



**Above:** BRIAN RICH of Omaha and his sister, Teresa, of Des Moines, Iowa, play their coins in a slot machine. Brian said his sister and him go to the casinos about once a month to play the slots and other games.

**Right:** ALONG WITH the numerous slot machines inside the casino, Bluffs Run Casino also offers live greyhound racing six days a week year round.

he said, but one time she walked out with \$300 in ten minutes.

Aaron Dupree, a UNL sophomore theater performance major, said the lure of such easy money made the casinos a popular destination for students.

"I'm all about getting something for nothing," he said, citing the experiences of some friends who often lose money in Council Bluffs but occasionally win.

"I know it's a risk," he said, "but if you go with \$50, planning to spend it, it's like paying for entertainment. And if you win, even better."

Many gamers echo that sentiment, saying good food and drinks, a show and hours of fun are easily worth the money they could potentially lose.

Again, a walk through one of the casinos provides evidence of that reasoning. Free drinks at the gaming tables keep customers betting. Free or almost free food, usually spread in a giant buffet, keeps players from getting too hungry. And free live entertainment keeps them from getting bored — if the games themselves somehow fail.

Gamblers prowls the casino floor, trying their luck until they find a hot streak. Sometimes a single machine works well for them. Sometimes they simultaneously work three or more. No matter how "hot" a machine gets, though, it's rare to see somebody cash out. More often, a player goes up several hundred dollars and keeps playing until coming back down to zero.

After reaching on the tips of her toes to insert several bills, an elderly woman struggles to pull the lever on an oversized slot machine. Advertised as the "Big Dog," the machine is reputed to give "huge payouts." She pulls the lever and nothing happens.

Nearby, another woman pumps quarters into a smaller machine. Cashing out, she holds her hand under the spout while coins rain down. Soon the hand is full and the money keeps flowing. One after another, coins fill the tray. A woman beside her leans in to watch but soon loses interest. She turns back to her own machine which flashes and beeps upon her arrival, welcoming her back and beckoning her to play once more.

