lot of work and it's a lot of money. I've seen people succeed and not succeed."

LOVE ON THE ROCKS

BILL WAKEFIELD

(pictured top) and B.J.

REED (pictured bottom)

have no intention

of going into business for themselves. The two Scotch aficionados simply let the business come to them.

Reed, UNO's senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs, and Wakefield, a professor in the school of criminology and criminal justice, belong to a group of Scotch whisky lovers that began meeting at Omaha's Dundee Dell in the early 1990s.

Today, 20 to 25 people gather with them one Sunday a month at the Dell to taste single-malt Scotch. There's even tours to distilleries in Scotland, where all Scotch is made and aged in oak barrels. The owner of a major distillery has come to Omaha to put on a tasting.

Though there's talk of pallet, aroma and finish, members of this group make an effort to avoid the elitist tag.

"We've been at it for 20 years," Reed says. "One thing we learn is how much you don't know. If you're a snob and you're in this business, you don't have any idea what you don't know."

While still male-dominated, the group has grown to include younger members as single-malt Scotch has shed its status

as a niche phenomenon. Twenty years ago, the Dundee Dell boasted one of the country's largest collections of single-malts, the highest quality of Scotch whisky. Now, a bar like the Jack Rose in Washington, D.C., contains more than 2,000 single-malt whisky varieties behind the bar.

"You're surrounded by individuals with this passion," Reed says. "Some are in their 20s, have no money, and whatever money they have is to invest in a tasting or a bottle of single-malt whisky."

"It's a very eclectic group of people. They're very down to earth."

Wakefield acknowledges that it takes "some means" to get serious about Scotch whisky. With just more than 90 distilleries in Scotland (there's no "e" in Scotch whisky), increased demand collides with limited supply to drive up price. A high-end bottle can cost as much as \$8,000.

Many bottles range from \$40 to \$100, but a bottle of Glen Moray can be found for under \$35 at a grocery store with a good liquor selection. Tastings at the Dell run for about \$50.

Wakefield stresses that the goal is to enjoy the taste, not the alcohol. "We taste less than half an ounce," he says. "No one is exceeding the limit while driving."

Pressed for a favorite whisky, Reed says it's impossible to give an answer: "Who's your favorite child?" he asks.

NO-GO FOR NEAR-BEER

What could possibly go wrong with a plan to sell non-alcoholic beer in the Milo Bail Student Center?

Plenty, apparently.

But, hey, it was the '70s.

The fall of 1975, to be exact. A time of polyester pants and the debut of the "Rocky Horror Picture Show."

Alcohol was banned on campus, of course, but that prohibition didn't include non-alcoholic "near beer." The student center floated the idea of selling the fake froth.

School of Communication Director Hugh

Reilly was a student at UNO then. He recalls being more than a little interested in the idea.

To promote it, a beer-drinking contest was held. Reilly remembers standing on the second floor of the student center to watch. Fraternity members lined up and, "They started chugging beers," Reilly says.

"One kid puked. That started a chain reaction."

The Gateway student newspaper reported that the winners drank nine near beers but the contest was



Photo by Joe Mixan



Both Wakefield and Reed believe the Scotch tastings are as much about the social interaction as the drink itself. That's a view shared by others in the beer, wine and spirits business.

Shaw gets the most satisfaction out of walking around his winery near Springfield and chatting with customers. "It's not the product itself, it's the experience," he says. "I enjoy it when I'm making people happy."

Payne agrees, though he and Shaw say it's easy for an outsider to overlook the hard work and thin margins associated with producing beer and wine.

Payne's UNO business degree also helped, he says, because running a beer company isn't one big party. It's hard work. "I admit, being in the beer business is cool," he says. "There's a fun factor. That subsides when you realize there's very little room for error."

He's optimistic about the future, though, with plans for an expanded tasting room to go along with the recent addition of distilled whiskey.

