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# NEWSLETTER

January  
2022

*The Voice of the University of Nebraska Rowing Alumni Community*

## 2021 was a 'watershed' year for Nebraska Rowing

### Forward:

Meetings, newsletters and town-halls were followed by Constitutions, bylaws, leases and contracts. The initial FONR board saw the first glimmers of greatness in 2020. It is truly amazing what was accomplished while "pulling together" in 2021.

### Leading with the 1st stroke:

We moved the team to Pawnee Lake giving it a practice facility closer to campus with calmer water and an opportunity for expansion. Coach Jensen was hired and funded, then navigated COVID protocols to get the team practicing again last spring. Coaching has exponentially increased water time for rowers, and also provided a layer of safety and security needed for the team to thrive. Four shells were repaired (some of which were cracked in half!). Equipment improvements will allow us to boat 62 athletes on the water simultaneously.

### A 'Power Ten' for 50 years:

The '50th' crowdfunding effort exceeded its goal and raised \$38,000 to fulfil short-term needs and outfit the Pawnee Lake facility. Added to the other banquet

appeals and fundraisers, FONR netted \$70,000+ in pledges for planned giving. Rededicating the campus boathouse bought back memories and established a future vision for the hallowed space. The alumni rowing event reconnected former rowers with their beloved sport. The 50th Anniversary Banquet was a deserved celebration to honor 50 years of Crew at NU. It was an emphatic commemoration fueled with alumni reminiscing on the gifts of rowing.

### Looking ahead to new challenges:

We are searching for 200 individual donations on February 16th to make our 3rd Glow Big Red Campaign a success. The "Coaching Endowment Challenge" will secure our future with a perpetual source of salary. Recruiting new board members and volunteers will define the success of 2022 and grow FONR using passionate, professional Alumni dedicated to improving Nebraska Crew.



<https://www.nebraskacrew.com>

We are reaching out to everyone who has been a part of Nebraska Rowing over the past 50 years to create connections between the names on our roster. If you have not done so already, please consider becoming a 'Registered Member' of FONR.

Registration will ensure you receive an invitation to the 50th Anniversary Celebration in September, Updates on the new Rowing Facility at Pawnee Lake and news from the Nebraska Crew Community. Registration is free and only take a few minutes: at <https://www.nebraskacrew.com/>

## Pawnee Lake Update :

Construction and remodeling continues on the Pawnee Lake 'Huddle' building. Electrical service has been established, water and sewer lines have been trenched and concrete walkways poured. New soffits have been installed and most of the of the internal frame-work is complete. A sliding barn door to the storage area has been installed and we are working on an area to rinse off the shells. Students are excited to move in this spring and the crowdfunding dollars will help turn this space into an elite launching area for rowing practice.



## Visible Improvement

The Campus Boathouse & Training Center continues to make progress.

Campus Recreation worked with UNL facilities to install new LED lighting. This brightened area will hopefully lead to more powerful workouts!

The new Floor was completed last fall and complements the FONR led cleaning last summer.

New Ergometers should arrive in January to complement and expand the capacity for a larger team to train at the same time.

Glow Big Red will help fundraise for AV equipment and a sound system.





## FONR Completes Goals for 2021, Begins Planning for 2022

As we approach the “Starting Line” for 2022, we look back at the goals accomplished in 2021 defined by our ‘Pillars of Success.’ These were made possible with continued support from Campus Recreation, Nebraska Game & Parks, FONR Leadership and Alumni who stepped in to give back to the Husker Rowing Team.

- ✔ Pillar One – Pawnee Project – Creating a permanent lakefront practice facility
- ✔ Pillar Two – Spring 2021 Rowing – Assisting the current athletes on their quest for water time within the University COVID-Protocol
- ✔ Pillar Three – 50th Anniversary Banquet – Holding the largest celebration of Nebraska Rowing, relaunching Crew for another 50 years.
- ✔ Pillar Four – Campus Boathouse Project – Improving the on-campus training facility, cleaning, lighting, painting and new equipment.
- ✔ Pillar Five – Fundraising Program – Using FONR as a multiplier for fundraising, including ‘Glow Big Red’, 50th Anniversary Crowdfunding and Endowment campaigns. Matching needs with donors.
- ✔ Pillar Six – Alumni Engagement – Using newsletters, town hall meetings and alumni events, we would like to reunite alumni with their rowing roots and create relationships between the students and alumni.
- ✔ Pillar Seven – Strategic Master Plan – Network the alumni within their career expertise to implement a long-term plan that will provide an increasingly competitive rowing experience for **our student athletes.**

## Rowing in the Spotlight!

We are Famous!

