

Lincoln summer month's survival guide unveiled

By Jeff Goodwin
Columnist

"Why don't you do a column on Lincoln in the summer? Say, about sixty lines?"

It sounded like a good idea when my editor suggested it. So I said OK.

Then I realized that I actually had to write something about living in Lincoln during the summer. What can you say about that subject that hasn't already been said about living in North Dakota all year round? The conventional wisdom is that Lincoln lacks a certain, shall we say, spark during the summer months.

Well, it's bound to be a little dull when the students leave. That's only natural. And, even at its best, Lincoln has never been confused with Paris or London or New York. But, thank God, its never been confused with Fargo, N.D., either (Please, all you Fargo fans, don't send me letters.)

And yet, my own experience has shown me that it's not impossible to have a good summer in Lincoln. Last summer was one of the best I've ever had.

So here it is folks. My guide on how to survive the summer in Lincoln. With a little luck you might even prosper.

Actually, there's not that much less to do in Lincoln during the summer. The only exception is sporting events. But Lincoln is close enough to such metropolitan centers as Kansas City, Minneapolis, and Tampa that you can go down for the weekend and catch a ballgame.

Movies are always a reliable source of entertainment. They also have another advantage during the summer for those of you (I include myself in this category) who don't have air conditioning: they offer a respite from the brutal heat.

The only trouble with this is that movies tend to stay in Lincoln for a long time, especially in the summer. The only theater that regularly changes films is the Embassy and how many people can sit through 90 minutes of steamy sex every week? Personally, my limit is 89 minutes.

A lot of people I know get athletic during the summer. Most of them play softball or tennis. That's OK. I can see the point of that. What kills me are the people who jog in 100 degree heat. And if they keep it up, it will kill them, too.

Which reminds me of an amusing anecdote. A few years ago I was walking with a group of friends back from Taco Inn and we passed a jogger. It was one of those July days when your shirt starts sticking to your back about eight in the morning and stays there until you go to bed.

Anyway, one of the guys I was with was from the East. He saw the jogger and said, "Back home the only way somebody would be running in this weather is if the cops were chasing him."

Personally, I was never that athletic during the summer months. I break into a sweat just walking from the sundeck (it's really only a porch but sundeck sounds more impressive) to the kitchen to get another beer. I've found that usually provides me with enough exercise to stay in shape until the fall when I really get athletic-by going to football games.

Well, in a nutshell there it is. I can't guarantee it will work for everybody but it generally has for me. The key to surviving a summer in Lincoln is having friends. If you don't know anyone it can be pretty bleak. So, as you read this you've got tomorrow and next week to make some. So get busy.



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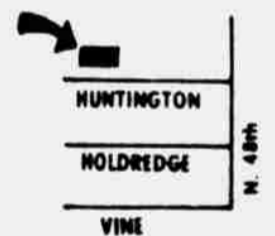
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