

New hairdo helps evict winter blahs

By Mark Baldridge
Staff Reporter

During the winter months many Nebraskans are overcome with the urge to escape.

We want to escape from the miserable weather, the indoors, the tedium of jobs or classes and, most of all, our wretched, winter-worn selves.

In a way, it amounts to the same thing: the Winter Crazies.

A haircut or tint offers the illusion of having escaped. When you look in the mirror and someone new and interesting looks out, you may feel like you've left a heavy, dead self behind.

"If you look different, you feel different," said Angie Alexander, stylist coordinator for The Hair Care Place at 101 N. 14th St.

"January is the doldrums," she said, and added that people become depressed for a long time after Thanksgiving and Christmas.

According to Tom Ficke of Mr. Tom's Lincoln Hair at 1417 O St., a

lot of people get their hair cut around the New Year.

Alexander said Christmas and mid-February brought big business, with more hair colorings and fewer cuts.

A haircut or style change is healthy, Alexander said. She said she remembered reading several years ago that people with high blood pressure were recommended to get their hair cut more often.

"It relaxes you," she said.

A young man, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me while sharing beers that he's getting his hair cut before his court date. His long hair, once a personal trademark, will be "sacrificed to the system," he said.

Asked if winter depression played any role in his choice, he replied that the offense he's facing occurred while he was intoxicated.

"I got drunk to get rid of the deep-winter blues," he said. Now he says he has other things to worry about.

Gary Longsine, former colum-

nist for the Daily Nebraskan, recently shaved the sides of his head, just around the ears — a self-inflicted haircut that he has reason to regret.

Interestingly, he, too, connects his hairstyle change to alcohol, claiming to have been "drunk and depressed" at the time.

Women interviewed seemed unwilling to reveal they'd had hair coloring done. It seems that a revelation ruins the effect of sudden "auburnness."

In an alternative vein is the experience of Thomas Irvin, assistant manager of Sir Speedy, a copy shop at 101 N. 14th St. He says he's had long hair for five or six years and intends to keep it that way.

Asked what would induce him to cut it, he said, "I've wondered about what kind of monetary value I'd place on that. I guess it would have to be a few thousand dollars."

Those who, like Irvin, want to keep their hair may be forced to opt for other tactics to fight the winter blues.

Weight

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Bohaty said.

When students find themselves in this situation they realize they need to make a series of lifestyle changes. These changes can be difficult to make because the person is dealing with habits, she said. This is why 95 percent of the people in the United States gain their weight back within the first year, she said.

Counseling is an important part of helping students make lifestyle changes. Because about 75 percent of success in weight loss is psychological, the behaviors that lead people to overeat must be addressed when making lifestyle changes, Bohaty said.

"College students are in this city to get an education," she said. "They are working on their minds and not

taking care of their bodies." Kathleen Lehr, a registered dietitian and a certified nurse for UNL, said that different people must make different changes because no one responds to stress in the same way.

"Some people eat when they are experiencing stress, others don't eat at all," Lehr said.

The University Health Center offers a 10-week program for people who are 12 percent or more over their typical body weight. The program teaches students to deal with lifestyle changes, and eventually weight maintenance, she said.

When students are confronted with stress they need to know how to walk away from it, to just get away and relax, before they put something in their mouths, Bohaty said.

"They need to learn how to identify the problem in order to make a change," she said.

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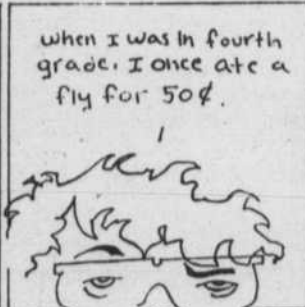
WITH HELP FROM MILI SMYTHE, BARBARA MADAMS, PETER ALEXANDER, & LISA DINEBIRD

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"THE RINGO"	"THE PERMA-PARTY HAT"	"THE DEBBIE"	"THE NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST"
"THE GEISHA"	"THE LARRY OF THE 3 STOOGES"	"THE SPROUTING HAIR PLUG IMPLANTS"	"THE SMURF"
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