The quarterly Nebraska Alumni magazine featured rowing on the cover and a 6-page article on the 50th Anniversary. Members of the Alumni Association should have received a copy mid-December. If you are interested in obtaining a copy, please contact the Alumni Association ([alumni@huskeralum.org](mailto:alumni@huskeralum.org) 402-472-2841).

An online version of the magazine can also be found linked below,

<https://www.huskeralum.org/s/1620/magazine/interior.aspx?sid=1620&gid=1&pgid=2597>

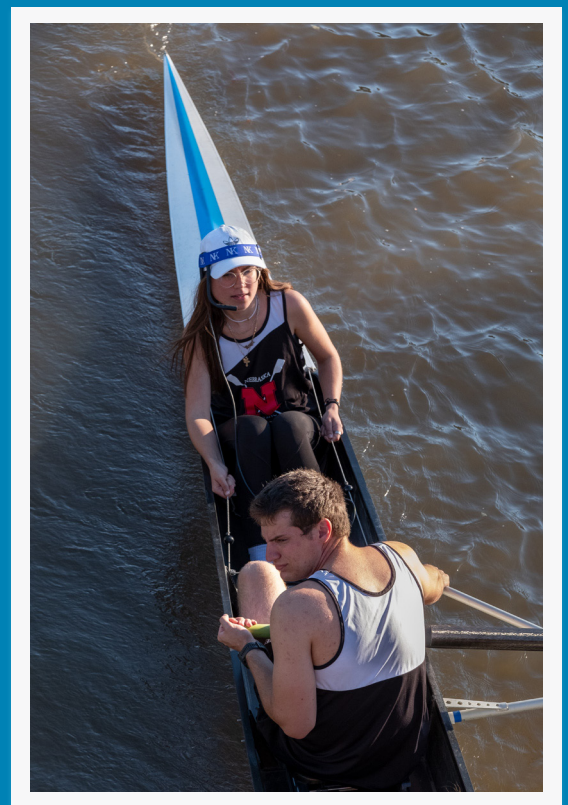






Hello, my name is Kiara, a freshman from Kansas majoring in microbiology. I have been at UNL only a few months and the rowing team has already become a significant part of my college experience. This fall season our crew put in the effort to compete at several regattas while building a welcoming community. Since our crew only had three people with rowing experience, we enjoyed significant improvement this fall.

After five weeks of practice we got our first taste of racing at the Head of the Mississippi in Minneapolis. Both men's and women's fours gave a great effort. Katy and Tess were also able to race a double. This regatta inspired us to train hard for the next regatta, the Iowa Chase. In Iowa we saw improvements in balance and timing and the men's four hot-seated from the four to the mixed eight! Our final fall regatta took place in Wichita, Kansas., at the Frostbite. This 2K sprint had many twists and turns, but our coxswains and bowwomen did a great job navigating. Our mixed eight also placed third out of eight! The beautiful scenery, amazing teammates, and great competitions captivated me with this sport. We are all looking forward to racing this winter indoors on machines and in several duals and regattas in spring. Our team has grown outside of practice, including a lot of eating (Kevin's amazing pies) and card games. It was great to meet everyone at the Alumni Rowing event and listen to many stories. We are so blessed to have your support, and we share in your vision to grow Nebraska Crew into a competitive and welcoming community.





# Coach's Corner . . .



It has been a rewarding season to coach the Nebraska Crew! We started with a small team that knew very little about rowing, with no experienced rowers to model. Sparse attendance turned into regular attendance. Light effort turned to hard effort. Individual work turned to team work. Week by week, they found dedication and cooperation are the way to achieve fun and success.

Good weather and dedicated coaching created an abundance of water time at the new Pawnee Lake facility. Improvement over the course of the season convinced the athletes to compete in a third race at Wichita after our planned regattas in Minneapolis and Iowa City. The team's desire to compete in this bonus regatta paid off, when a boat placed fifth in a field of fourteen. They clearly beat Colorado boats that had bested them earlier in the year. We also placed third in a field of eight boats. Truly a success for a team having to start from scratch.

The crew is settling into winter training at the newly refurbished training center. They are putting in hard work on the ergs and organizing team leadership. This team of leaders is stepping up to challenges on the water and out of the boat. Thank you to alumni who provided so many resources to these talented athletes. The move to Pawnee Lake and the upgrades to the campus training center have already shown positive results. Improvements to these facilities will continue the success of Nebraska rowing. I can't wait to share their next achievements!