Shaw says shelf space is tough to get at retail stores, but he's convinced there's always room for something new. "The newer generation doesn't have a lot of loyalty," he says. "They are open to trying things."

Vollmer learned that in her college days. During "get-to-know-you sessions" on the first day of classes at UNO, she always offered up a more interesting hobby than yoga or listening to music.

"Everyone introduces themselves and says what they do for fun," she recalls. "I say, 'I brew beer.' Everybody thinks it's pretty cool. Ninety-nine percent of time they say, 'Can I try it?'"

FERMENTING FUN

"not without incident." Reilly says that's putting it mildly.

"It was a domino effect," he says. "I do remember watching people get sick. People in the audience were feeling nauseous."

The results did for near beer what the Hindenburg did for zeppelins. Ron Pushcar, food services director at the time, ultimately abandoned plans to sell the product to students.

"As you can imagine, Mr. Pushcar thought he had a winner," Reilly says. "He couldn't give that stuff away."

Looking back, the remarkable thing wasn't the drinking contest or its effects. It was that beer was seriously considered. UNO even had a vice chancellor — named Ronald Beer, of all things — who said he wouldn't object to selling beer on campus if the Board of Regents and the state legislature approved it.

They didn't.

Reilly says it was a different, looser time. The Vietnam War just ended and students on UNO's campus would gather when there were rumors of guys streaking across campus.

Beer on campus? "I think there wouldn't be a snowball's chance in hell of this happening today," Reilly says. "There was some innocence."

It was all for the best. Reilly tried near beer and understood the reasons for the not-so-pleasant reaction.

"It tasted terrible," Reilly says.

"I've become kind of a beer snob. I love all the wonderful choices we now have.

"When I was in college, it was whatever was on sale."



Healing Waters

By Kevin Warneke



Melanie McGrath

Emily Gorman is putting Jake McCain through his paces, but he's getting nowhere.

Just a few months removed from surgery to repair torn ligaments in his big left toe, McCain is in a hurry to rehabilitate and condition. Trouble is, it's too soon for the UNO's men's soccer player to run.

So Gorman, a graduate assistant certified athletic trainer, has McCain spending time in the SwimEx — working to keep up.

This is no ordinary swimming pool. The SwimEx generates a current that can be adjusted for speed and depth. Think of it as running in place, but in water.

McCain is discovering just how intense a workout in water can be. He can work on his upper body conditioning — where Gorman has directed the current — while his legs remain below the tide working resistance-free.

Gorman is learning about water's rehabilitative

powers in her classes and while assisting UNO's array of injured athletes.

"I can kick up the speed and make it real difficult for them," she says.

All the while, she can watch as McCain and others in her charge receive the maximum benefit from their workouts without adding to their injuries.

Dr. Melanie McGrath, associate professor of health, physical education and recreation, knows what Gorman is discovering: water adds a dimension to athletic training that benefits the injured and the bored. McGrath knows that training in water provides the same benefits as training on land — while reducing pressure placed on tender or healing joints.

She knows that water regulates the heart rate, which can be beneficial for some people. She also knows that water can help reduce swelling on injuries.

Hot and Cold

Dr. Dustin Slivka wants to send a message to muscles to spur their growth and help them resist disease and degeneration.



Dustin Slivka

He's especially interested in what signals temperature — applied via ice or moist heat — send to muscles during exercise.

"When we exercise our muscle temperature rises. It makes sense that heat conditions for muscle growth is going to be favorable," says the associate professor of health, physical education and recreation.

The benefits of deciphering the code could have life-saving ramifications, he says.

Slivka just finished a pilot study in his lab that had 12 college students completing sets of leg extensions and leg bends. Slivka targeted the thigh muscle for this study and had his students wearing cuffs — a device that looks similar to those used to check blood pressure — with water heated to various temperatures moving in them without adding compression.

"The thigh — that's a nice big muscle that's easily biopsied," says Slivka to explain why he targeted that particular muscle. His study involved collecting muscle samples before during and after his participants' workouts.

