

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Wednesday, March 13, 1996

Page 9

the glassy eye



Mike Kluck

Basketball fans prepare for weekend

If you're a basketball fan, this is the one weekend a year for which you live — the beginning of the road to the Final Four.

From Thursday through Sunday, at least 48 different NCAA men's basketball games will be on the tube, not to mention a variety of NIT games, women's tournament games and a few NBA games.

With all these opportunities, it is important to carefully plan out the week in advance to utilize the maximum viewing time efficiently.

The first thing you need to do is get yourself in shape. You should have started last weekend by watching the Big Eight Tournament, the Nebraska State High School Tournament, the Southeastern Conference championship and, of course, Sunday's NCAA selection show.

Now I know the high school tournament and opening rounds of the Big Eight probably weren't as exciting as the NCAA Tournament will be. But at least they gave your eyes practice for continuous gazing.

Monday and Tuesday were the reading days, learning about the teams, filling in your tournament brackets for the office pool and memorizing phone numbers for carry-out and delivery — because once the tournament starts, there will be no time for cooking.

It is also a good idea to rent a couple of movies. I would recommend "Hoosiers" and "Blue Chips." "Hoosiers" gives you the emotion you expect from the tournament, while "Blue Chips" is what college basketball is all about.

Today you need to let your professors know that you won't be in class on Thursday or Friday. If they give you any grief or accuse you of wanting to leave for your spring break trip early, just scream at them in your best Dick Vitale voice, "It's the NCAA BABY! Time for the PTPer's to step up because it's one game and go home!"

Now if for some reason they still can hear and have a problem with you skipping just say, "I loove you, man!" in your best Budweiser commercial imitation. By this time they should be ready to let you leave.

Finally, on Thursday, sleep in. But if your most comfortable chair is just a little better than sitting on nails, you may need to make a run to REMCO.

While there you also may try to secure yourself a big screen television. Even if your team loses, you can always return it on Monday.

Just before the first game starts, make sure the phone is close but the answering machine is on. You know how your mom always decides to call you with only a minute left in a one-point game. But you do want the phone close to order supper.

Also hide the remote control. This way, even while CBS goes through its barrage of commercials you won't have any temptation to switch the channel and miss a key play.

Another thing to have close by is your tournament bracket so you know when your Final Four teams lose (which hopefully won't be on the first day). A cooler and a 12-pack may not be too bad, but then you have those unwanted trips to the bathroom.

Now sit back, relax and let the games begin.

Kluck is a journalism graduate student and a Daily Nebraskan senior reporter.

'Reading Rainbow' looks for pot of gold

By Patrick Hambrecht
Senior Reporter

"Reading Rainbow's" executive producer Twila C. Liggett just finished five new episodes of her award-winning program at UNL this month.

But Liggett said she wasn't sure how much longer the show would be on the air because of congressional funding cuts and a frugal economy.

A UNL graduate, Liggett said the new shows she produced with UNL's Great Plains National and University Education Television used important children's books, dealing with issues like homelessness, multiculturalism and math education.

"Fly Away Home," based on the book of the same title by Eve Bunting, is a ground-breaking episode, Liggett said. The show tells Bunting's story of a homeless father and his young boy, both forced to live in an airport, followed by live interviews with homeless children.

"We're struggling for funding. This is probably the most difficult time we've had since I started."

TWILA C. LIGGETT

Executive producer for "Reading Rainbow"

"I think it's probably one of the most important shows we've ever done," Liggett said. "Leaving our audience feeling helpless about a problem is something we don't like to do, so we show them how they can help also."

To show children how to fight

homelessness, Liggett said, she focused on two groups started by children to help the impoverished — a man and his daughter who collect donated pennies for the poor with their national program, Common Cents, and a teen-ager who distributes excess restaurant food to the hungry.

Most of Liggett's time is not spent on developing new shows, she said, but on fund-raising and grant writing to keep "Reading Rainbow"

alive.

"We're struggling for funding," Liggett said. "This is probably the most difficult time we've had since I started."