Coach Jensen [jensencoach@me.com](mailto:jensencoach@me.com) 503-709-7110





# A Night at the Boathouse Carol (Bryan) Easley, 74'

The UNL Campus Boathouse has been home to NU Crew and the vision of crew founder Allan Maybee. On Friday, September 24, 2021, over 130 crew alums, spouses and current crew members gathered to once again claim the boathouse as their domain – and begin a weekend of celebrating our 50+ year history, hosted by Friends of Nebraska Rowing. The boathouse, sporting a “new and improved” aesthetic, rocked with memories, laughter, renewed friendships, and the aroma of Valentino’s pizza!

Emcee Pete Zandbergen guided the evening. Maybee shared early tales of NU Crew and “declaring” the boathouse as crew’s habitat and presented Stan Campbell, recently named NU Campus Recreation Director Emeritus, a NU Crew Horseshoe plaque (upward facing horseshoe represents NU catching “good luck,” while the interlocking downward horseshoe symbolizes dispersing “bad luck”). The plaque will proudly hang above the boathouse door. A duplicate will hang at the new Pawnee Lake facility. Scott Lewis, 75’ generously donated a sweep oar signed by the 1974 IRA crew that finished 5th in the nation. Frank Dolezal received the “Keeper of the Cob” award for his contributions as a rower, coach, and FONR Board Member.

Current crew coach, Eric Jensen shared insights into today’s program. FONR President Mark Stormberg reviewed some of the upgrades to the Training Center such as a new epoxy floor. Future upgrades will include interior lighting and electrical as well as new paint inside and out. The renovation of the rowing tank was highlighted as a future project. Mark reinforced FONR’s commitment to growing the rowing program within the Campus Boathouse/Training Center for the next 50 years.

What a privilege it is to be part of the NU rowing family! We have the opportunity to ensure the NU Crew program remains strong and viable.







# The Big Red Row

By: Joel "Mama" Merriman, class of 1983)

They came from all corners of the nation; women and men of all shapes and ages jumped into an eight and rowed as if they just competed for the championship. On a perfect Fall Saturday at Pawnee Lake, two boats rotated at the dock every thirty minutes. All Alumni had an opportunity to get on the water filling 72 seats. From the coxswain's first call to final dock, the passion for rowing was evident in every stroke. Key skills and muscle memory returned almost instantaneously allowing for a remarkable morning on the water.

Coach Eric Jensen and a capable cadre of current student athletes were excellent hosts, getting boats on the water and bodies in the boats for a safe and fun morning of recreational rowing. Drew Van Heuveln '19 was instrumental for signup, liability waivers and putting eight full boats on the water. Masters joined novices; mentors through protégés sensed the boats in "swing," gliding across the calm water. Eric even coached a few well-synchronized crews with nostalgic determination to push a couple of crab-free power tens.

Sweaty survivors returned to the dock with big smiles! They crawled or stepped out of the boat, then posed for pictures while reminiscing about the terrific exertion just concluded, proving they "still had it." From former Olympians to an in-vitro future Husker rower, everyone made this September rowing reunion a success.

University of Nebraska Campus Recreation, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Nebraska Alumni Association, coaches and crews, and Friends of Nebraska Rowing have formed a strong partnership. This collaboration and cooperation is everpresent as we build out the Pawnee Lake rowing center and improve the on-campus training facility.

Friends of Nebraska Rowing looks forward to the years ahead when rowing at Pawnee Lake can include you as part of the competition and annual alumni events. Whether you rowed one season or your entire college career, you are already a part of this unique legacy. Come join us to refresh old friendships, make new acquaintances, see the growth and progress of the team, and support the development of Nebraska Rowing.

Thank you to all who were able to make it to this year's rowing reunion and those whose efforts on and off the water contributed to a sensational day of rowing in Nebraska. See you next year when you too can return to Row Big Red!

- Photos courtesy : Paul W. Rea







## Sold Out Crowd Celebrates 50 Years

Alumni raise over \$75K to support Nebraska Rowing

A banner that read “Welcome Home Crew,” in large, red letters hung from the ceiling as 150 alums, family and friends entered the Champions Club. Old teammates enjoyed a wonderful evening reminiscing about great friends, great times and great stories.