He's also interested in how room temperature affects the response muscles exhibit toward heat and cold. Distinguishing muscle temperature from core body temperature also is in play, he says.

Athletes would be the top-of-mind beneficiaries of Slivka's work.

"More bang for your workout," he suggests.

But what about special operations soldiers who must perform when much more is at stake, Slivka asks.

Then, Slivka talks bigger picture. Muscle breakdown is a part of aging. What if muscle degeneration could be delayed or prevented?

"Could we keep people mobile longer, out of wheelchairs?"

Finally, she knows that working out in water allows athletes to begin conditioning earlier and adds a twist to their training regimen. Think about the athlete sidelined with a torn ACL, she says.

"Having something to break up that routine has a tremendous benefit psychologically," McGrath says. "Let's get them in the pool."

Think of it as running in place, but in water.

The UNO athletic department realized this long ago. McGrath points out — with just a tad bit of pride — that UNO was the first Division II school to have a SwimEx and the first of any university in Nebraska.

The SwimEx and swimming pool in UNO's HPER Building are available to all UNO athletes but may prove especially beneficial for those whose sports require constant

cuts and turns — basketball, soccer, track and field. Long-distance runners often train in water because their joints take such a beating, she says.

Training in water extends beyond athletics. McGrath mentions a television commercial that features seniors — armed with floaties — exercising in a swimming pool.

"Those floaties do more than hold you up," McGrath says. "They provide resistance."

McGrath, who doubles as the director of the Athletic Training Education Program, wants to make sure her athletic training students understand water's power and flexibility. So she also turns HPER's swimming pool into a classroom each semester. There, her students learn the value of simple things like jumping in water.

"You get the same impact as on dry land — but less impact on the joints."



2014 UNO CENTURY CLUB

In 1973, the UNO Alumni Association created its premier giving society – the UNO Century Club. The first 44 members contributed \$5,250. Today, the Century Club includes more than 300 members who each year combine to give more than \$195,000.

The UNO Century Club is vital to UNO's continued growth as one of the nation's top metropolitan universities. In 2012, the Alumni Association introduced four funds to which Century Club members could direct their gifts. Those funds – the Communications & Social Media Fund, Alumni Engagement & Programs Fund, Thompson Alumni Center Fund, and Alumni Innovation Fund, support daily activities of the Alumni Association that make the alumni network's reach greater and its impact stronger.

In 2013, the UNO Alumni Board of Directors voted to add a new level to the Century Club – the Landmark Level, recognizing annual donors of \$10,000 or more. In this issue, the Century Club recognizes all donors of \$250 or more to the UNO Alumni Association, including the Landmark Level.

On behalf of the university, its students, faculty and alumni, the UNO Alumni Association and the University of Nebraska Foundation recognize the generosity of UNO Century Club members who believe strongly in the mission of the university and support its ongoing success.

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CLASS NOTES

Send your classnotes to unoalumni.org/classnotes.
Or, post your note on the UNO Alumni Association Facebook page: facebook.com/UNOAlumni

62

CLIFFORD KANTZ (BGS) was thanked for his service in World War II 69 years later by the French

government. A Bootstrapper graduate who and retired Major in the USAF, Kantz was presented the French Legion of Honor medal, the highest medal of France. The medal is awarded to U.S. veterans who risked their lives during WWII to fight on French territory. Kantz received the award for dropping paratroopers into France and flying resupply flights into the country during the war. Kantz said, "What ran through my mind as the ceremony continued was, 'Here is a Bootstrap graduate from the University of Nebraska at Omaha! What a feeling!'"

63

ROBERT E. MUNDY (BS), president of Mundy and Associates/

Coordinated Planning, has completed coursework to earn the designation Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP). Organized by the Omaha Community Foundation, the year-long CAP program is comprised of



three graduate-level classes offered through the American College in Bryn Mawr, Penn. For more than 40 years, Mundy has been consulting with business owners and executives on their business, estate and insurance planning. He also is a partner with Legacy Preservation.

