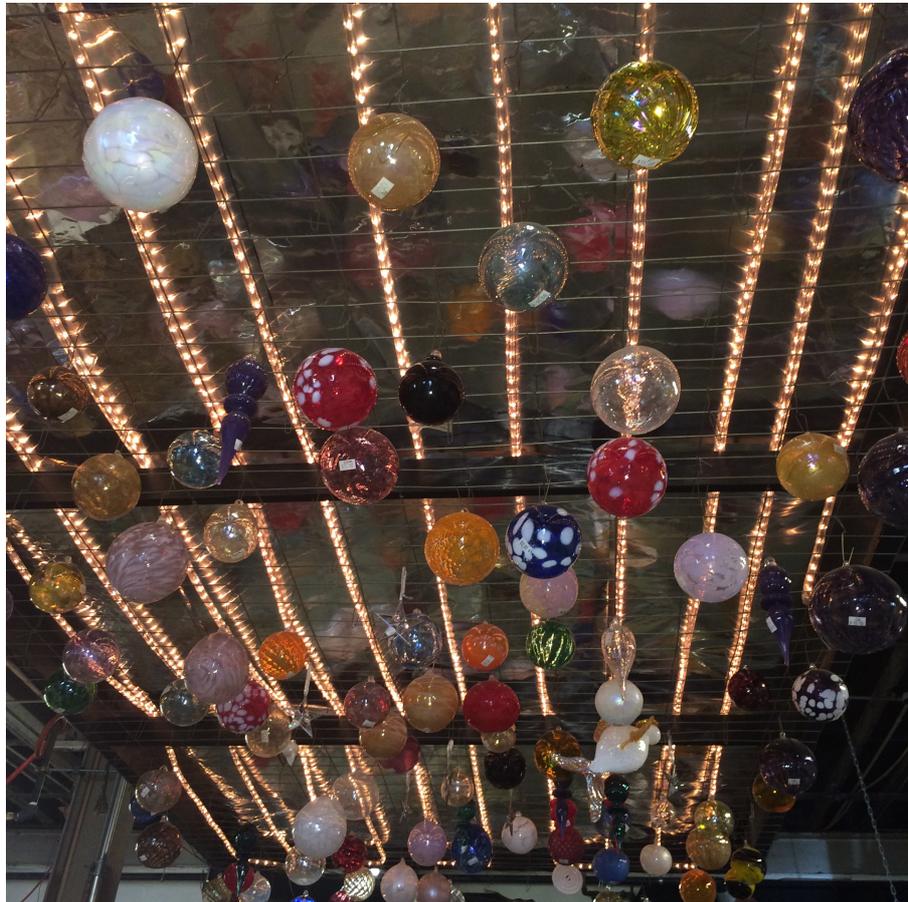


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A Nice Day Spent in Nebraska

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By Erin Lenz, Public Relations Intern, Nebraska Tourism Commission



A theatre made for independent films, an art center that celebrates hundreds of creative minds, and ice cream that seems to take you back in time. All of this is what I, along with a group of University of Nebraska-Lincoln students, had the opportunity to explore on Friday, April 15th. The places we visited were Film Streams, Crystal Forge and Springfield Drug and Soda Fountain, all stops on the 2016 Nebraska Passport Program.

The first stop was Film Streams in Omaha, a nonprofit arts organization that plays indie, foreign and classic film titles. Now I'm not the type of person that typically likes indie or foreign films, but after touring Film Streams and having the communications director explain the different movies available, I can't wait to go back. This theatre does fun promotions like free movies on Monday nights for students, the playing of a live score in the theatre during a silent film, playing movies on the old form of film projector and more. This theatre is small, unique and has a great atmosphere to it. It also doesn't hurt that the people who work there have a passion for the theatre and films of all kinds.



The next stop on the list was Crystal Forge in the Hotshops Art Center in Omaha. Before I describe Crystal Forge, I have to talk about the Hotshops Art Center as a whole first. Artistic, fun, unique and lively are just some of the words that came to mind to describe this place. We were shown unique structures of the building, walked through rooms of pottery, wood making and stained glass. We even walked through an area where people were creating dozens of clay squirrels, yes I said *clay squirrels*. At Crystal Forge we watched the process of creating art



through glass blowing. This process is not at all what I expected, which is weird because glass blowing actually involves blowing on the glass. We watched basically a small dot of melted glass turn in to a medium-sized, crackled textured, beautiful vase. It was a very detailed, but amazing process to see (video is below). I recommend going to this unique art gallery- it's interactive and has a little bit of something for everyone. Plus it's right off of the Old Market area where you could easily do some shopping and get a bite to eat too.

Lastly, we made a stop at Springfield Drug and Soda Fountain for a treat. This destination is similar to a small-town Walgreens, but with a fun addition of an old fashion soda fountain. This is my kind of stop because I am an ice cream fanatic. The soda was deliciously sweet and I think I might have drank my rootbeer float in a matter of seconds. Besides the ice cream, it was fun sitting up at the bar and feeling like I had been taken back in time.

Overall it was a fun day trip. I've lived in Nebraska my whole life and trips like these help me realize how much more I still have left to explore. I can't wait to go back and visit these stops so I can get an actual Nebraska Passport stamp, and I look forward to exploring everything else the Nebraska Passport has to offer (mainly the tour that is heavy with coffee shops because I'm a caffeine addict).