Master of Ceremonies Pete Zandbergen started off the evening with a lively silent auction and social hour. Representatives from six decades raised toasts to their time on the crew. Matt Kush represented the 1970s, John Dundon, the 1980s, Brad Jones the 1990s, Diane Hastings Lewis, the 2000s, Hannah Tamayo Langdon, the 2010s and Eben Kohtz, the 2020s. Teammates raised their glasses in tribute to each other and to the future of Nebraska Rowing.

Crew founder Allan Maybee shared some wonderful stories about his failed attempts to solicit varsity-level support from legendary Husker Athletic Director Bob Devaney. Al spoke about the team’s first trip to the Head of the Charles Regatta that saw hundreds of fans line the course to cheer for the Huskers with “Go Big Red” clickers.

Lisa Rohde, a farm girl from Hubbard, Nebraska reflected on her journey from a chance meeting at Abel/Sandoz that took her all the way to an Olympic Silver medal. She shared how the Nebraska Rowing program “changed my life.”

Brad Kuhn, a 1980s oarsman, produced an outstanding video retrospective that told the improbable story of a rowing program founded in 1970 in the land-locked state of Nebraska. Classic footage from some early crews was complemented with several hundred photographs that had been curated from Alums (Video and photos are available at [www.nebraskacrew.com](http://www.nebraskacrew.com)).





Campus Recreation Director Amy Lanham and Director Emeritus Stan Campbell noted a strong Alumni organization like Friends of Nebraska Rowing will be key to the success of club sports. They encouraged all Alums to keep “pulling together.” The CREC staff received a huge ovation when they shared the investment of approximately \$100,000.00 in rowing team facilities on campus and at Pawnee Lake.

Coach Eric Jensen and 2021 Team President Katie Orr thanked alumni for their enthusiastic support of the program. It has enabled them to spend much more time on the water rowing. FONR President Mark Stormberg shared the alumni group’s vision to “provide long-term consistent financial support and advice for a sustainable, competitive rowing program at the University of Nebraska.” Funding priorities are to provide for current coaching salaries, build a Coaching Endowment for sustainability, and provide equipment to grow the program.

Amanda Kraus, CEO of US Rowing, joined the event via Zoom. She congratulated all for 50 great years. She encouraged the student athletes to persevere during these challenging times, telling them, “Nobody is tougher than rowers, you can push through.” She also encouraged them to appreciate the special privilege they enjoy as collegiate rowers and the life lessons learned. “You are blessed to learn to row in college. There will be times in your life when you think that you can’t keep going but you will, because you learned how to keep going in the boats.”

“Sold. Sold. Sold,” filled the air the rest of the evening, as auctioneer Jeff Merriman and his brother Joel, Class of ‘83, auctioned off some classic memorabilia such as a custom 50th Anniversary “Throw Big Red” cornhole game and commemorative sweep oars, all fashioned by Allan Maybee. Professional sculling lessons, a Colorado condo and even a quarter side of beef, brought in several thousand dollars for the program.

**“Save The Date” for next year’s event to be held on Saturday, October 8th, 2022.**





# Glow Big Red

## Set a Reminder! -> February 16th - 24 Hours of Online Giving

Glow Big Red is an annual fundraising drive for student clubs and colleges. FONR has found matching funds to double or triple the impact of our donations this year. The University Nebraska Foundation will also add bonus dollars when we place in the top tier (historically 1st place!) among our peer organizations, and even more if we can rally the largest number of donors. We are asking the Alumni of Nebraska Rowing to encourage everyone capable of making a \$5 or larger gift to donate to our cause. These donations need to happen between Noon on Feb. 16, and Noon, Feb.17. Our goal is to surpass 200 individual donations! Use your phone list, text chains and social media to motivate your old boat mates and spread the word!

The Team hopes to use the funds from the 2022 GlowBigRed in four areas:

- Improving the Campus Boathouse with a new sound system to boost training.
- A/V equipment to review and improve technique.
- Cutting-edge Racing Oars for faster rowing.
- Additional Coaching/rescue equipment to ensure the safety of our Athletes.

If there is specific intention or area for your Glow-Big-Red donation, please contact Jerry Huber or Joye Fehringer and we will work to direct it to the proper area!

**Search for 'Crew Club' at [http:// glowbigred.unl.edu](http://glowbigred.unl.edu)**

<https://glowbigred.unl.edu/campaigns/sports-club-crew-club>



## Coaching Endowment Challenge

Over the past year, the Nebraska Crew has been blessed in many ways. The reintroduced coaching structure has dramatically increased participation, athleticism and hours on the water. Continuity is key. With that in mind, FONR has set a goal of raising \$500,000 for a Coaching Endowment Fund (CEF). At an annual rate of 4.25%, the CEF would distribute \$21,250 annually to pay coaches and staff. This would double our current salary pool and provide a perpetual legacy from the Alumni to the student Athletes. Our long-term goal is to reach a principal amount that will fund the annual salaries of a full-time, professional coaching staff.