65

PATRICIA MCNAMARZ (MS)

keeps busy creating collage and watercolor paintings and is a member of Las Padres Watercolor Society in Santa Barbara, Calif.

68

WILLIAM (BA) and **MARILYN** (BA, 1967) **JANSEN** live in Palm Coast, Fla., and are retired.

He writes: Still feeling disappointed and hurt UNO dropped football and wrestling. A big part of the past is gone forever. wjansen@cfl.rr.com

72

GUY L. REECE was sworn in by Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor as president of the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association for 2015. Reece will preside over an



organization representing approximately 300 judges from all of Ohio's 88 counties. Reece is a retired U.S. Army Colonel and earned various military awards, including the Bronze Star.

73

DANIEL DOBMEIER (BS) applied at the Omaha World-Herald in 1973 and was hired on the spot by

Dick Crabtree to be the paper's librarian. Dobmeier now lives at Golden Living Sorenson, where he is starting a railroad club.

RANDY ADCOCK (BS) is retired and living in Costa Rica. radcock2010@gmail.com

76

REBECCA FAHRLANDER (MA)

published "Unfriending Your Family" in the May 17 Washington Post. A UNO professor, she also was interviewed on the Fox program "Varney & Company" about social media issues. She is a part-time instructor in UNO's School of Public Administration.

82

LEO BIGA (BS) received

the 2015 Andy Award, an annual journalism grant at UNO, affording him a trip in June to Rwanda and Uganda. There he visited with fellow UNO graduate Jamie (Fox, 1992) Nollette, a former elementary school teacher who now heads the nonprofit Pipeline Worldwide, which performs sustainability projects in Rwanda, Uganda and other developing nations. Biga met with perpetrators and survivors of genocide and heard their stories of violence, loss and forgiveness-repentance. That included a visit to a genocide memorial and the Hotel Rwanda. He also visited Pipeline projects focused on water, farming and building schools and clinics. Also in Africa was Omahan and WBO lightweight boxing champion

Terence "Bud" Crawford, a former student of Nollette's at Skinner Magnet School in North Omaha. Crawford was the special guest at boxing convention in Uganda attended by boxers and coaches from all over Africa. Biga now is writing stories about his trip for various local print publications. He also is writing about his experiences at his blog, leoadambiga.com.

KATHERINE HAMILTON-SMITH (BA) was promoted to director of Public Affairs & Development for the Lake County (Ill.) Forest Preserve District. The district encompasses 31,000 acres of land in 68 distinct preserves, including historic sites, museums, visitor centers, golf courses, boating venues and more than 180 miles of land and water trails.

84

RICK POESCHL (BS)

was named the new fire chief in Lee's Summit, Mo. City Manager Stephen Arbo said,

"It was clear Rick possesses the leadership skills and vision to serve as our next fire chief. My decision was based upon a combination of his 26 years of experience as a firefighter, engineer, fire specialist, captain, battalion chief, and assistant chief of support services and his performance during the last six months as the acting fire chief."

87

KATHY KNUDSEN

(BS) (MA) in January celebrated 25 years owning Healthbreak, a worksite wellness company. Knudsen played on the UNO volleyball team from 1982- 1986 setting records still standing.

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88

LISA MUSCHALL

(BS) lives in Omaha and has accepted a new position as director of Administration and Operations at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing. lmuschal@unmc.edu

90

JOHN MURRAY (BS)

lives in Omaha and works at Foundation One Bank. He has been in the banking industry for 23 years. lmmljem1@cox.net

96

TORI RUBY (BSBA)

writes "After 7 years with Otis Elevator, I joined my husband to run our towing company, Midtown Towing in Omaha, where we service the Omaha metro area with towing and roadside assistance. It's been a great career transition!"

