INTRODUCING
THE LIED
EDUCATION CENTER
FOR THE ARTS
AT CREIGHTON

IRMA’S LEGEND:
SHE WAS COACH,
COUNSELOR AND MOM

CREIGHTON ‘CHANGING
ITS LOCATION’ FROM
OMAHA TO WORLD
A New Home for the Arts: The Lied Education Center

Let us introduce you to the Lied Education Center for the Arts, Creighton’s newest facility on campus. After years of waiting, the arts have a home. Page 4

Remembering Irma; Coach, Counselor, and Mom to Many

Writer Bob Reilly helps us remember one of Creighton’s most popular characters, Irma Trumbauer, who was coach, counselor and a strict, but loving, Mom for decades at Creighton. Page 16

The International Creighton You Might Not Know About

Creighton’s international connections come through several people and places, both on campus and across the oceans. Page 22

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Barone Congratulates

Congratulations to WINDOW for recognizing Rosemary Gross. She is a difference maker.

As a basketball coach I grew to recognize Rosemary’s impact upon our student-athletes. I always believed that teachers should give students every chance to succeed. Rosemary not only provided this opportunity but also demanded it of each student-athlete.

I miss Rosemary’s attitude as well as her belief in the abilities of the students. Continued success in your efforts to make a difference.

Tony Barone
Head Basketball Coach
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas

Inopportune Typo

As you are by now no doubt aware, there was a magnificently inopportune typo in my letter which appeared in the Spring issue.

Our ’95 Markoe-DePorres Social Justice Lecturer, Mr. Ernesto Cortes, Jr., Southwest Regional Director of the Industrial Areas Foundation and a past MacArthur Fellow (so-called “genius grant”), is definitely not, as printed, a “communist organizer” but rather a community organizer. Although a few of the unenlightened may fail to see the difference, it is real and crucial — although, happily these days, largely laughable.

I hope the next issue of WINDOW will make this correction.

I would also appreciate your mentioning the details of the upcoming lecture, which will be Thursday, October 24, at 7:30 p.m. in the Business Administration Building. The speaker will be Dr. Jacqueline Pope, Associate Professor of Political Science at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Roger Bergman
Director, Justice & Peace Studies Program
Creighton University
rbjps@creighton.edu

Warming from Sun

I want to object to the false scientific presumptions in Robert Heaney’s letter. Global warming is not caused by production of heat on the earth. It is caused by the greenhouse effect which traps the sun’s rays in our atmosphere. The greenhouse effect is caused mainly by the build-up of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Heat, then, can enter more readily than it can escape.

I know Bob Heaney to be very intelligent. We were in the same fraternity. But in this case, his science is deficient.

Ward R. Anthony, MD’54
Boulder, Colo.

Rising to Hero Status

I was intrigued by your running a cover story on Fr. Markoe. When I was a student at Creighton I gathered that the De Porres Club was an embarrassment to the school administration. Yesterday’s pains are tomorrow’s heroes.

A few weeks ago I sent to Fr. Morrison a complimentary copy of my book, “America and the Founding of Israel: An Investigation of the Morality of America’s Role.” I suggested that he pass it on to the college library when he is finished with it.

Rev. John W. Mulhall, CSP, BA’50
Los Angeles, Calif.

China Connection

When I returned to Omaha to visit my family during Christmas I found a copy of WINDOW tucked away in a drawer. The article about Wen You-Yan heartened me. I was even a bit envious because I wished Creighton had established an exchange relationship with China while I studied there. I began my studies at Creighton after Ming T. Lee, professor of political science, passed away and before the history department hired a woman from Taiwan.

I guess in some respects I studied at Creighton at the wrong time, but my interest in China persevered. I must admit that my favorite political science professor, Ming Ivory, was Lee’s replacement.

During my visit home, I also learned Japanese was now being taught. Why not Chinese? I firmly believe Chinese, as a language, is now far more significant than Japanese and shall be for decades to come. Creighton risks too much by entering this late in teaching Japanese.

Pioneering universities are now teaching students Vietnamese and have been for a number of years.

Returning to the article concerning Wen You-Yan and Chinese art, I must point out that politics and the arts are intrinsically linked both in modern and traditional times in China. As in most academic settings, art funding has decreased or remained at the same level as in the late 1970s or early 1980s. The central government let most art academies and institutions go their own way beginning in the late 1980s. The decentralized system of cultural funding. Some arts institutions opened karaoke bars, laser disc movie theatres, or galleries catering to foreign-

Great Writing

I must admit it is indeed a pleasure to read great writing in WINDOW magazine these days. Thank you for continuing publication of such a fine magazine.

I make the magazine do some extra work. I give it to the Lutheran minister in our area. He appreciates it very much and often includes material from it in his preaching.

I am sure you will be very pleased to realize some of its other powerful uses.

Margaret E. DeMars, MA’48
Spring Hill, Fla.

Dear Readers:

In the Spring Issue of this magazine, at Pages 15 through 20, we published a set of 173 questions which were and are the proprietary interest of the Archdiocese of Omaha and protected by federal copyright laws. Regrettably, this entire set of questions was published without the consent of the Archdiocese of Omaha. We regret this error and remind our readers that any further publication of these questions without the consent of the Archdiocese of Omaha will violate federal copyright laws.

Editor
A NEW HOME FOR THE ARTS AT CREIGHTON

“We shape our buildings: thereafter they shape us”


By Mary Heng
Parting is such sweet sorrow, but in this case, the regrets are fading fast. In May, the Lied Education Center for the Arts at Creighton celebrated its grand opening, which actually capped numerous sneak previews and a full semester of classes.

But now it’s official. Students and faculty in fine and performing arts have abandoned a hodgepodge of facilities spread out over campus and moved to their new home west of the Ahmanson Law Center.

And, like every moving day, this one has left in its wake stacks of unpacked boxes, settling-in pains, and the inevitable hindsight that comes with a new house.

Fine tuning continues, particularly in choral music rooms where instructors strive for perfect pitch and minimal echo, and throughout the building as occupants struggle furiously to rub out the new smell and imprint the building with paint, ceramic dust and the general untidiness that comes with art.

“People ask, ‘Is it finished yet?’” said Dr. Roger Aikin, chair of fine and performing arts. “I always say ‘no.’ The building suggests, and is, an ongoing process.”

The $11 million building was funded by the Lied Foundation Trust and the Peter Kiewit Foundation. But other donations are sprinkled throughout the building, including six grand pianos on long-term loan from the Omaha firm, Pianos Plus, carpeting from Mr. and Mrs. Louis Blumkin, and other gifts, including those from faculty and alumni.

