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# Diner seems like home

What can you do when your friends desert you for spring vacation and you're stuck in Lincoln? Maybe you'd like to try some home cooking.

How about filling up the ol' beater with \$5 worth of gas and going out to eat? No, not one of those boring old fast food places you normally go to, but someplace that won't break you and has "just good ol' food"?

The Hi-Way Diner, 1339 West O St., claims just that. Co-owner, Gary Walker, said his truck stop is designed for big eaters and their portions are double what regular restaurants serve.

So early on a Sunday morning, I decided to venture out to this so-called truck stop and see for myself. They very rarely get truckers in the the Hi-Way Diner anymore because interstate traffic is now routed around West O Street, but the atmosphere has remained the same.

Entering the restaurant, the customer is serenaded by a colorful display of automotive signs, some in neon. But the center of attraction is the old-fashioned tin Texaco sign. It protrudes from a hole cut in the main floor down to the basement and extends all the way to the ceiling of the restaurant.

After choosing biscuits and gravy from the large menu board behind the counter, the waitress asked me if I didn't want the half order. I said I was sure because at the time I felt ravenous, or so I thought.

Customers help themselves to silverware and drinks poured by the waitress at the end of the counter before grabbing a seat.

Even though the food was excellent, I only managed to put a dent in three-fourths of the full order. But it was more than enough to feel stuffed.

The waitresses weren't what you'd expect if your idea of a truck stop is Mel's Diner. They weren't loud, obnoxious, dressed in short uniforms or chewing gum; instead, they were dressed like any other customer who might wander in.

As the rain beat on the pavement outside and vehicles

Kochner, a regular customer, said she keeps coming back because of the homey atmosphere, the food and the help.

"They keep your coffee cup filled," she said.

Andrew Kellogg, who usually comes to eat at the diner every Saturday and Sunday with his own



Robin Trimarchi/Daily Nebraskan

The cozy dining room at the Hi-Way Diner, 1339 West O St., greets customers with lots of elbow room and truck stop decor.

whooshed by the front picture window, waitress Dolly Cutshall scurried around to deliver the food.

Despite several quick rushes as groups of customers came in together, Cutshall still took time to smile and crack a joke with the customers.

The Hi-Way Diner might be a worthwhile trip just for the difference in atmosphere it provides from the regular restaurants.

After I had finished eating, I glanced at other tables and their occupants.

Customer Beth Duncan had quietly moved in behind De Kochner and covered her eyes. Kochner just laughed and turned around to greet her friend.

family, was there that day with his father, brother and sister.

"They treat you like family here," Kellogg said.

His father, Calvin Kellogg, reminisced about the time the waitresses sang happy birthday to Andrew and then told him he had to get up and take off his clothes.

"Boy, whatever color his face was before — it wasn't after that," joked Calvin Kellogg.

And if you stick around long enough, supervisor Mamie Jensen might even tell you one of her famous jokes.

Carissa Moffat is a junior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan news reporter.

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The neon-adorned front window of the diner reflects street activity and chatting customers.