

Bars, pool halls and restaurants among student popular hangouts

By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

Okay, your assignments are finished (well, you've thought about them a lot), your room is all spic-and-span (the uppermost layer of crud has been removed) and a letter or phone call home at this point seems a little inappropriate (how many ways can one say "SEND MORE MONEY" without sounding greedy).

It's time to "hang out" or "kill time" in Lincoln. However, you're probably asking yourself, "Self, where can a college student hang out in Lincoln?"

Here are just a few options that many college students of the past and present have taken advantage of.

Of course, one is not limited to the selections on this list, but they have been known to be popular for many college students.

LATENIGHTRESTAURANTS — very well-liked for both the studying and the non-studying student.

It is not uncommon to find these places filled to the gills at 1 a.m. with students hunched over a textbook and a cup of coffee, especially during dead week or finals week.

However, it is also common for groups of students to gather at one of these restaurants for a study break to enjoy a slice of pie or a cup of hot chocolate.

All of these places offer a wide variety of breakfasts, desserts, sandwiches and appetizers, as well as free refills on coffee, hot tea and iced tea (each of which are vital ingredients to a successful finals week for most college students).

Denny's (open 24 hours a day, two locations at 900 R St. and 3031 NW 12th St.) has a special late night menu (available 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.), which is

an abridged selection of the full daytime menu, but still has some excellent choices, such as chili fries and mozzarella sticks.

For a student with a sweet tooth, Denny's offers seven selections of pie, as well as shakes, sundaes and banana splits. Not only are the coffee and tea refills free, but the soda products, lemonade and herbal tea are as well.

Village Inn (open 6 a.m. to 2 a.m., four locations at 2949 N. 27th St., 111 S. 29th St., 6555 O St. and 5001 Van Dorn St.) has possibly one of the best dessert selections in the city with 14 kinds of pie available daily, five other flavors offered on a seasonal basis, PLUS a pie of the month. And that's not to mention the cobblers, cheesecake and custard.

Village Inn also features skillet dinners, which consist of country-style potatoes covered with one of six different styles of toppings (Garden, Country, Mexican, etc.) and two eggs, all served in a piping hot skillet.

Perkins (open 24 hours a day, two locations at 121 N. 48th St. and 2900 N.W. 12th St.) is probably the most popular with college students out of the three, and also features a late-night menu. However, if there is something on the daytime menu that is not listed on the late-night menu, it still can be requested.

Perkins also features quite a wide variety of desserts including more than a dozen kinds of pie, six kinds of "mammoth muffins," and various other treats — all homemade in the Perkins bakery.

BARS — Well, those college students who have survived to the age of 21 occasionally find the desire to take in an alcoholic beverage outside of the privacy of their own living establishment, while still able to have a good time doing it.

Many bars in Lincoln do allow minors on the premises, but only prior to 9 p.m., in accordance with state law. Lincoln offers a wide variety of bars, all with a variety of drink specials, but some of the more popular ones with UNL students are:

Chesterfield's/Big Red Pool Room/Underground (Gunny's Building, 245 N. 13th St., lower level) has something for everyone. All three are equipped with a full bar for its patrons.

The Big Red Pool Room has 17 pool tables that have hourly rates or are coin-operated. Free pool (no purchase necessary) is available 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. Sunday through Wednesday.

The pool room has about six pinball and video machines as well as a couple electronic dart machines. It is open from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Sunday, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. Monday through Thursday, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Saturday and 3 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Friday.

Chesterfield's offers a bit more of a laid-back atmosphere than its two neighbors. Chesterfield's has a full menu, featuring such items as burgers (10 kinds) and other sandwiches, appetizers and desserts. This menu can be ordered anytime before 10 p.m.

Chesterfield's also features a



Therrese Goodlett/DN

Marshall Price, a recent graduate of Lincoln High School, and Wen Ma, a researcher in UNL's engineering department, play Go, a Chinese game at the Coffee House, 1324 P. St. Students hang out in the shop to study, play games, talk and drink coffee.

Karaoke machine, which plays the instrumentals of several classic tunes while the customer sings, reading the lyrics off a nearby monitor.

From time to time, Chesterfield's features local bands. They are open from 11:30 a.m. until 1 a.m., Monday through Saturday.

Duffy's (1412 O St.) is one of the best places in Lincoln to check out some of the local bands. Duffy's features local talent on Wednesday and Sunday nights and will soon be featuring comedy and acoustic acts on alternating Mondays. Duffy's features its own monthly publication, entitled "Duff" Stuff," which mainly hits on the upcoming local bands and a cut-out calendar for upcoming Duffy's events.

Duffy's is open 1 p.m. to 1 a.m. Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. on Saturday and 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Sunday.

P.O. Pears (322 S. Ninth) is one of Lincoln's most visually stunning places. The decor is unique; whether it is something painted on the wall or hanging from the ceiling, something new can be found on each visit.

Some of the events also are unique, such as the weekly hermit crab races on Friday nights.

P.O. Pears carries a terrific menu, featuring several types of burgers (for those of you with a taste for danger, they offer the "Jiffy Burger," a cheeseburger topped with peanut butter), as well as appetizers such as nachos (made with homemade chips) and a new arrival, armadillo legs (jalapeno halves stuffed with cream cheese, breaded and deep-fried).

In addition, P.O. Pears has a sand volleyball court that is available year-round (weather permitting) and balls can be checked out at the bar with proper identification.

One hint if you do go to P.O. Pears; read the instruction at the door twice.

It's not as simple as it looks to the first-time customer.

P.O. Pears is open 11:30 a.m. to 1 a.m., seven days a week.

OTHER STUFF — These are a couple of places that just didn't really fit into either of the categories above, yet couldn't form a specific category. Nonetheless, they do need to be mentioned for the college student seeking a change of pace.

The Coffee House (1324 P St.) attracts an extremely wide variety of people. It features eight different kinds of gourmet coffee and three kinds of specialty teas daily, and also has 30 kinds of both coffee beans and teas available for sale.

Several types of "munchie" stuff, including croissants, fresh fruit and bagels are also available for sale.

In the back part of The Coffee House is Afterthoughts, bookshelves filled with hundreds of diverse books, which are both for sale and available for some light reading while enjoying a cup of coffee.

Seating varies from the typical tables and chairs in the front, to sofas and easy chairs towards the back. The Coffee House also has board games such as Othello and Chess available for its patrons.

The Coffee House features poetry readings on Monday nights, a musician of some type at least one Friday or Saturday each month and art exhibits that occur fairly regularly, which usually last for about a month.

The Coffee House is open from 7 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Sunday.

Big John's Pool and Billiards (399 Sun Valley Blvd.) has over two dozen regulation size pool tables on hourly rates and four coin-operated tables. In addition, Big John's has four elec-

See HANGOUTS on 7

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