The result is a 71,600-square-foot nucleus from which Creighton students, staff members, and area artists and performers will ply a rich variety of talents.

The Lied Education Center for the Arts is comprehensive in its offerings,

At left, the west face of the Lied Education Center for the Arts shines in the late afternoon sun. At right, the recurring architectural theme of pentagonal spaces shows up in the entry-room of the new Art Gallery and is reflected in the light bar near the ceiling. Windows at the top add an airy quality to the space.
with class and studio room for dance, theater, sculpture, ceramics, drawing, painting, printmaking and photography.

And, like the artists whom it will nurture, this building does more than house bodies and equipment. It expresses personality.

The Lied flaunts an eclectic architecture, a post-modern design that mixes exposed duct work, oversized stone blocks and rich carpeting with a Persian print. That combination, along with quirky color choices — vibrant moss green glazed tile in several areas — has produced a fair amount of head scratching.

But, then, a primary goal of art has always been to take reality by surprise, and in that, the Lied does not disappoint.

“It’s a wonderful facility and a fun building,” said Fr. Don Doll, S.J., the Charles and Mary Heider Endowed Jesuit Faculty chair and professor of photography. “What the architect has done is create a surprise in every room.”

A design too faithful to one period or rooted in one discipline would have boxed in the creativity it was meant to inspire. And the ability of all art to evoke emotion and thought lies in subjective interpretation and debate. Or, more simply put: Hey, it’s art.

The two most debated elements of the building are space and light, and in that, there is a fair amount of creative division.

A few disciplines surrendered raw square footage for better facilities, said Fr. Michael Flecky, S.J., associate chair and associate professor of visual arts, who teaches photography.

“We did lose some photography space, but what we have is much better organized,” he said.

In the old Dental Building, his office was on the first floor, he said, but almost...
all of his classes were in the far corner of the third floor, making for a long trek juggling materials and equipment. In the Lied, his office is down the hall from classrooms.

“Light was really good in the old Dental Building,” said Kristin Pluhacek, who earned her BFA in 1990 and teaches drawing part-time in Omaha. “There’s a lot more light here,” said Neve Grosse, an art major who will graduate in December. “The windows are huge.”

During an alumni showing in April, Creighton graduates and their families pronounced the building a masterpiece of unsurpassed proportions.

The exhibition showcased alumni works in adjoining pentagon-shaped galleries with parquet wood floors, a stark contrast from past facilities.

“I wish we could have had this,” said Teresa Onoda also, a landscape painter from San Francisco who earned her BFA in 1975. Back then, Onoda said, painters worked out of a warehouse downtown.

“We weren’t even on campus,” she said. “The studios here are gorgeous. The light is great; the storage is good. You can look out a window and see trees, where in so many studios you can’t.”

“I don’t think we lost a thing,” said painter Johnna Eck from Omaha, who earned her BFA in 1985. “And we gained a lot of space, space that is uplifting.”

A few visual arts majors voiced the reservation that the new structure is, well, just too darned clean for their tastes. Art, they said, is messy. They are currently working to rectify this design flaw with the full palette of materials at their disposal.

“You always feel at home in a place you’re familiar with,” said Joanne Mihelich, who earned her BFA in 1991. “In the old building, we felt at ease to make our mess and live with it.”

But there was other clutter that all fine arts and performing arts students were happy to leave behind. The Lied fulfills a multitude of long-awaited, practical needs.

Because the building was built from scratch, designers brought the “messy arts” — painting, set design, sculpture, film, printmaking and ceramics — into compliance with federal health standards with spray painting booths, dust vacuum hoods and better ventilation in chemical mixing rooms.

“That’s a lot safer environment now because it’s a lot cleaner,” said Brian Harvey, a Creighton dark room technician.

And while most artists assume their avocation comes with a fair amount of discomfort — what is art without suffering? — technical considerations have taken some of the grief out of the expression.

“In the old facility, we often times couldn’t even get hot water in the dark-rooms,” Harvey said.

The new center has two separate group dark rooms, two thesis dark rooms, and one color dark room, he said, all with temperature controlled sinks. A computer graphics classroom is under construction.

For theater students, the move to the Lied might be described as the end of a long-running game of dungeons and dragons.

For decades, theater students have made do with a Quonset hut wedged between N. 30th, Burt and Cuming streets. The unanimous consensus was that, as an auditorium, it made a pretty good garage. Soundproofing from outside traffic noise was virtually nonexistent, which led to more than a few humorous pauses.

“The first show I was ever in there was supposed to have a helicopter in one scene,” said Bill Van Deest, Creighton’s
scenic and lighting designer.

"Every time Life Flight (St. Joseph Hospital’s rescue helicopter) came over us, we thought it was our cue."

The audience of another show had trouble achieving a suspension of time and place because every few minutes, a siren blared into what was supposed to be the silence of a barren desert.

Sirens and helicopter intrusions are now history. The theater, really a building within a building, is soundproofed with six inches of concrete on top of eight inches of insulation.

The theater seats 350 and, like the rest of the building, pits elements against one another: cherry wood, unpainted cement and a vivid green festival-style border around the stage.

"The theater really has that cosmopolitan feeling that you might see in New York or Chicago," said a woman touring the facility during the alumni exhibition.

The stage itself has 10-foot-high doors in the rear that open to the set construction workshop.

The stage also boasts a three-level orchestra pit and the highest fly gallery in Omaha, rising five stories, which means that sets can be moved quickly and stored overhead between acts and, more importantly, between shows.

Before, minus the set workshop and the fly gallery, once scenes were built on stage, they stayed put until the final curtain call, Van Deest said. Now, an evening play can run concurrently with recitals or day-time rehearsals for other events.

Backstage are make-up and dressing rooms, and next door is a “black box” theater, a thoroughly flexible studio with

Opposite page, top: guitarist Ron Cooley gives a concert at the Lied; below, sculpture class. The dance studio practice space is shown on this page. It has a mirrored wall (which can be covered) and high ceilings that permit a dancer to be carried aloft by her partner.
a moveable stage and seating for more intimate productions.

Theater facilities and the main stage were placed between the music and dance areas because all share performance space.

The center showcases these performers with separate studios and practice areas designed for each specialty. The dance studio has a sprung floor and separate offices and shower facilities.

The Lied offers more individual work space for musicians, with four practice rooms, a half dozen individual classrooms and offices, two larger studios, and an electronic music lab.

Each room corrects a number of eccentricities of the old facilities that struck a sour note with musicians.

“For one, the lights in the old rehearsal space tuned to B flat,” said Carole Seitz, associate professor of music. “It was a problem, particularly for students who were already struggling to get the right pitch.”