98

ERIC SHANKS (MPA)

lives in Antioch, Calif. He went on to receive a doctorate in political science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is a project manager for the Bay Area UASI in

San Francisco where he manages



Homeland Security-funded Medical and Public Health Projects. Shanks' Dissertation is titled "Political affect: An

investigation of visual behavior and political attitudes". Dr. Shanks research focused on relationships between affect and attitudes. His experiments included laboratory-controlled observations of visual attentions using the EyeLink II System which records eye movements. Research participants completed a Political Attitude Survey and were then shown slides containing various facial expressions. In each slide there appeared a sentence that was worded to contradict the facial expression in the frame. Shanks found significant differences in pupil size and gaze behavior between conservatives, moderates and liberals in these tests. See more at digitalcommons.unl.edu/dissertations/AAI3685478/ eric.shanks@sfgov.org

99

JOE MINARIK (BSBA)

Joe Minarik works in the government reporting department at TD Ameritrade in Omaha. After working in several different positions over the years, he says, he "has finally found a home," both in the job he does and the company where he works.

01

SUMMER MILLER

(BS) published her first cookbook in May 2015: "New Prairie Kitchen,"

which collects 50 recipes and 25 stories from chefs, farmers and artisans from Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota.



02

TOM JOHNSON (MBA)

was named vice president for finance and administration/treasurer (VPFA) at Central College in Pella, Iowa. "Tom brings a depth and breadth of experience, along with a creative entrepreneurial spirit,

that will strengthen our capacity for



sound, financial decision making," said Mark Putnam, president of Central College. "He's a person deeply committed to a rich student

experience and he will be very engaged in the life of the campus and the Pella community." Johnson is completing his Ph.D. in Education Leadership and Policy Studies from Iowa State University in Ames.

04

SHEENA KENNEDY

(BA) Lives in Elkhorn, Neb., and on May 30 married Brett Helgenberger. The two met while both attending UNO in 2006.

11

DEBRA DANIELSEN

(EMBA) lives in Council Bluffs, Iowa. In May she had a book signing event for "Vapor," a book she co-authored with Dr. Robin Gandhi. The book is a memoir and deals with the difficult subject of cybercrime and cyber dating. Danielsen@mac.com

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13

NATALIE MCGOVERN

(BS) was crowned Ms. Nebraska United States in April 2014.

She lives in Omaha and is singer-performer who also owns the princess party business Pick A Princess Parties. During her reign she spread awareness about her platform OCD and Mental Health



Awareness and supported Peace of Mind Foundation. McGovern has modeled for the Omaha Law League Fundraiser and volunteered with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and Victory Riding Academy. She has been featured in local and regional commercials, co-hosted a KFAB radio program, and walked in a Sherri Hill Fashion Show. Natalie was chosen to be a UNO Terrific 10 Communications student in 2013 and graduated with a Lambda Pi Eta distinction.

nmcgovern@unomaha.edu

SYDNEY FLEECE (BS) after graduating from UNO was accepted into the master's program for Occupational Therapy at Rush University in Chicago. She is in her last clinical rotation at Madonna Rehab Center in Lincoln then returns to Chicago for eight weeks of classwork before graduating in late August. She is one of a select few of OT graduates receiving the College of Health Sciences Dean's Award, presented to students who maintain a 4.0 GPA during their time at Rush. Fleece played volleyball for UNO.

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VIJAY PARALKAR (MS)

lives in Omaha and writes:

"Post-graduation I started working as career navigator at

Metropolitan Community College, Fort Omaha campus. This Fall 2015, I'll be joining Higher Education Leadership Ph. D. program at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, while working as graduate research assistant with Ohio's Discovery Center for Evaluation,



Research and Professional Learning. My academic advisor Dr. Abby Bjornsen and other faculty members at UNO Counseling department played a vital role in guiding and supporting me to accomplish this success. Thank you so much for UNO's contribution in shaping my career." hiedcounseling@gmail.com

IN MEMORIAM

A listing of alumni whose death the UNO Alumni Association has received notice of since Jan. 1, 2013. Years indicate graduation from UNO.

