

Dr. Marten's famous shoes Store down deep in 'cool clothes'

By Jennifer Johnson
Staff Reporter

With the goal of making Dr. Marten shoes available in Lincoln, Jeff James packed up a U-Haul in Tempe, Ariz., and came back to his hometown to open a store he named "6 Feet Under."

Dr. Marten's shoes, originally from England, have been a staple for years in the wardrobes of those who wear alternative fashions, but they haven't been widely available in Nebraska, James said.

"Docs," as they often are called, are leather shoes famous for their "bouncy soles with lasting style for all walks of life," he said. The shoes are basic, but are available in many different styles and colors.

Currently, James is carrying Dr. Marten "monkey boots," eight- and-10 eye work boots and the standard "Gibson," as well as many other styles.

"That's my pride and joy of the store — to have the shoes in here," he said.

James said he has taken special orders for the shoes "since day one." With more than 500 styles available, he said only in his "wildest dreams" could he get them all into the store.

James owned two stores in Tempe; one called "Gargoyles," a Dr. Marten shoe store that he still co-owns, and another called "Hob Nob," which carried alternative, secondhand clothing.

Both stores were successful, James said, so he decided to bring the two concepts together in Lincoln.

Racks of jeans, blazers, pants, shirts, dresses and just about everything else fill the store. His store is different from a "regular" store, James said, because his clothes are relics from the past.

"Not vintage clothes necessarily," James said, "but clothes that are still cool."

James said he buys clothing that will appeal to the "crowd" whether it happens to be vintage or not.

What's "cool" right now, he said, are '60s and '70s fashions. James

said items such as platform shoes and bell-bottom jeans are popular right now in Los Angeles and New York.

But people in those cities usually dress up at night when they go out to dance clubs, he said, something that doesn't exist on the same scale in Lincoln.

James said he still believes there is a market here for the Pucci and Peter Max-type print shirts, double-knit polyester jumpers like the ones worn by the "Brady Bunch" sisters and other items reminiscent of bad '70s television shows.

The store's name is not one with dismal undertones, he said, but a phrase he came across while flipping through the newspaper.

"Six feet under" was in a headline in the newspaper. I didn't read the article or anything, but it seemed like a cool name for a place that would sell Doc Marten's," he said.

James said that his shoe suppliers have reacted positively to the name he chose.

James said he plans to slowly expand his merchandise. Already

he has ordered new leather jackets, sterling silver jewelry, crushed velvet women's clothing and Guatemalan backpacks.

He hopes to start a "wish list" for customers, something he has done in the past at his other stores.

The store currently handles tie-dyed T-shirts made by a local artist, and James said he would sell more artists' items if they are marketable in Lincoln.

James buys the store's clothing from customers, and also receives shipments from his buyer in Arizona. Ideally, he said, he would like to acquire clothing from customers only.

James doesn't canvass the local thrift stores to buy stock for the store, but occasionally if he passes one he will pick through the racks of jeans, he said.

The store is located at 1637 P St., in Pickles Plaza. Business hours vary, so check the door, but chances are that someone will be there because James said he has kept the store open as late as 11 p.m. to give customers a chance to stop in.

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Outlets of alternative stores provide fashions for budget-minded students

By Julie Naughton
Senior Editor

Most of us aren't living off our trust funds and buying our spring wardrobes with Mummy's Gold Card. Most students work with limited budgets, picking up a pair of shorts on sale here, a dress on clearance there.

Fortunately for fashion-and-budget-conscious students, Lincoln has several shopping alternatives.

The top of the line in this area is T.J. Maxx, an off-price chain with stores across the nation. Lincoln's branch is located at 400 N. 48th St., in the Centro Plaza.

T.J. Maxx is like the world's largest garage sale: There is a lot of junk around, but there are also incredible bargains to be had.

The store has a heavy emphasis on women's clothing, although it also carries clothing for men and children. It's possible to update an entire wardrobe with T.J. Maxx specials; with everything from work clothes to sportswear to swimwear, every base is covered.

Designer labels are featured, including such names as Liz Claiborne, Ralph Lauren, Anne Klein, Andrea Jovine, Evan Picone, Calvin Klein, JH Collectables and the Gap. The store has great sales, including seasonal clearances.

The store also has jewelry (occasionally, good stuff by Liz Claiborne), lingerie, perfume (recent sightings include Passion by Elizabeth Taylor and Anne Klein II scents) and belts.

Labels in the men's department include Polo by Ralph Lauren and Claiborne, Liz's men's line.

Another budget wardrobe possibility is consignment shopping. Jan Gauger's One More Time, 850 N. 27th St., is a quality store that also features many "name" clothes — Jones New York, Liz Claiborne, Ellen Tracy, Pendleton and J. Crew.

The store also consigns formals and wedding dresses. Prices start around \$5.

Jewelry to accessorize your new finds starts at \$1 here, and reaches into the \$30 and \$40 range for top-of-

the-line costume jewelry.

If you're looking for capital to buy other people's clothes, keep in mind that Gauger's One More Time takes clothing on commission.

Thrift stores also offer opportunities to add to a wardrobe at low prices; however, the selection here is the most erratic of the alternatives mentioned. The best of these: The Junior League Thrift Shop, 2201 O St. and the Salvation Army, 8th and P streets.

These stores are best for things like jeans to make into cutoffs or funky things like hats and costume jewelry. Jeans can be found for a quarter, sweaters for a dollar or two. Nicer pieces can also be found from time to time.

Designer labels are one indication of a garment's quality, and one thing that savvy shoppers should pay attention to.

Off-price and bargain shopping offers unlimited opportunities to add to a wardrobe at bargain prices — so leave the Gold Card at home, and enjoy.

Suits

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suit, she said customers can get the look without actually buying the suit.

Dean Dietz, store manager of Landon's, 1201 O St., said most of his customers are looking for something a little out of the ordinary in the suit line.

"Blues and greys have been around for so long, we get a lot of customers looking for what's different," he said.

New shades, like taupe and olive, are getting a good response, Dietz said. Darker browns are doing just

"so-so," he said.

And, although the traditional single-breasted suit has continued to do well, Dietz said he has seen a resurgence in the popularity of both the double-breasted suits and the suit with an Italian influence.

"Shoulders are wider, lapels are wider," he said. "It's a little more relaxed."

Although Ehlers cautioned the use of "flashy ties" for job interview attire, Dietz said he predicted that florals, geometrics and bright colors would continue in popularity.

"Guys are having fun buying ties again," he said.

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