The old choral facilities had 8-foot ceilings, she said. The new ones are 14 feet high for optimal resonance. Practice rooms are intentionally not square, so sound doesn’t bounce off the walls, she said. Each is soundproofed with double layers of insulation.
“Try to imagine having a language class next to an un-soundproofed room where the choir is singing,” Aikin said.

But perhaps the most meaningful component of the Lied is one of place. For the first time in the history of the University, all of Creighton’s fine arts majors have one building from which they can extract their budding profession through classes and their own sweat.

Shuffled to a progression of garages, warehouses and condemned buildings designed for dentists and auto mechanics, fine and performing arts students now have a permanent home.

“The students have been great,” Aikin said. “They became used to working in spaces that were not ideal.”

In fact, there is a survival instinct unique to artists that almost begs them to seek out the worst accommodations — and thrive in them like flowering weeds.

No matter their calling, artists have always been somewhat of a reclusive breed that nonetheless needs social communities for interacting with kindred spirits.

“I like the building, not for the building itself, but because it brought the art community together,” Grosse said. “We have our own place now.”

In their first full semester in the building, Grosse said fine arts students knit into what one of her instructors called the most cohesive class in memory, which she attributed to the new building.

“It’s a pride of ownership, having a place to call your own. We never had our own place before.”

That proprietorship and an awe at the newness of it all has inspired a rare trait among students.

“They really like it, and they’re trying...
to keep their areas clean,” Seitz said. Now that’s art.

The Lied’s sense of esprit de corps is proving a powerful recruiting asset. Already, prospective freshmen touring the campus this spring critiqued the center with resounding approval, Aikin said.

“If half of those students come to Creighton, we believe the building has done its job,” he said.

The draw takes on broader dimensions both for the University and with the community at large.

The center was not created solely for fine and performing arts majors. Fine arts has always been a service department, Aikin said, each year reaching more than 1,600 students, of whom about 50 are fine arts majors.

All students are required to take a fine arts class, in part because a grounding in cultural pursuits lies at the heart of a Jesuit education. Those core classes often woo students from diverse callings into a secondary love affair with music, theater or another calling that’s the polar opposite of their chosen profession.

“You’d be surprised the number of doctors, lawyers and technical professionals who adopt a fine arts minor,” Aikin said.

From its inception, the center was designed to encompass community education and artistic development, to reach area artists who also are making do with less-than-ideal accommodations. That effort began immediately.

Already, the center is hosting classes for the Omaha Academy of Ballet. The Lied has initiated a wide variety of classes and seminars directed to the community, including:

- A day-long recital for the students of private music instructors and a concert for young artists.
- The annual festival of the five-state area Hand Bell Association.
- The Nebraska Shakespeare Festival.
- A three-week seminar for gifted children.
- The 15th biannual convention of the American Society for Deaf Children.

On these pages are shown various scenes in the theater arts facilities. Above, a pianist rehearses on the Lied’s main stage. Below, a troupe of dancers performs for the grand opening of the facility. Opposite page, the Lied stage is being used for setup and painting of sets for the city’s Shakespeare on the Green presentations of The Taming of the Shrew and Henry V. Inset shows two actors in the “black box” theater.
which will include workshops in pantomime and acting for deaf children.

• The first of its visiting artists, Cecil Cooper, a Jamaican visual artist who will give classes oriented to African Americans.

• The Jesuit Institute for the Arts, a collection of summer classes, seminars, performances and exhibitions led by noted Jesuits from across the country, which will kick off in June. The institute celebrates the Jesuit tradition of supporting and leading art that dates back to the 16th century. Classes in every fine art discipline will be open to the public, but several are tailored specifically to Jesuits.

Many of the events target the young, with good reason.

Aikin cited a recent study that sug-

Opposite page, the curving stairway to the lowest floor is a piece of art itself. Inset shows Don Doll, S.J., exhibiting his CD-ROM VisionQuest to visitors during the Lied's grand opening. At right above, pottery class. Below, a publication design class is held in the new computer laboratory on the lowest floor.

gests Americans' cultural tastes are shifting. Fewer attend opera and the symphony, more visit museums and sample informal musical concerts. Aikin theorized that exposure is the key.

"Not everyone who takes an art class or a music class grows up to be an artist or musician, but they are more likely to go to museums and concerts."

Already, the Lied is proof: If you build it, they will come. The first performance at the center, "Working," an adaptation of Studs Terkel's book by the same name, sold out, and the staff has been inundated with requests for seminars, classes and space for group productions.

The interest is an encouraging sign that art isn't, and never was, a separate world, Aikin said, but perhaps one in which orphaned musical notes and brush strokes were waiting for a flash of inspiration — and a place to converge.

"I always wonder if the next Georgia O'Keeffe is out there, or the next Bach," he said. "If you never pick up an instrument or a brush, you'll never know. We've tried to make this a place where those introductions happen."
How many people do you know who can be identified by a single name? Madonna, Shaq, Chantal, Duce ... and Irma.

Irma Trumbauer has been profiled in alumni publications, fraternity histories and a spate of citations. Bob McMorris, Mike Kelly and Bill Ramsey, BS'55, have written of her exploits in the Omaha World-Herald.

She’s walking down New York’s Fifth Avenue with her daughter, Marie, when they hear a passerby mutter, “That couldn’t be Irma???” She whirls and acknowledges, “Yes, I’m Irma.” One more global recognition by a Creighton alumnus.

When Father Neil Cahill, S.J., an old friend of Irma’s, concluded her funeral service this past March, he asked the congregation: “How many funerals have you attended where the luncheon afterwards was served in a room named for the deceased?”

True. The former faculty/staff dining room now bears a plaque calling that facility after its longtime duchess. That’s merely a formality. The place was always “Irma’s Room.”

Along with the Student Center, the dormitories, the gym, and a fair chunk of the rest of the real estate that is Creighton.

Irma was indeed unique, a 40-year Bluejay veteran who turned a mundane job into a vocation. She evokes a litany of titles, from coach to counsellor, and provides a maternal link to campus for thousands of graduates.

Irma Trumbauer didn’t light on the Creighton campus as a
middle-aged woman minus any personal history. There’s another story to be told here, a rather remarkable story. But you’ll have to wait for the book.

What book?

Bob Trumbauer, Irma’s son, is working on pulling this tale together, filling in the hidden years before aprons and athletics. But don’t write for copies just yet.

For now, let’s stick with the oft-reported data. Irma Erixon was born on a farm between Mondamin and Magnolia in Iowa, about 40 miles northeast of Omaha. The year was 1903, the same year the Wright Brothers got off the ground and Henry Ford launched his empire.