1942	Velma L. Ellithorpe	1962	Charles J. Searock		Karen K. Lohman
1948	John D. Carter		Desmond Dewey		Kenneth R. Boettcher
	Myron H. Milder	1964	William B. Yarbrough	1980	Doris M. Fyfe
1951	Andrew M. Hansen		Sandra (Bergstadt) Cooper	1981	Betty J. White
	Edward H. Stech	1965	Edmund A. Mackett		Sam F. Clinton
	Helen M. Patane		John W. Rushfeldt	1983	Irwin H. Nelson
1953	Richard A. Leed		Paul Degraff	1985	Martha M. Harmon
1954	Joyce E. Crouch	1966	Robert D. Alhouse	1988	Charles S. Kepler
	K. Gunnar Mossblad	1967	Edward Fitzgerald		Patricia N. Glasrud
1956	Harold L. Davis		Marilyn C. Riechel	1991	Susan Schlieker
	Russell D. Gorman	1968	Terrance L. Edstrom	1992	Jane D. Holveck
	Thomas E. Harper		Florian A. Grzywa		Kenneth Gustafson
1958	James C. Hicks		Richard F. Darling	1993	Rita D. Traynor
1959	Richard O. Clark	1969	Robert E. Welch	1995	Ken Hui
1960	Herbert J. Lucks		John Camper		Patricia T. Johnson
	Milo E. Cowdery	1970	Hans G. Lienhard	1996	Richard H. Sheumaker
	Robert O. Woodward	1971	Richard M. Ramirez	2002	Virginia H. Malone
	Velma D. Reimer		Kenneth G. Steine	2005	Kathleen L. Day
			Paul Davies	2006	Stephanie R. Atkins
			Virgil R. Eldridge	2008	Amanda L. Smith
		1972	James G. Fuller		Dana M. McCord
		1973	Joyce E. McWilliams		Ingrid C. Van Blerk
			Roger L. Reese	2010	Brian C. Rossi
		1974	Lavonne M. Spires	2012	Richard J. Kreulen
		1975	Claire Hauptman		Shaleana M. Johnson
			James R. Biscup	2013	Kathryn Gallagher
		1976	Lynn M. Peetz		
			Glenda Staff		

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communications like this magazine. Together, with UNO's worldwide alumni network, we can make our reach greater and our impact stronger.

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unoalumni.org/give



FUTURE ALUMS

Since 1991, the UNO Alumni Association has given more than 2,000 free shirts and bibs to children and grandchildren of UNO graduates! Get YOUR child a new O baby! shirt today! Submit a birth announcement within 1 year of birth by completing the form at unoalumni.org/futurealums

EMMA CANDIDA CORTEZ-JIMENEZ, daughter of Joel and Miriam (Jimenez, student) of Omaha.

RYAN JAMES RODGERS, son of Micah and Laura (Reynolds, '10) Rodgers of Omaha.

WILLIAM THOMAS MICHAELSEN, son of Amy and Adam ('09) Michaelson of Omaha.

HAZEL MARIE FITCH, granddaughter of Joyce Lusinski Fitch ('71) of Omaha.

MAISIE LAKE HOUGH, daughter of Michael (grad student) and Emily ('11, '14) Hough of Omaha.

OLO'WAN THOMAS RENDER, son of Elizabeth and Thomas ('08, '12) Render of Omaha.

BRIAR KAY LEE BUZZELL, daughter of Amanda (Wagner, '04) and Jason ('05) Buzzell of Omaha.

JOHN ROSS NEWCOMER, son of Russ and Diane ('14) Newcomer of Omaha.

BRUNO MURRAY ALIANO, son of Joe and Erin (Richardson, '00; '02) Aliano of Papillion, Neb.

AMELIA "MINNIE" RUTH VICE, daughter of Karen (Murphy, '06) and Jordan ('05) Vice of Omaha and granddaughter of Cy Ferraguti ('84) of Omaha.