A \$50,000 commitment could be paid over ten years at the annual rate of \$5,000. Contributions would be made to the University of Nebraska Foundation and are tax deductible. Several Alumni including Lisa Rohde, Pete Zandbergen and Bill Brush have already stepped up to the \$50,000 challenge for a combined commitment of \$200,000. This support is conditional upon our ability to raise the remaining \$300,000 toward our initial goal. Commitments can be of any size and payable over 10 years, we just need a cumulative total of \$300,000.

Members of the active 70s & 80s crews are entering an age where they must take mandatory IRA distributions. The taxable income from an IRA distribution can be offset by a contribution to the CEF at the University of Nebraska Foundation. Larger contributions sooner will help the CEF balance grow faster.

Please contact Bill Brush (FONR) [billbrushnebraska@gmail.com](mailto:billbrushnebraska@gmail.com), or Joye Fehringer (NU Foundation) [joye.fehringer@nufoundation.org](mailto:joye.fehringer@nufoundation.org) if you have any questions or suggestions.

If the Nebraska Crew has good coaches, the other things will fall into place.

Regards, **Bill Brush**, First Coach of Nebraska Crew



# GRoW Big Red

## 50th Anniversary Crowdfunding Campaign

In tandem with our 50th Anniversary Events, FONR kicked off a Crowdfunding Campaign to meet the immediate needs of the team and put them on a solid footing this spring. Donations were intended to outfit Pawnee Lake with everything required to be a safe, efficient and dependable practice facility. The response from Nebraska Crew Alumni was truly amazing, collecting \$19,022 electronically and \$18,996 in physical donations. We exceeded our goal of \$32,000 (Physical donations were not represented on the website). This funding will be a huge step forward and impact generations of student-athletes. Thank you to everyone who “Pulled Together” to make this dream a reality.

### Noted Donors to the FONR 2020 Fundraising Campaign

Peter and Kristae Zandbergen	Kevin Steele	Marvin and Raelene Schliep	Frank Dolezal	Robert Zook
Wesley and Sonja Hubka	Rebekah Hoyt-Steele	David and Kathleen Volkman	Scott Renken	Lane and Amanda Phillips
William Brush	Billy Coghill III	Lisa and Jeffrey Culbertson	Roger and Pamela Holmstedt	Joye and Marty Fehringer
Gary Arehart	Janita and Kevin Kube	Jessie Strom	Hannah and Justin Miller	Daniel and Lisa Nollette
Diane Kaese	Brandi Crockett	Lisa Rohde	Christopher and Lisa Ostwinkle	Michael and Catherine Huber
Timothy and Caroline Jensen	Carol and Jerry Easley	Daniel Myers	Daniel and Ann Wenzl	Douglas Nodgaard
Douglas Weiss	Douglas Elizabeth Drbal	Jerry and Jeanne Huber	Frederick Griggs	Daniel Pollack
Tina Kearney	Joseph and Molly Lang	Scott Svoboda	Derrick Anderson	William Brush
Scott and Barbara Lewis	Lee and Linda Johnson	Janice Enstrom	Anne and Clarence Baden	Darcy Jacobitz
Jeffrey and Lorain Place	Mark and Lisa Stormberg	Brenda and Michael Wenzl	Jamie Furry	Investors Realty, Inc.
Linnea Fredrickson	Rachelle and Brian Brown	Caleb and Sydney Pokorny	Betty Olson and Peter Wegman	Anthon Brooks
Leannal Timanus	Brad Kuhn	Diane and Dustin Lewis	Rebecca Reisinger	Galen Wilke
	Darlyn Finch Kuhn	Gary and Cynthia Dostal	Rembolt Ludtke LLP	

### Pawnee Lake Launch



~~24~~ **63** SUPPORTERS      ~~59%~~ **118%** OF GOAL      ~~\$19,022~~ **38,018** / \$32,000

### University of Nebraska Foundation Funds - Nebraska Crew

As Alums, we know that when we rowed, we did it for more than ourselves. We learned valuable lessons from our days behind the oar. We can also help pay these lessons forward to this year's team. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift through the University of Nebraska Foundation. Your donations are administered by the Campus Recreation Department, in consultation with the FONR Board. There are three funds to choose from. You may also designate your gift to a specific purpose within any of these funds if you wish.