The Panama Canal Treaty was signed, Jack London published “The Call of the Wild,” and the pioneering motion picture, “Great Train Robbery,” hit the screens.

We know Irma attended St. Francis Academy in Council Bluffs and Clarke College in Dubuque, did some teaching, became Mrs. Byron Trumbauer, had a son and daughter, moved to Omaha, and, in 1960, became a widow.

“We couldn’t have had a better mother growing up,” insists Bob Trumbauer, veteran teacher and administrator in the Omaha Public Schools. “She was a very loving person, assertive, but never abusive. A good disciplinarian, but I don’t remember her ever spanking me. She got across to us that whatever problems we had, we could deal with them.”

His sister, Marie Larsen, who works for Mass Mutual, agrees.

“When we’d have friends in,” she recalls, “and we were playing in our basement and bedtime arrived, she’d come to the head of the stairs and say, ‘Good night.’ That was it. Everyone left.”

The Trumbauer kids also have a positive image of their father as a role model and remark on the love and devotion Irma showered on him when he was alive.

“We were poor, and lived in the poor dining area like a benevolent warden, emphasizing hospitality, switched to the new Brandeis Center, where she patrolled the cafeteria, which must have been a cut below Beal’s on a Mad Men style amity and an improved menu. Still, the Medical School cafeteria, which must have been a cut below Beal’s on a Mad Cow day, caught the attention of city inspectors who closed it down. Irma always suspected one of the staff physicians notified the authorities.

Moving west to the main campus, Irma became part of The Beanery ambience, when a cup of coffee was 6 cents and you paid in cash. Before long she had earned the dubious sobriquet of “Hamburger Queen.” Rising in rank and responsibility, she switched to the new Brandeis Center, where she patrolled the dining area like a benevolent warden, emphasizing hospitality, but alert for infractions.

Former Creighton public relations director Harry Dolphin, BS'49, witnessed her censuring students for their off-color language.

“Faculty members, too,” adds Harry. “No arguments. And she would nail kids who looked exceptionally sloppy and convince them to shape up. She wanted everyone to act as if they were at her table.”

Strangers to the dining room came under her immediate scrutiny.

“‘Who’s that guy?’ she’d ask me with a mixture of inquiry and disdain,” says former biology chair, Dr. Al Schlesinger. “I’d tell her I didn’t know, so she’d probe until she found out. You had to register in with Irma before you gained acceptance.”

Schlesinger also felt her ire when he quipped to a friend about the high caloric content of certain menu items. Irma overheard the remark, whirled around, then pointed to a table where maintenance workers were dining. “You don’t hear them complaining, do you?” she shouted.

Irma was given honor after honor by Creighton and those with whom she came in contact: Honorary Letterman, Honorary Alumnus, Outstanding Omaha Citizen, Centennial Sweetheart... and many more.
Lamely, Schlesinger opined that they probably burn more calories than a guy pushing a pencil or supervising a lab.

“She didn’t speak to me for a while,” concludes Al.

This fierce loyalty was accorded a succession of food service firms that handled the Creighton account. Even when they didn’t totally appreciate the difference Irma Trumbauer made to their operation, she defended them. She backed down for no one. Not Jesuits, not administrators, not even visiting dignitaries. Not when they were wrong. She’d brook no criticism of employees who worked with or for her and could stifle dissent with a scornful glance.

One senior secretary, trying to slip ahead in the food line, was detected and admonished by Irma.

“Do you know who I am?” huffed the secretary.

“Yes,” retorted Irma. “I know who the hell you are. Now get to the end of the line.”

She might mutter to herself about some administrator. “For cripes sake, who does he think he is?”

But, if you were a friend of Irma, or if you handled her in the right way, you got everything you wanted. A larger table? She’d move some dilatory squatters. Some special selection? She’d hunt it up. Harry Dolphin recalls that the “heavy hitters” who came on campus often sought out Irma for a chat.

An advance man for President Richard Nixon, set to make a 1967 campus visit, pumped Bill Ramsey, then the public relations director, for some local references that might favorably launch the President’s remarks. Bill told him about Irma. So Nixon began his comments to the overflow crowd by telling them he never would have made it inside the Student Center if it hadn’t been for Irma. The place erupted.

She seemed ever present, like your mother waiting for you to return from kindergarten. When you laid a one-liner on her, she might laugh, give you one of those “get-outa-here” shoves, and an almost coquettish grin.

“You were going to be treated very well,” sums up Schlesinger, “if you behaved.”

Even though she sometimes called Dr. Schlesinger “Arthur,” after his more famous (well, maybe not locally) namesake, and confused sociology chairman Jack Angus with the late “Chuck” Zuegner when addressing him, Irma was generally remarkable for remembering, not only names, but also details about students and faculty. Years later she might quiz an alumnus about a girl he’d dated or remind him of some escapade that got him into trouble.

Recalling names also provided Irma with power.

“Hoover!” she’d shout. “What are you doing?” That settled down the future dentist.

When a food riot got out of hand and a hastily-summoned Jesuit failed to quell it, Irma took over and restored order. Unflappable, she also moved in when the adjusting of an overhead light fixture sprayed dust and insects on a table already set for a major banquet. “I’ll handle it,” she reassured Harry Dolphin. Before the guests arrived, she had the linen cloths swept clean.

“But,” says Dolphin, “I often wondered if those people noticed that some of the pepper on their salads had legs.”

An unabashed admirer of Irma’s people skills, the former public relations director says he’d known a lot of people who have studied psychology but that none of them could read a person like Irma.

“She always understood what you were saying. Age didn’t matter. She seldom asked for clarification. She could be whatever you needed - a friend, a parent, a sister.”

Her daughter, Marie, benefitted from this tough love approach.

“Early in my marriage,” recalls Marie, “I got into some silly argument with my husband, and I called my mother to get some sympathy. She told me, ‘You married that man. You’re going to be with him the rest of your life. You handle your problems.’”

One of Irma’s closest Creighton friends was Coach John “Red” McManus. During his bachelor days, she kept trying to marry him off to some “nice girl.” Red admired the extra dimension she brought to all her relationships.

“She had a great way with kids,” he asserts.

“Many students were homesick, feeling like they had nobody. She’d sense that and treat them like a real mother. She was tender-hearted, but also knew when to be tough. She could handle even some of the roughest types, and often made them her enforcers.”

John “Jocko” Ilcisin, BA’69, now a coach and teacher at Gross High School in Omaha, recalled those intuitive qualities when he was inhabiting the hardwoods and academic halls at Creighton.