BETHANY JOY RYBA, daughter of Brittney (Haak, '04) and Jeff ('03) Ryba of Omaha.

SLOANE HEIDI SCHLEGELMILCH, daughter of Joel and Danelle (Petersen, '06) Schlegelmilch of Omaha.

DEVYNN MONET WATSON, granddaughter of Dina Kruckenberg (Kaluza, '85) of Omaha.

CONNOR JAMES KANKOUSKY, son of Michelle (Manthei, '02; '08) and Chris ('01; '08) Kankousky of Omaha.

MICHAEL DAVID VOLLER, son of Saira (Albert, '02) and Zach ('03) Voller of Omaha.

ISAAC ADAM and **VIOLET KATHERINE BRAND**, son and daughter of Trevor and Catherine (Hinman, '07) Brand of Omaha and grandchildren of Suzanne ('79) and Bob ('75) Hinman of Omaha and of Kathy (Sexton, '77; '90) Brand of Omaha.

PIPER DENISE DENNIS, daughter of Matt and Tracy (Abler, '07; '09) Dennis of O'Neill, Neb.

GRAYSON DEAN COLWELL, son of Nicole (Leffler, '15) and Craig ('12) Colwell of Omaha.

ANDREW PEYMAN RINAKER, grandson of Dudley ('78) and Erin ('81) Rinaker of Omaha.

JOHN LINCOLN KINNEY, son of Pilar (Perez, '09) and John ('10) Kinney of O'Fallon, Mo., and grandson of Paul Perez ('83) of La Vista, Neb.

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SIGHTS & SOUNDS

A look at happenings on and off campus

Frozen Fun

The UNO hockey team was not alone at the Frozen Four in April. Hundreds of students and Maverick fans made the trek to watch the team play in Boston as UNO sold all 600 of its tickets to the game. The UNO Alumni Association and NU Foundation hosted a pregame watch gathering at The Greatest Bar across from TD Garden where the Mavs played.

In and Out

UNO Chancellor John Christensen in April oversaw a changing of the guard in UNO student government leadership. Leaving office (from left) were Adam Mackenzie (vice president) and Jordan Koch (president); entering were Brock Lewis (president) and Amanda Chapin (vice president). The UNO Alumni Association provides scholarships to both officers. Since 1983 that support has totaled nearly \$65,000.

Up, up and away

UNO students soared in April with Project HALON — High Altitude Learning Over Nebraska, launching a balloon outside PKI then monitoring its flight electronically. The balloon burst around 67,000 feet and landed 20 miles northeast near Honey Creek, Iowa.

Fallen but not Forgotten

UNO hosted "Remembering Our Fallen," an exhibit of military and personal photographs of the 179 men and women from the region who have died in service since Sept. 11, 2001. Patriotic Productions, a nonprofit organization founded by Bill and Evonne Williams of Omaha, staged the exhibit, on display in Mammel Hall in March.

Giving Counsel on Peace

Roey Gilad, Israel Consul General to the Midwest, visited UNO in March, speaking at a special public form about peace in the Middle East.

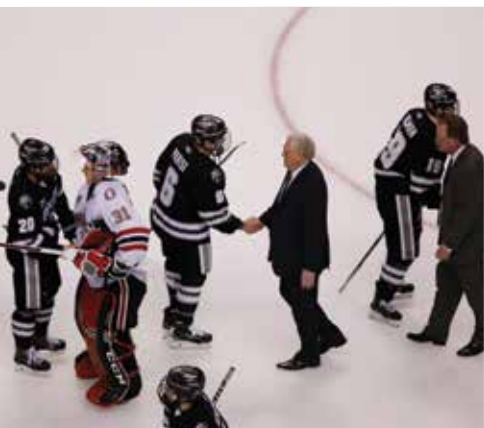
Pictures by Jeff Beieremann, University Relations





Selfie with the Guv

Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts visited UNO in February to speak and learn more about the Omaha Public Schools Middle College program housed in Kayser Hall. The program is for high ability learners in need of an alternative setting.