**Crew Development Fund** – A general fund for equipment and other needs of Nebraska Crew. You may mail your gift directly to the University of Nebraska Foundation 1010 Lincoln Mall, Suite 300, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68508. Make checks payable to “University of Nebraska Foundation” and add in the memo line or an accompanying note: “Fund # 01015580 University of Nebraska –Lincoln Crew Club Development Fund” or donate directly online at: <https://nufoundation.org/fund/01015580/>

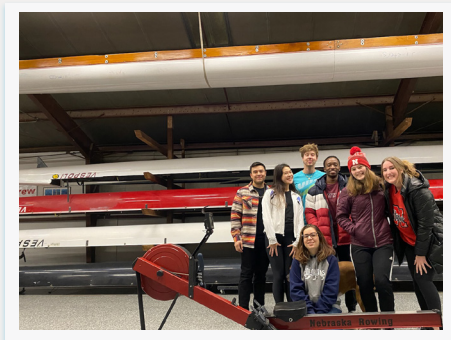
**Annual Coaching Salary Fund** – To fund and supplement the annual salary for the Nebraska Crew coaching staff. You may mail your gift directly to the University of Nebraska Foundation 1010 Lincoln Mall, Suite 300, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68508. Make checks payable to “University of Nebraska Foundation” and add in the memo line or an accompanying note: “Fund # 01156770 Friends of Nebraska Rowing Annual Coaching Salary Fund” or donate directly online at: <https://nufoundation.org/fund/01156770/>

**Coaching Endowment** – This fund has a long-term goal of growing to a level where the annual endowed income will cover most of the coaching salary. You may mail your gift directly to the University of Nebraska Foundation 1010 Lincoln Mall, Suite 300, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68508. Make checks payable to “University of Nebraska Foundation” and add in the memo line or an accompanying note: “Fund # 01101440 Friends of Nebraska Rowing Coaching Endowment-Mark & Lisa Stormberg Fund” or donate directly online at: <https://nufoundation.org/fund/01101440/>

You may also contact our Rowing Team Advisor at the Foundation to make a gift by phone or to learn about other ways to make a gift. Joye Fehringer can be reached at [joye.fehringer@nufoundation.org](mailto:joye.fehringer@nufoundation.org) or 402-875-0611.



View Updates on our website:  
[www.nebraskacrew.com](http://www.nebraskacrew.com)



## Current FONR Board

Any FONR member is eligible (and encouraged) to serve.

MARK STORMBERG  
 JERRY HUBER  
 DAVE VOLKMAN  
 FRANK DOLEZAL  
 BRAD KUHN  
 ELLEN JIROVSKY  
 STAN CAMPBELL

JOYE FEHRINGER  
 LISA ROHDE  
 ALLAN MAYBEE  
 BILL BRUSH  
 PETE ZANDBERGEN  
 AMY LANHAM  
 KATIE ORR

## Save the Date!

for the 2022 Alumni  
 Event - Friday 10/07/22  
 & Saturday 10/08/22.

## Support the crew!



[bonfire.com/50-years-of-Nebraska-](https://bonfire.com/50-years-of-Nebraska-)

## Volunteer!



When you joined UN-L Crew you became part of a miraculous story. That story continues today and we need your help to write the next chapter.

If you are interested, please fill out our Alumni Volunteer form:

<https://www.nebraskacrew.com>

Event	Race	Event Dates	Location	Opponent
Team Cross-Training	Crew X-Country Ski Training Trip	1/15-1/17 2022	Frisco Colorado	"The Powder"
Erg Machine Race	Shocker Sprints	2/12/2022	Wichita, KS	Lower Midwest Rowing Clubs
Erg Machine Race	Martin City Showdown	2/19/2022	Kansas City	Upper Midwest Rowing Clubs
Lake Preparation	Pawnee Lake Rowing Center Launch	3/12/2022	Lincoln, NE	-
Dual Race	Minnesota and Colorado @ Nebraska	4/9/2022	Pawnee Lake, NE	Minnesota & Colorado
2k Regatta	Illinois Collegiate Rowing Invitational	4/16/2022	Farmer City, IL	Illonies, Iowa, DePaul, Northwestern, Chicago, St. Louis, Marquette
Dual Race	Kansas State @ Nebraska	4/23/2022	Pawnee Lake, NE	Kansas State
2k Regatta	ACRA Plains Regional Regatta	5/1/2022	Wichita, KS	Witchata State, Kansas, Oklahoma