



Johnny Reno (center) and the Sax Maniacs at the Zoo Bar. Donna Sisson/Daily Nebraskan

Johnny Reno wants to be a famous sax maniac

By Christopher Burbach and Mike Frost

Johnny Reno is the Sax Maniac — literally. Reno, who with his combo played Lincoln's Zoo Bar last weekend, has an unflinching loyalty to the instrument he says invented rock 'n' roll.

"I feel like the saxophone was the founding instrument of rock 'n' roll — slightly before the guitar. The way I figure it, rock 'n' roll was invented in 1949. That pre-dates Elvis a little bit but I think a lot of people that listen to a lot of rhythm and blues music would agree with that."

The saxophone brought the audiences to life. "Before that crowds just sat around and enjoyed music and listen to stuff. These guys would start going wild on solos and people would start jumping

up and down in the aisles and doing back-flips on the stage and stuff like that. That's rock 'n' roll right there."

Reno's love affair with the sax began when he started playing the instrument at age 25. Reno's interest was sparked by the rhythm and blues sounds he heard at the Bluebird Nightclub in Ft. Worth, Texas.

"There were a lot of guitar players, needless to say, and I'd played a little bit of guitar, but there was never any room...I needed to play a different instrument. One of the guys in the band...played me a couple of records and said 'There's no one playing saxophone like this right now. If you could do this, there'd be a lot of room for you around here.'"

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Ted and Wally's...

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Ted and Wally's offers a sample package consisting of four small scoops for \$1.40. From my limited experience, that may be the best buy.

By itself, the vanilla is creamy, rich and fattening — everything you expect from homemade vanilla.

The coffee ice cream tasted like rich, creamy vanilla with coffee in it.

The peach was a trifle too peachy, but bits of frozen fruits made up for the excess of peach flavoring.

Maple nut made my mouth cry tears of joy. (I'm running out of ways to say it's good.)

Kirschenman said the inspiration for Ted and Wally's came from his brother in Boston, who had described stores similar to Ted and Wally's. Kirschenman, who said he had been looking for something to do, went to Boston to research the idea. He came back, joined with his partner, collected capital, worked on a small business loan — and then went on vacation. Some of the ideas for recipes and the freezers came from Boston.

The store has an interesting mix of decorations. About 40 lamps hang from chains at various heights throughout the store. The counter gives Ted and Wally's a sort of drugstore atmosphere. The antique wood and glass refrigerators and the large mirror also add to that effect.

Some neon signs, plants and a wall of modern freezers add an incongruous modernity, but the overall effect, gives you many things to look at while you're eating.

The loose-set brick floor adds a clacking and clicking that may be distracting. I think it adds character.

Ice cream cones at Ted and Wally's are 70 cents for one scoop, \$1.01 for

two. The mix-ins are \$1.40, which includes two scoops and one extra ingredient. Extra ingredients cost more. Sundaes are \$1.70 for a large one, \$1.40 for a small. Wally's also sells malts, cold pop,

floats and candy.

Ted and Wally's is a pleasant place to enjoy ice cream on a cold day. If business increases steadily with the temperature, you won't be able to get in on a warm one.

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