

Alternative shopping

Students living on tight budgets find bargains

By Tasha E. Kelter
Staff Reporter

It's no big news flash that most students operate on a tight budget. For some, unique clothing is a top priority.

Many students reconcile these conflicting circumstances by shopping at thrift and consignment stores. And for those willing to spend a little more, they may shop at vintage clothing stores.

Lincoln's downtown area has a number of thrift stores, including the Junior League Thrift Store, Goodwill, Salvation Army, Ruby Begonia's and Mission Thrift Mart.

Chloe Thurston, a sophomore physics major, is a regular "thrifter." She tries to go thrift-shopping twice a week, and 80 percent of her shopping is done at thrift and consignment shops. Thurston said she appreciated the large selection of polyester that many thrift stores carried.

"You know that no one else is going to be wearing what you're wearing," Thurston said.

Dave Baker is a sophomore secondary education major. He also goes thrift-store shopping regularly — every other Sunday.

"I like to make it a little habit — it's kind of a quirk of mine," he said.

His best finds have been striped shirts and extra-baggy pants.

"I like my stuff really baggy," Baker said, "and usually some big old fat man left his clothes and I can hook up with them."

His favorite thrift stores are South Side Thrift and Family Thrift.

"That whole 17th Street area is pretty good," he said.

One potential problem with thrift-shopping was mentioned by Thurston, who was a thrift store employee.

"A lot of times, Japanese buyers and vintage clothes store buyers come and get it (quality donations) all, so a lot of thrift stores are already picked over."

Buyers often would pay stores to hold clothes for them, Thurston said. One Lincoln store she's found that doesn't seem to do this is the Salvation Army on 27th Street.

That is another well-known downtown thrift store, which obtains its clothes solely from donations. It also has a large student patronage, and it sees students buy-

ing a little of everything. "We try to go with the season," she said of the store keeping up with fashion trends. "If we're overstocked, we'll run sales."

The Junior League Thrift Store gets its clothes both from donations and consignment. The difference between a thrift store and a consignment store, manager Gwen Gies said, was that a thrift store took tax-deductible donations, while a consignment store paid the person giving away the clothes half of what they would sell for.

Their clientele ranged from "the junior high kids to the retired," Gies said. Most college students, when shopping in the store, bought both career and weekend wear. A lot of the students came in for professional outfits to wear for job interviews, she said.

Around Halloween, many more students came to find possible costumes.

The Junior League Thrift Store's selection was current with the season, Gies said.

"We just restocked our store with all the new spring fashions," she said. "All the stuff is really new."

College students made up about half of its clientele, said manager Sandy Saunders. They generally buy casual wear — shorts, jeans and T-shirts.

All of the thrift stores carry accessories and novelty items like hats, jewelry and sunglasses. Some have vintage-style clothes and gloves. All the stores have a large selection of shoes.

Thrift stores are only one place to buy unique clothing. Vintage stores are another type of shop in downtown Lincoln that offers alternative shopping.

Two of the best-known vintage stores are Rialto Extra and Ruby Begonia's.

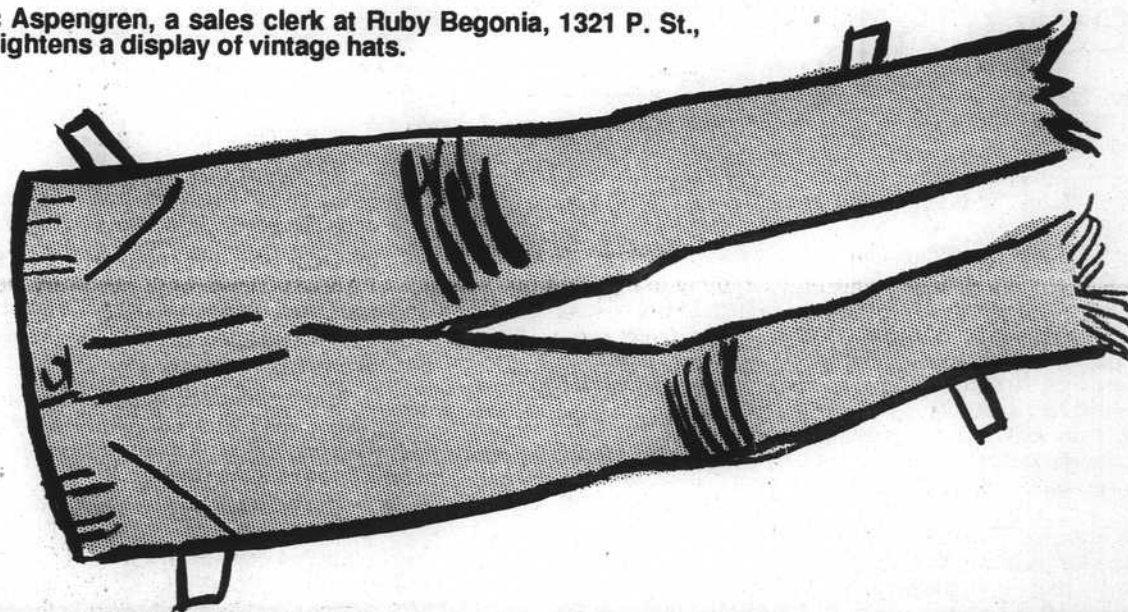
Vintage stores often are confused with thrift stores. The differences between the two is that vintage stores are more selective of the clothing they choose to sell, and their clothing is much higher-priced. Some students are willing to compromise the prices to get a special item.

"Vintage clothes are collectible," said Mindy White, sales assistant at Ruby Begonia's. "They're from the '30s and '40s. They have class and style, and they can actually be worth something."



Tanna Kinnaman/DN

Eric Aspengren, a sales clerk at Ruby Begonia, 1321 P. St., straightens a display of vintage hats.



Thrift shops

- Disabled American Veterans Thrift Store**
821 N. 27th
- Family Thrift Center**
1745 O St.
- Fredrick Oznam Thrift Shop**
1911 R St.
- Goodwill**
1717 O St.
- Mission Thrift Mart**
1825 O St.
- Salvation Army**
737 P St.
- The Classic Consignment Boutique**
4900 Dudley

Vintage Clothing

- Ruby Begonias**
1321 P. St.
- Rialto Extra**
1725 O St.



If you are a competitive rider or if you ride for exercise, the road or just to class, do it with **style**

SPECIALIZED

Available at



CYCLE WORKS

27th & Vine (402) 475-BIKE