“She had a tremendous ability to bring you up, or, if you were too big for your britches, to bring you down. Either way, you appreciated it.”

For every student that felt the sting of Irma’s tongue, 20 felt the comfort of an encouraging arm.

“She was always for the underdog,” says son Bob.

And Marie admits Irma was not overly emotional in her consolation.

“A hand on your shoulder might be it.”

She worried about a sister, a single parent, with 14 children. And she took another sister travelling with her, also escorting this handicapped sibling on shopping trips. “Buy what you want,” Irma would tell her.

There are numerous tales of her lending money to temporarily impoverished students or putting meals on the cuff to those who ran short at month’s end.

“One girl typically spent her check from home by the 28th of the month,” recalls Fr. Cahill. “Irma would lecture her about better planning, then produce the plate she’d already prepared for her.”
John Mulhall, a great character himself and once a Creighton employee before creating his own successful landscaping firm, experienced Irma’s largesse.

“In 1963,” he recites with compelling brogue, “I was 10 years in the States and headed back to Ireland for the first time. Irma was moved by the fact that I was going to see my parents after all these years. We had four children then, and not a lot of money. Irma sent for me and handed me some cash she had collected, telling me it was to make my trip more enjoyable.”

While Dr. Dave Haberman, JD’64, was running the journalism program at Creighton, he also was active with St. Vincent de Paul at St. John’s Church, and was working with a Hispanic family with one son who was constantly in trouble. He convinced Irma to give the son a job.

“First,” says Dave, “Irma fed him. She told me he ate so much she was afraid she’d have to order more food. But she was delighted he was full. And she put him on the right track.”

Irma’s ability to adapt herself to each new generation was what impressed Omaha attorney Terry Grennan.

“She was able to re-focus herself as she aged,” he explains, “and to get things jump-started from a different point of view. I’ve always felt she came to Creighton at just the right time, providing some stability for dorm students as the place became more of a residential campus. She added a sense of reality to the rarefied atmosphere of academe.”

Grennan was part of the fraternity that owes its existence to Irma. It began with an intramural team dubbed the Irma Knights (they agreed “Irma-ites” sounded too much like “termites”), for which she was coach, mentor and inspiration. This aggregation evolved into a social fraternity called the IKEs (Iota Kappa Epsilon), with the “I” symbolizing “Irma.” She became the nation’s only fully-initiated member of a men’s fraternity, qualifying by pushing a bean up Fontenelle Boulevard with her nose.

When Dr. Jim Smith transferred to Creighton in 1958, he pledged the IKEs and met Irma for the first time.

“I saw her my first day on campus,” the Omaha dentist recalls, “and soon realized she was the perfect go-between for us versus them — the students and the Jesuits. She gave credibility to the students, taught us how to get along and she made it all fun. She often reminded me of the dumb things I had done, but she never called me dumb. She could think like guys think.”

That was a trait Irma possessed, the ability to suggest locker room camaraderie, without the reputed profanity, and without losing her own role and dignity.

The IKEs (who later merged into the national fraternity of Sigma Alpha Epsilon) began as a service frat, ushering at basketball games, running in track meets, lending their support to other athletic endeavors. And, when they fielded a winning touch football team, Irma was a major part of this success.

In a World-Herald column, reporter Tom Allan reproduced a string of her memorable half-time quotes, including these observations:

“Listen buster, don’t come around huffin’ and puffin’ and try to tell me you’re out of shape. Git in there and drive.”

“Don’t be bothering the referee by arguing with him. You might get him all confused.”

The IKEs had their ups and downs, earning banishment, then probation, as the result of the drinking at their first party. They heard about that from Irma.

“For someone without any special speech training,” says Fr. Cahill, “Irma was a pretty effective orator. At their dinners, she spoke like a pro, exhorting members to get in line with University regulations.”

The IKEs have survived the years, and still gather in reunions that have attracted up to 150 couples. While she was able, Irma made all these gatherings.

On one occasion, held at the old Fontennelle Hotel, one happy returnee, confessing he’d had too much to drink, said he thought he’d better get home.

“Where the hell do you think you are?” asked Irma.

He was staying at the hotel.

Of course, Irma’s great love was athletics. When her son, Bob, lettered in four sports at both North High School and the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Irma was always in the stands. She was named “Rooter of the Year” at North, and often had to juggle her allegiances when her beloved Bluejays were scheduled in conflict with Bob’s contests.

No one who has attended Creighton basketball games for the four decades of Irma’s presence will forget her enthusiastic outbursts, delivered from her post near the bench. Before any Creighton player launched a free throw attempt, she would audibly add that number to the score. Always the optimist, she doled out kudos, reassuring pats and critical glances.

“My mother came to the games sometimes,” recounts “Red” McManus, “and she’d sit by Irma with her rosary in her hands, and close her eyes during crucial points. Irma would tell her what happened.”

Irma had other unofficial duties.

“Once, when I was in the hospital,” related Fr. Cahill, “and was teaching

Sometime in the 1950s, Irma even was a coach and cheered her fraternity lads of the Irma Knights with typical “tough love,” saying: "Listen, buster, get in there and drive ..."
and testing in absentia, one basketball player, taking advantage of my absence, missed two weeks of class. I told him he was through. He protested, reminding me of all he’d done for Creighton. I told him he’d have to see Irma and tell her what he’d done. She worked him over. And I let him back in. We helped each other a lot that way.”

As often as she could, Irma travelled with the team, usually paying her own way. When Red’s squad earned their first NCAA bid, team members collected enough money in an hour and a half of Student Center solicitations to take their Number One fan with them.

Jack Payne, who broadcast Creighton games for years, remembers her in the hotel lobby during that tourney. She was seated near the team, holding a pom pon in her lap. A stranger came up and asked if she were a mother to one of the players.

“Hell, no, honey,” she shot back, “I’m the senior cheer leader.”

Which she was.

Once, when the team landed in Hawaii for a game, Irma drew more cheers than the players and coaches. She was a sure-fire hit at alumni functions.

“She was great when travelling,” contends Mike Leighton, BA’70, Creighton’s vice president for university relations. “She’d keep everyone’s spirits up, reminding you that, no matter what the problem was, it wasn’t as tough as some of the situations she could recite. You’d see her with her arm around a player in a slump, or chatting someone else out of the dolor of a failed romance. When we’d eat in a restaurant, she’d cozy up to the waiters and waitresses, ferreting out their life stories. When she wasn’t along, alumni would invariably inquire about her.”

Dr. Lee Bevilacqua, MD’61, the team physician, knew Irma very well, and echoes the admiration for her success with young-sters. Many Creighton athletes shared digs with “Doc,” and, for 19 years, Irma was part of that assemblage, acting as surrogate house mother.

