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Shaun Sartin/ DN

Bar hoppers make their way down O Street in front of Iguana's Pub and Grill.

Downtown bars offer variety of options for UNL students

By Stacie Hakel
 Staff Reporter

“There are a lot of people that come to this area and just bar hop.”
 — McLeese bar co-owner

University of Nebraska-Lincoln college students age 21 and up have an advantage when it comes to finding weekend festivities — the bars.

Drink specials, happy hour, Friday Afternoon Club, pool, darts, video games, music and dancing are standards at local bars, a little something added to the social aspects of bar hopping.

Kim Gifford, co-owner of Chesterfield's Bottomsley & Potts, Lower Level, 245 N. 13 St., said 90 percent of her clientele were college students. With entertainment including karaoke and the Night Club and a full menu with items priced under \$5, students can enjoy a full evening at Chesterfield's, she said.

“We provide such a wide range of entertainment,” Gifford said. “There's a real versatility here for people. Our motto is ‘We have something for everyone.’”

Gifford also is co-owner of The Cactus Club, Suite 111, 1111 O St., Centrum Main Level.

About 70 to 80 percent of The Cactus Club's patrons are college students, she said.

The bar, with its “contemporary neon atmosphere,” plays the newest of country music and offers country dance lessons on Tuesday

evenings for people ages 16 and up.

At the other end of the spectrum is O'Rourke's Tavern. Doug McLeese, co-owner of the bar, said the music at O'Rourke's, 1329 O St., ranged from blues and reggae to Frank Sinatra.

McLeese said a variety of people go to O'Rourke's.

“We get a mixture of a lot of things. By that, I mean we get working people, older people and the non-traditional student,” McLeese said.

“We're not strictly a college bar. We're appealing to the regulars that come in a couple times a week. We are very much a regular-based bar.”

Steve Pope, vice president of The Edge, 1118 O St., said most of his bar's patrons were students.

Pope said business had increased this summer since the bar moved to its O Street location from 227 N. 9 St.

“The main reason why we moved out of the old place is because we outgrew it,” Pope said. “We were pretty popular there also.”

Pope said The Edge offered Lincoln a variety of alternative sounds with dance music and bands that fans can't find in most Lincoln bars.

“The owner decided there was nothing like this in Lincoln and thought he would give it a shot and see what happened,” Pope said.

“The guy that books the bands tries to get the newer, alternative bands that aren't real, real big yet. Local bands also play. We try to get them to open up for the bigger bands.”

Pope said the music at The Edge ranged from the mellow tunes of Blind Melon to the heavy thrash metal of D.R.I.

While there are bars all over Lincoln, many are in the heart of downtown.

McLeese said O Street seemed to be the center of attention for the bar scene.

“I think you'll find that around the area of 14th and O, that the bars do very well,” McLeese said. “There are a lot of people that come to this area and just bar hop.”

Food

Continued from Page 12

Grandpa's Ribs and Secret Sauce, 27th and Orchard.

Walking into Grandpa's, I thought I was in for something extraordinary.

The rule at these kind of places is: the worse they look, the better they are, or at least can be.

At Grandpa's the waitress was surly, the wall was lined with cowboy hats and the menu had an ad for a pest control place on the cover.

This is the place, I thought, where they send me straight to heaven.

But I was sadly mistaken.

The ribs were tender enough but not particularly flavorful. I couldn't make it out over the wait.

In all a disappointment, but even that's good to know.

Especially if you want to be a man-or-woman-about-town.

— Mark Baldrige

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