"Reading Rainbow," whose host is LeVar Burton, the famed actor from "Star Trek: The Next Generation," is one of the oldest educational children's television shows, younger only than "Sesame Street" and "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood."

If viewers want to keep the 13-year-old program on the air, they should write letters to their local stations, Liggett said.

"One of the best tools we have are spontaneous letters, letters from parents and children and teachers, just letting them know they like the show."

Purple Moon offers flashback

Coffee shop re-creates '60s style

By Lane Hickenbottom
Staff Reporter

The spirit of 1967's summer of love has not been forgotten, perhaps only hidden.

Free friendship, free candlelight ambience, free live music and affordable coffee all can be found at the Purple Moon Cafe. Open daily from 1 p.m. to 3 a.m., this cafe is one of Lincoln's best-kept secrets.

Linda Bunik, owner of the Purple Moon, located near the corner of 13th and F streets, said that by opening the cafe last summer, she was trying to re-create a coffee house like the ones she remembered in the late 1960s.

"A coffee house was a place that attracted interesting people," Bunik said. "The focus wasn't so much on what the coffees were, as much as the atmosphere with music where you could meet others."

"Music was part of it. You had a lot of amateur players."

Most coffee shops today are quiet places where a lot of people go to study, Bunik said. In keeping with her memories of coffee houses in the '60s, Bunik wanted less of a study hall.

"You didn't go there to study," she said. "You went there as a place away from studying. The old coffee houses had character. You had an atmosphere where you could wander around; you weren't stuck at one table."

And the Purple Moon has very much become that.

Inside, the customers appear to have good times — sitting around tables, telling stories or playing card games or chess. The walls are lined with cushy couches, end tables and lamps, providing a very comfortable environment.

Live music is featured every night at the Purple Moon with no cover charge. The acts are usually solo acoustic artists who sing and play their own tunes. And the music is just another part of the atmosphere Bunik has tried to create.

During the day, before the nightly live music begins, people are welcome and encouraged to play their guitars and use the stage.

"I have no problem with musicians," Bunik said. "It's my belief that people need their own individual expression."

As an ordained minister, Bunik



James Mehling/DN

said she was often frustrated with the way people interacted these days.

"We have lost our human qualities," she said. "It's like we are some robots walking around."

This kind of sentiment has influenced the environment she said she wanted the Purple Moon to offer.

"I have become a minister, and it is kind of my ministry," Bunik said of the Purple Moon. "It is a healing kind of coffee house. If you look

around, to me, it's like the candles are there to heal."

The community atmosphere that has developed — with Bunik's encouragement — at the Purple Moon also contributes to her vision of what a coffee house should be.

"It is a place women can go, and it is a safe place," Bunik said. "If you need a walk to your car, there are always people to walk you to your car."

Futz show examines growing up

By Brian Priesman
Staff Reporter

It's hard to grow up. And this weekend, the Futz Theatre intends to show just how difficult growing up can be.

"Found a Peanut," the latest offering from the Futz theatre starts off a three-week series of productions at the Futz, located in the Mission Arts Building, 124 S. Ninth St.

"Found a Peanut" tells the story of a group of children growing up together next to a vacant lot. An all-adult cast will play the roles of the various children who interact in the play.

The Futz's artistic director, Paul Pearson, said the play examined issues that face kids throughout their lives.

"It's very kids stuff that they're involved in," he said.

"It really looks at greed."

According to Pearson, many of the events which happen to the kids help shape and affect them as they grow up.

"It looks at certain acts of violence that we indulge in as children," he said.

"Found a Peanut" will run this weekend only, a scheduling that is uncharacteristic of the Futz, which usually runs its theatrical productions for at least two weeks at a time.

The reason for the short run of "Found A Peanut" is because of two upcoming events, Pearson said.

Next weekend the Futz will present its annual "Futz Follies," and the weekend after that it will present a drama from England that delves into the controversial issue of abortion.

"Found a Peanut" opens tonight at 8 at the Futz Theatre and runs through Saturday. Tickets are \$8. For more information or ticket reservations, call 435-6307.