

New downtown coffee shop offers food, entertainment

Le Cafe Shakes aims to be 'hangout' for under-21 crowd

By Joel Strauch
Staff Reporter

There is a new coffee and sandwich shop downtown known as Le Cafe Shakes. Named after what can happen when you overdo it with their quality coffee, this little cafe might give you the shivers.

According to owner/manager Reg McMeen, Le Cafe Shakes wants to be "a social venue for the half of campus that's not old enough to drink."

"I want people to not think of this as a typical all-ages, teenager hangout," McMeen said. "If there are a few teenagers in here, come in anyway. They're not gonna bite."

Shakes, run by Duffy's Tavern, opened its doors in May and have been getting a lot of people through them since, he said.

"We get the downtown business crowd during the day and in the evenings we get the people who are out for a quick bite before the bars," he said.

Shakes serves up some rather unique (for the Midwest) bagel sandwiches. "The Big One," with its unlimited toppings, is quite impressive. "They're catching on real big on

the coasts," McMeen said. "We're just trying to keep up."

"We intended on a small menu, but we ended up going to a full-on sandwich kind of menu."

"Bagels are real versatile," he said. "They're a good canvas to work on."

Le Cafe Shakes has to be careful that their foothold doesn't get too shaky with all the other coffee houses and sandwich shops downtown.

"Hopefully, we're striving for a different market than the other coffee houses," McMeen said.

"And our handmade sandwiches are far superior to every other product around here."

Shakes also has an entertainment edge.

"We have a broad selection of live music and try to have one to two shows a week," he said.

"We can get more expensive shows than Duffy's because of a younger crowd. We have a larger general audience and no restrictions on alcohol," he said.

Shakes is adding to its ambiance with wall decor from local artists.

According to assistant manager Paul Engelhard, who has two pieces up himself, "We've got mostly abstract works by UNL undergrads or recent graduates."

If you are in the mood for an unusual and tasty sandwich and a great cup of coffee to wash it down with, check out Le Cafe Shakes at 1418 O St.



Jason Levkulich/DN

Le Cafe Shakes, a new sandwich and coffee shop, is at 1418 O St.

Film documents Clinton campaign

Like the 1992 campaign that it documents, "The War Room" starts out slow and goofy, and ends up fast and goofy.

Watching the film brings back many memories from the campaign: how it began with in-fighting among the Democratic nominees; how Ross Perot emerged on the scene, dropped out, and then came back; how Bush initially resisted participating in a debate; and more.

The main figures in the D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus documentary are Clinton campaign strategists James Carville and George Stephanopoulos. Although Carville and his wife Mary Matalin, lately of CNBC's "Equal Time," are Washington's couple du jour — featured in a current Vanity Fair magazine article — this film reveals the working relationship between Stephanopoulos and Carville to be more intriguing.

When Clinton's campaign team finds out that one of Bush's supporters hired a Brazilian printing company to produce campaign posters — rather than "buying American" — Stephanopoulos calls Matalin, Bush's Deputy Campaign Manager, to get a response. We see Stephanopoulos telling Carville, "I called Mary, and she said 'Is this

bad?'" And we see the two laughing about it.

The film focuses, appropriately, not on political rhetoric, but on behind-the-scenes images, on the comments made before and after a speech. For instance, the sarcastic lift of her eyebrows as she takes the podium reveals more about Gennifer Flowers and her relationship with Clinton than anything she actually said at her press conference.

After the Gennifer Flowers scandal breaks, Carville accurately defines it as a turning point. He says to the Clinton campaign staff, "Whenever anyone with new ideas comes along, they try to ambush him. If they win this time, then they will win every time." Clinton's ability to survive subsequent scandals shows the truth of Carville's prophecy.

The documentary also reveals the surrealism of American politics. Watching TV coverage of Perot dancing with his wife as the voice-over announces that his by-then failed campaign cost him over \$60,000,000, Carville terms Perot's campaign "the biggest single act of masturbation in history."

Or we see a rally, "Poultry Workers for George Bush," crashed by someone dressed in a chicken suit holding up a sign reading "Chicken

George Bush Won't Debate."

Despite all the rhetoric of this or any campaign, one thing that comes through is how committed and genuine the people behind the campaign are. Watching Carville thank the staff near the end of the movie is almost as painfully emotional as watching one's father cry.

Our view of Clinton becomes distanced as the film progresses. An early scene shows an extreme close-up of him in a hotel room, drinking coffee and joking with his staff. By the end of the film, we only see him as the staff watches him on TV, or imagine his words as the staff talks to him on the phone.

Carville — an opinionated, down-to-earth Southerner, almost a Democratic version of Perot — emerges from the film as a potential future candidate with grass-roots appeal.

Clinton, Hillary, Chelsea — in the few glimpses of them we get — come across as dorks, just as do most, if not all, of the contemporary political figures in the documentary. But the viewer is left almost with a sense of affection for them: these are our dorks, damn it.

"The War Room" is showing at the Mary Rieppma Ross Film Theater this weekend.

—Jim Cihlar

New videos shelves full of mostly obscure movies



By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

It's another one of those weeks where hardly anything on the new release shelves played in Lincoln. We have one hilarious hit, a bomb and one film that had both good and bad reviews, but did little business at the box office. The pick-of-the-week is an excellent sci-fi/drama from a few years back. All new movies were released on Wednesday.

Grumpy Old Men (PG-13) — Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau team up yet again for yet another laugh-riot hit, this one taking place in a small, cold town in Minnesota.

John Gustafson (Lemmon) and Max Goldman (Matthau) are childhood friends-turned-enemies in a feud that has lasted for 56 years and comes to a head when Ariel (Ann-Margaret) moves to town and they both compete for her affections. Burgess Meredith also stars as Gustafson's father, a role that proves to be quite hilarious.

It's side-splitting comedy from beginning to end (including outtakes during the credits). It's worth going

out of your way to find.

Sugar Hill (R) — Rumor has that this one was so bad, the distribution company pulled in almost all the copies from the theaters after one week of release. It never played in Lincoln (pulled before it got here). The movie stars Wesley Snipes, concerning a drug lord who wants to quit the business. Catch a rerun of "Matlock" instead.

Romeo is Bleeding (R) — a movie that received either really good reviews or really bad ones. This one also did not play in Lincoln, which is unfortunate considering some of the star power in the film such as Gary Oldman. Roll the dice for this flick.

PICK-OF-THE-WEEK — Jeff Bridges (currently starring in the extremely-average thriller "Blown Away") did some of his best work back when he starred in "Starman", a story about an alien who crashes on Earth, and with the help of a widow named Jenny Hayden (Karen Allen), he attempts to avoid the various authorities and malignant situations that arise.

Bridges garnered an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor for his performance in "Starman", and it was well deserved. The movie itself is very solid, with a comfortable mix of comedy, adventure, science-fiction and drama.

Go find it.