“There were always people around in those days,” recalls Bevilacqua, “and we had fun. Domestically, the place left a lot to be desired. We had the only stove that flushed and the only garbage disposal that threw up.”

No slouch with a quip himself, Bevilacqua was a match for Irma. Once, when they were discussing travel, Irma said she’d like to go somewhere she’d never been before.

“How about the kitchen?” countered Doc.

Those were the good years, the scrapbook years, when Irma was amassing awards as Honorary Letterman, Honorary Alumnus, Honorary Parade Marshal for Homecoming, Outstanding Omaha Citizen, Centennial Sweetheart. She even placed second as a write-in candidate for best-looking girl on campus.

She adored her six grandchildren, spending a weekend a month with each, and, before that, taking them along on her trips. At home she loved to read (“Isn’t that George Burns something?”), watch sports on television, and, most of all, visit with friends. Doc Bevilacqua remembers her as a good eater who favored fruits and vegetables, enjoyed her steaks broiled, and, like former Creighton president, Fr. Carl Reinert, had a passion for hamburgers.

From Bevilacqua’s she moved to an apartment with a food service associate, then went to live with her daughter for four years. A car struck her in December of 1990, tearing up her right knee, and forcing her retirement from Creighton. Using a walker and wheelchair, she managed to get out and around, attending games, seeing friends, but she absented herself from the more recent IKEs’ reunions.

“I’m getting too old to stay up late,” she explained, “and I’m starting to forget the names of the boys.” That fact embarrassed her.

Marie would take her to the casinos. Sloan, Onawa, Council Bluffs.

“I’d wheel her in,” says Marie, “and she’d sit by the slots, inserting a quarter at a time. We’d be there until midnight, but when I’d suggest we leave, Irma would insist she wasn’t tired and could go all night. I had to drag her out of there. She was lucky, too. Twice, on successive weekends, she hit

From her post in whatever faculty dining room was her current venue, Irma would patrol the patron tables as well as the steam tables. Often she would “encourage” the patrons to say nice things about the food service and sometimes she would simply exchange pleasantries, calling patrons by their first names.
the $500 jackpots. Someone watching her said it was too bad she hadn’t used 3 quarters. ‘Listen,’ she said, ‘$500 is a lot of money.’ She was generous all her life. Even then, if you ran out of cash, she’d offer you coins from her tray.”

In August of 1995, Irma broke her hip, ending up in Omaha’s Immanuel Medical Center where they repaired the damage as well as they could. After a month recuperating, Irma transferred to the Good Samaritan Center in Millard. With typical upbeat acceptance, she asked her son, “Bob, how did you find this place?”

Sue Mitchell, social services assistant at Good Samaritan, said Irma quickly came to love this final home. “After breakfast,” she recounts, “Irma would wheel herself into the lobby, where she could see and greet everyone coming in. When I would take prospective residents on tour, Irma always happened to be sitting out somewhere. She was our best salesperson. ‘Oh, honey,’ she’d say, ‘you’re going to love it here. Good food, nice people.’ She liked all of the men that lived or worked here. Sometimes, with a smile, she’d say, ‘If I were only 50 years younger...’”

Bob and Marie visited her every day. “And she loved seeing the grandchildren,” says Bob, “and her five great grandchildren.”

The staff met regularly to discuss each patient, and invited both the patient and family members to sit in on these sessions. Bob and Marie were always there. At one meeting, a staff professional outlined the multitude of recreational opportunities. Addressing Irma, he commented, “I notice you come to all of these things, but you don’t participate. What would interest you?”

From her wheelchair, Irma replied, “How about jumping rope?”

The children refused to consider amputation, as did Irma, so she endured the pain, and never lost her sharp edge. Impending death was nothing new to her. She saw her husband die, lost her retarded sister, agonized over Fr. Reinert’s lingering illness, was summoned to Fr. Labaj’s sick bed. She’d mourned the loss of Fr. Linn and so many other friends.

Irma and Fr. Tony Weber, S.J., were especially close. When Fr. Weber was dying of cancer and his hospital room was off limits to most visitors, Irma shoved her way past staff members and spent much of that last week with him. So she wasn’t afraid of dying, and she retained her humor and equilibrium to the end.

Red McManus was among her many visitors. “She had free run out there,” says Red. “She was all over the place. But her memory was going. She asked me if any of the boys had died. So I told her about Tim Powers, and Chuck Officer, and Dick McMahon, and Wally Anderzunas. We had a great talk that day.”

This past spring, in mid-March, all the conversations ceased. At age 93, Irma Trumbauer quietly died. Fr. Neil Cahill celebrated the funeral Mass at St. John’s campus church, with a congregation more male than female. Her boys. And their boys, and their girls, and their wives. And others who remembered Irma.

Cahill described Irma in Heaven, telling people what to do, rearranging things, meeting Dr. Ted Urban and asking him what he was doing there. He read from St. John about loving God above all things and your neighbor as yourself. The Gospel reminded listeners of Christ’s words that whatever you did for the least of His brethren, you did for Him. The reference to Irma was obvious.

“She was one of a kind,” said Cahill. “Sui generis. Like land, which is defined as any God-given, free natural resource whose supply cannot be increased. In the long run or short run, Irma cannot be increased.”

At her wake the previous evening, many of her “boys” offered views of Irma, expanding the legend. Every person with whom I spoke had stories, plus names of 10 others I should interview. Even at the Good Samaritan Center, where Irma was resident only a few months, she made a great impact.

“Certain people stand out,” says Sue Mitchell, “and Irma was one of these. She made your day. People still talk about her. Remember when Irma did this. Remember when Irma said that.”

Like her 40 years at Creighton. Nothing but good memories. She defined her own job and gave it a universality never intended. Thousands of graduates who can’t remember Newton’s Law or Shakespeare’s birthplace will always remember Irma.

Years ago, Fr. Cahill received a letter from Irma, written on a Sunday morning from a Los Angeles bus station. The letter ended:

“I’ve had a very good vacation, and am glad to be going home.”

That could be her epitaph.
It’s been said a number of ways to the point of overload. Communities, mar-
kets and economies are global. Networks are international. The case of the incredible shrinking world.

Beyond the cliches, two simple facts emerge. No one can hole up in a world apart anymore and get ahead. And borders are being crumbled not by net-
works or economies, but by the people crossing them.

In the global mergers under way, education has become the most influen-
tial conduit of cultural, intellectual and business connections because, by defini-
tion, being part of a learning community opens people to new experiences.