Big Apple meets Big O

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio was the keynote speaker for the University of Nebraska Peter J. Hoagland Lecture in April at Mammel Hall. De Blasio spoke about income inequality, calling it the "crisis of our time ... The crumbling of the middle class isn't just a problem on the East Coast, it's a national problem, and it requires a national commitment to solving it."



Color Blind

UNO's Indian Student Association hosted "Holi: Festival of Colors" in April, celebrating unity in diversity and promoting inclusion.



Maverick Day

The Omaha City Council voted to make April 21st UNO Maverick Hockey Day in Omaha, commemorating the team's appearance in the Frozen Four. Players, coaches, UNO Chancellor John Christensen and Vice Chancellor for Athletics Trev Alberts were there to accept the honor.



Can-Do

UNO's Pi Kappa Alpha once again staged Just Can It!, a food drive and homelessness awareness event to benefit The Salvation Army food pantry. UNO students slept outdoors in cardboard homes during a week at Crossroads Mall, accepting donations of money and non-perishable food.

Test your brainpower with these puzzles created by UNO graduate Terry Stickels ('76). An author, speaker and puzzle maker, Stickels' *FRAME GAMES* is published by *USA Weekend* magazine and in 600 newspapers. He has three new puzzle books being published by Dover Publications later this year: "Savage Sudoku," "The Big Brain Puzzle Book" and "Challenging Math Puzzles." For more information on Stickels, or to order any of his books, visit terrystickels.com

Mathematics — Puzzle 34

Debbie walks by a dish where she throws her loose change. She knows there are three coins in the dish and those three coins are either dimes or nickels but she can't see them. She also knows that there is an equal chance they could be any combination of the two coins. In other words, no one has done anything to prejudice the probabilities. Her dad walks by and she tells him she'll buy him a dinner if he can tell her what the chances are that at least one dime is in the dish. He answers $\frac{3}{4}$. No dinner for Debbie's dad. Can you tell Debbie what the correct answer is?

Language — Puzzle 7

These words share an interesting feature that is common, basic and known to all. What is it? Hint: Sound?

abuse contest permit
produce rebel use
convert

Language — Puzzle 59

Which of the following words is misspelled?

connoisseur sergeant
necessarily repertoire
supercillious cemetery

Wordplay — Puzzle 3

Here are 16 letters that form a common, everyday word. Using each given letter just once, can you figure out what the word is?

T	S	R	O
I	G	D	N
T	E	S	S
H	H	E	S

Puzzles taken from *The Big Brain Puzzle Book*, created by Terry Stickels for the Alzheimer's Association.

LANGUAGE: Each of the words can be pronounced two different ways and has two different meanings. Each word is both a noun and a verb. Words like this are called heteronyms.
LANGUAGE: Supercillious
WORDPLAY: Shortightedness

MATHEMATICS: 7/8. The possibilities: 7 of the 8 following combinations have at least one dime, as well as one nickel.
dime, dime, dime
dime, dime, nickel
dime, nickel, dime
dime, nickel, nickel
dime, nickel, nickel
nickel, dime, dime
nickel, dime, nickel
nickel, dime, nickel
nickel, dime, nickel
nickel, dime, dime

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JEFF LEHMKUHL, NEW MEXICO

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University of Nebraska at Omaha**

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30 The War for Water

It's more precious than oil or gold and the source of conflict around the world. See how Mavericks are helping people around the world work together to best manage water resources for today and tomorrow.

36 Testing the Waters

UNO faculty, students and alumni are testing the waters — from the banks of the Elkhorn to the shores of the Caribbean Sea to drought-parched Owens Valley in California ... and back home to faucets in Omaha.

42 Water into Wine

It's not that hard to turn water into wine ... or any other kind of spirit. The hard part is turning it into the good stuff. Plenty of UNO grads know good water is essential to whatever gets tapped, corked or bottled.