“We can no longer afford to be isolationists,” said David Higginson, Ed.D.,
director of Creighton’s Office of International Programs. “With modern technology and a global economy, the world is getting smaller every day.

“To prepare our students and faculty for the future, we need to establish these international links now and do everything we can to make the connections flourish.”

Through a variety of efforts, Creighton University has remade its geographical position in the middle of the country to one in the middle of the world. It’s done so by creating avenues that allow students, faculty, and most importantly, ideas, to leapfrog oceans.

In terms of sheer numbers, the largest effort involves bringing students from other countries to Omaha for study in the University’s degree programs.

Last year, Creighton brought 265 students from 55 countries to Omaha, a rise of 30 percent in nine years, which exceeds national trends. In the 1994-95 academic year, the number of foreign students at American colleges reached a record 452,000.

In many nations, colleges are in short supply or nonexistent, and providing study opportunities world-wide goes to the heart of a Jesuit school’s mission.

“Back home, they have universities in social sciences and humanities,” said Onkemetse Kibitwe, a chemistry major from Botswana headed for pharmacy school this fall. “We really don’t have professional schools like medical, pharmacy or dental school.”

In other countries, particularly those in the Pacific rim, the problem is one of numbers. Intense competition for limited slots means many willing stu-
dents won’t get a college education unless they go abroad.

“Because it’s such a small country, the spaces at our universities are limited,” said Prema Bennett, an education and French major from Singapore. “Our pop-
ulation is almost 3 million. There isn’t a space for everybody.”

While earning their own education, students from other countries help their adopted universities in several ways. At the top of the list is cultural diversity.

“Domestic students benefit from hav-
ing foreign students on campus,” said Susi Rachouh, assistant OIP director. “It’s hard for our students to get a global perspective if they only come into contact with people from backgrounds like their own.”

Kibitwe recalled the story of a Creighton student who asked him how he got to America. Did they have planes in Botswana? Later, after the student got to know Kibitwe, he was sheepish about his earlier blind spot. Students from far-flung areas of the globe put a personal face on geography.

They also put a friendly face on politics, no small asset when relations seem to be growing tumultuous in inverse proportion to the planet’s downsizing.

“The students coming here are going to be playing leadership roles in their countries,” Rachouh said. “Many world leaders were educated in the United States, and that’s good for diplomacy.”

There’s no better advertisement than these young backyard diplomats, and the OIP goes to great lengths to woo them.

Several times a year, Dr. Higginson and Rachouh visit embassies in Washington and make exhausting overseas trips of up to seven or eight countries at a crack, attending recruiting fairs that attract as many as 3,000 potential students.

They guide recruits through the increasingly ticklish task of obtaining visas. More time intensive is OIP’s work with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to maintain students’ status for jobs and travel home once they’re here. The OIP also helps newcomers navigate the strange language, social customs and food which acerbate the universal scourge of all freshmen: homesickness.

To counter, Dr. Higginson and staff find host families who add personal touches, form student groups and urge visitors to savor Americana while they’re here. After all, the chance to learn a whole new culture is a major perk, one so valuable that, at the same time it’s bringing students to Omaha, Creighton encourages native students to study abroad for part of their degree.

“When you immerse yourself in a culture like Study Abroad students are forced to do, you get the ‘global’ view through how other people live, think, feel and love,” Dr. Higginson said. “That’s so important to understand in the world today.”

And college is the best time to shed provincial stereotypes. Young minds are more easily molded before they’ve taken a set.

According to the Institute of International Education, a New York-based nonprofit organization, 76,000 American college students studied abroad in 1993-94, up 63 percent in eight years.

Last year, about 75 Creighton undergraduate students studied abroad in various programs, including Kara Barnes, a psychology major who spent the 1995-96 academic year in Rome studying Italian. While there, she became fluent not only in the language, but in new ways of thinking.

“I came to see that other cultures are just as legitimate as my own,” she said, “and that there is not a right way or wrong way of doing things.”

Nationally, studying abroad is abandoning its old reputation as an extravagant junket. More students than ever before are stepping outside traditional programs and into those in developing nations or regions in political upheaval, a step Dr. Higginson said he encourages.

Such programs are not only less expensive, but more rewarding because they are often service-oriented, he said. And the steepest learning curves develop in nations undergoing the greatest changes.

The priority is already mirrored in Creighton’s other international programs, many of them two and three decades old. The 20 formal exchange programs Creighton has are sprinkled across several continents, and include programs in Japan, China, South Korea, Lithuania, India, Colombia, and most recently, Ireland.

Last summer, Katie Wilkins, then a senior nursing student, joined a medical team in the Dominican Republic through a program run by Creighton’s Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC).

During her eight-week stint in a remote village, Wilkins learned, among other things, the persistence of happiness in the face of abject poverty. Hosts who owned almost nothing shared freely what they had.

“The love they had was so incredible. They love life and appreciate everything. They were an example for me.”

Most striking was having to administer to patients with few of the tools available back home. She recalled one patient, a 2-year-old boy, who was burnt from his neck to his leg when he pulled over a pot of beans. Death by infection seemed inevitable.

“In the States, everyone would have been in gloves, gowns and masks,” she said. “Here we were in a little shack wrapping him in gauze three times a day and telling his mother to keep the chickens out of his bed.”

The child recovered, a marvel that Wilkins said reaffirmed the most elemental medical tool: compassion.

Other Creighton medical professionals find that the big difference is not always what’s available, but how
Holdaway to Creighton to lecture. Holdaway came to Omaha in 1994 and January of 1996.

But in that stream-of-consciousness way artists have, one hop across the pond led to another, and another.

Last semester, Thein taught a joint class on drawing and painting with Wen You-Yan, a painter from Northwest University in Xian, China, whom he’d met on a visit there in 1988.

“You could say it was an ‘East meets West’ class,” Thein said.

In return, Wen invited Thein to teach and exhibit in Xian. When Thein arrived in Xian this spring, his exhibition included Holdaway’s translations, bringing eight years of contacts full circle. He’ll return to China in 18 months for another exhibition with a new teacher, spawning yet another network.

“We’re finding that there are many common threads in art that bind us,” he said. “It’s almost as though the images transcend the barriers of language.”

The faculty exchanges also pay off for students by exposing them to artists and specialists otherwise beyond their reach.

In a nutshell, that’s the whole idea behind all international exchange programs, expanding the reach of education. The best way to broaden students’ horizons is to introduce them to people beyond them. And once they discover it’s a small world after all, their own latitude in it expands.

Museum tours exposed Kara Barnes to a rich European legacy and when she returned home, she took on a second major in art history. Nurse Wilkins, who graduated in May, joined the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. She’ll work in a prenatal and post-natal health program in Bend, Ore., a career she wouldn’t have considered before her work in the Dominican Republic.

“It really gave me another perspective on what I could do with nursing and with service.”

— MH
ers in order to supplement their meager funding. The salary for a president of a major university or art academy is approximately 900-1000 yuan per month, or not more than $130 in U.S. currency.

This is not to say that art is foundering. Indeed this is the most important and exciting time for Chinese art in the twentieth century with the exception of the period prior to the founding of the PRC. Unfortunately, Wen You-Yan's ink paintings manifest no hint of this. His work reproduced with the article illustrate a lack of innovation in traditional Chinese painting. Many artists' works have brought traditional ink and watercolor paintings to new levels, but these works do not.

William Andrew Albano, BA'92
Seattle, Wash.

Protest
I protest the tone as well as the content of the article written by Gerard Stockhausen, SJ. His critique of the American economy seems to be either seated in a misunderstanding of free enterprise or a disgust with it.

In any measure, the American economy is the best in the entire world, providing the most opportunity, and leaving individuals alone to accomplish the most by their own effort. Is Stockhausen recommending the European managed economies as more protective? Would he suggest that the European economies are more successful than the American economy?

The article, in addition to its attempts to condemn the most successful and free economy in the world, also gets a little loose with regards to whether it wants to criticize distributions of income on a worldwide scale or in America.

Studies show that, in the United States, the top 50% of income earners pay 95% of all federal taxes, the top 5% pay 47% of total taxes (earners above $87,154) and the vast majority of rich people in the United States are rich because of their own efforts, not because of inherited money.

Stockhausen suggests that we are not doing enough to redistribute income, and yet the war on poverty has transferred $5.4 trillion to the welfare system (constant 1993 dollars), rising from well under $50 billion spent in 1965 to well over $300 billion spent in 1993 without any measurable effect other than a clear degeneration of the civilization, a tremendous rise in teenage and illegitimate pregnancy, not to mention other social and family problems not even imagined three generations ago.

The criticism of the American economy as not generous enough clearly flies in the face of proof that the hourly wage equivalent of welfare across the United States ranges from $17.50 in Hawaii, is above $10 in 17 states, and is above the minimum wage in all states. This welfare system is overly generous and, in fact, encourages people to consider welfare as a better alternative than work.

Standards of living are also given short shrift by Stockhausen, showing that consumption by households in the lowest 20th percentage of income distribution in the United States is much higher than their income because of in-kind redistribution of wealth in the United States, which Stockhausen ignores. Poor Americans own more VCRs, microwaves, and own their homes more often than even middle-class Europeans. When does that demonstrate an unsuccessful economy?

It appears that Stockhausen appreciates managed economies and socialism more than he appreciates the importance of independence, responsibility, and a free-market economy. He rightly points out that graduates of universities do better. Isn't that the point?

In a United States where nine states' welfare programs pay better than the average first-year salary for a teacher and 29 states pay more than the average starting salary for a secretary, I think that Stockhausen's criticism of an unfair economy is complicated by the fact that for taxpayers a total burden of taxation reaching more than 40% is a high price to pay so that politicians and career socialists can attempt to redistribute benefits.

John D. Dunn, MD'71, JD'79
Lake Brownwood, Texas

KOCU Radio
Since the very reason I chose Creighton University was the availability to join the radio station staff my freshman year, I was elated to read your story on KOCU in the Spring 1996 issue of WINDOW magazine. In 1977 I was 17 years old with a goal of being a disc jockey. I had been on the air in Philadelphia within the top-rated disc jockey’s show for over two years.

I had to decide between a disc jockey school in Philadelphia or college. The best school on the East Coast for communications at the time was Temple University, but you had to be a junior to be on the radio staff. At Creighton you could join KOCU your freshman year. I chose Creighton.

Many wonderful memories returned to me as you discussed the history of the station especially the comment that many legends were born from KOCU. You were so correct.

I could not help but reminisce with pride about the legends I worked with: Bob Hallinan, BA’79, Kevin O’Conner, BA’90, Cary Pfeiffer, BA’79, (golden throat) Mark Mazzie, BA’81, and Jacquelyn Morgan, BA’80. We worked to make KOCU a quality station irrespective of the number of listeners we had.

While news director, I covered a speech at Creighton sponsored by the Alpha Sigma Nu Fraternity featuring the late Israeli leader Yitzak Rabin. During his speech Rabin predicted an end to the Middle East War within two to three weeks. I took the story over to KYNN radio where I was doing an internship, edited it and the story ran on radio stations across the United States.

KOCU may not have been much equipment-wise, but it was all that was needed for success. That is the purpose of college, after all, is it not - to give students the basic tools necessary for success?

Your article reminded me how the little transmitter that could has broadcasted success for many dedicated students.

Michael G. Campbell, Esq., BA’81
Remarkable initiative and able enterprise ... wisdom in action and modesty in achievement ... great personal self-sacrifice for the good of others ..."

When the text of the Spirit of Creighton Award is read at Commencement each year, two seniors come forward to receive the University’s highest student honor. This year, Richard Ralphson and Jennifer Naughton, both of the College of Arts and Sciences, were so honored.

Richard has served as a residence hall advisor, Student Board of Governors representative, teaching assistant, retreat director, and lector and liturgical assistant. He has contributed his time and efforts to the Salvation Army and the Camp Fire Boys and Girls, the Open Door Mission and Habitat for Humanity. Thanks to him, the Boys Club of North Omaha, the Nebraska AIDS Project, Omaha Housing projects and the Ronald McDonald House all have experienced the generosity and the commitment of Creighton students. Hailing from Chicago, Ill., Richard also helped organize a North Omaha Awareness Day and a National Youth Service Day during his years at Creighton.

Jennifer, an elementary education major from Sioux Falls, S.D., has served as a Campus Ministry student advisor, promoting student involvement in planning Masses, gathering information about students’ spiritual needs, organizing retreats and serving as a source of support. She has volunteered her time at Sacred Heart School and has served as a lector at St. John’s Church, a facilitator for Christian Life Community, and as a member of several Campus Ministry committees.

Both Richard and Jennifer are honor students, with membership in Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Society and Alpha Sigma Nu Jesuit Honor Society. Recipients of the Rev. Thomas N. Schloemer, S.J., Student Leadership Award, both have coordinated and participated in service trips, served as Freshman Seminar group leaders, volunteered at the Francis House homeless shelter, and been active in their respective fraternal organizations.

Congratulations to Richard and Jennifer ... and the students you represent.