

# Getting Used

Local used bookstores offer a wide selection of services

BY SARAH BAKER  
Senior staff writer

Although American culture currently sways under the heavy saturation of television, radio and the World Wide Web, a finer medium exists in our mass-marketed times — books.

New books are still big bucks, but with the increasing numbers of used book peddlers, they are more accessible than ever.

Downtown Lincoln is abundant in used bookstores, most of which have a huge selection of books ranging from paperback romance novels to that tome for *Psychology 301*.

But used bookstores offer more than just cheap prices and out-of-print books. Most have a focus on personal service, a unique sense of atmosphere and, in some cases, the chance to play with a big, fat cat.

Cinnamon Dokken, owner of A Novel Idea, 118 N. 14<sup>th</sup> St., said she thought used bookstores have an appeal to everyone, but especially to college students.

"Sometimes we don't have the straight main textbooks students need," Dokken said. "But we do have books for classes like classics, English and philosophy or psychology. We try to keep a good, scholarly selection."

Most of the local used bookstores have a wide selection of out-of-print books that can't be found at new sellers.

Each bookstore has its own policy of pricing, but the books are usually available at bargain costs. Some stores work on a book-for-book trading basis, depending on what the customer has to offer the store and what they are looking to buy.

Katherine Bergstrom, manager for A Novel Idea, said students are a big part of the store's clientele.

"If students don't go to used bookstores, I think they should," she said.

"Often the university bookstores run out of books or are delayed in getting them, so, depending on the book, we might already have it, and usually at a lower price."

If the store doesn't happen to have what the customer is looking for, A Novel Idea has a request list that many people find helpful in their search.

A Novel Idea also offers a student discount of 10 percent off anything in the store on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Jean Lewis, owner of Page One Bookstore, 206 N. 13<sup>th</sup>, said her store deals exclusively in used paperbacks.

"We have some of everything," Lewis said. "We have good selections of science fiction and mystery as well as literature and romance novels."

Dealing with used paperbacks, Lewis said, requires her store to be even more selective because they often have numerous copies of the same book.

She said her store, along with two others in town, are the only ones who specialize solely in paperbacks.

Lewis thinks the price is the deciding factor between used and new books for most people, including students.

Whether paperbacks, literature or textbooks, used bookstores are not the only ones working hard to sell their wares at a competitive price.

But most Lincoln used-bookstore owners said they don't feel much competition with used bookstores and chain bookstores, which deal exclusively in the sale of new books.

Bergstrom said she thought compe-



SCOTT McCLURG/DN

CINNAMON DOKKEN, owner of A Novel Idea, 118 N 14<sup>th</sup> St., provides an alternative to the large chain bookstores in Lincoln. Along with her cat Silas, Dokken has created a more casual atmosphere for literature lovers.

titution with chain bookstores is not a factor in sales of old books, but added that it also depends on the store.

"Barnes & Noble has a lot of bargain books, and we do keep an eye on those so we can keep prices competitive," she said.

Bob Condello, manager for Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 5150 O St., said he tries to work cooperatively with used bookstores in Lincoln.

"We refer a lot of people to used bookstores when we don't have what they are looking for," Condello said. "I think there is a place for both kinds of stores. Our goal is to work together to get more books into more people's hands."

Dokken agreed. "New and used work in tandem," she said. "We both occupy our own

niche." Many people may have the wrong idea of what a used bookstore is really like, Bergstrom said, and encouraged people to check one out.

"Some people think everything we have is going to be collectibles, or everything is going to be falling apart," she said. "If they can't afford what we have, then it wouldn't be worth it."

Personal customer service is another plus to shopping at second-hand stores, especially since the selection in a used bookstore is much wider, and sometimes harder to fit into categories. Difficulties locating a specific text in the store leads to greater interaction between shopper and retailer.

"If you walk up to someone in a used bookstore, they are going to know how to help you," Bergstrom said.

"Every bookstore is unique and has a different flavor. That's part of what makes them so much fun."

"Plus, there are no cats in a new bookstore," Dokken added, in reference to her gigantic feline Silas, which roams the store freely.

Perhaps Dokken's favorite aspect of a used bookstore is the casual atmosphere, which fosters an environment of discussion and fun.

She said many people stop in her store just to take a break from their stressful days and to spend a few minutes in the comfortable and relaxing atmosphere.

"People like the mystery in a used bookstore," she said. "There are lots of little surprises that aren't found in places with fluorescent lighting and the same books that everyone else has."

## Veggie cookbook makes a cut to the lighter side

BY TODD ANDERSON  
Senior staff writer

If becoming a vegetarian is about practical planning and decision-making, Karen Lee knows what she's talking about.

Drawing from traditional continental and Chinese cuisine, Lee explores meatless meals without scaring off the curious carnivore in her new cookbook, "The Occasional Vegetarian" (Warner Books, \$15.99).

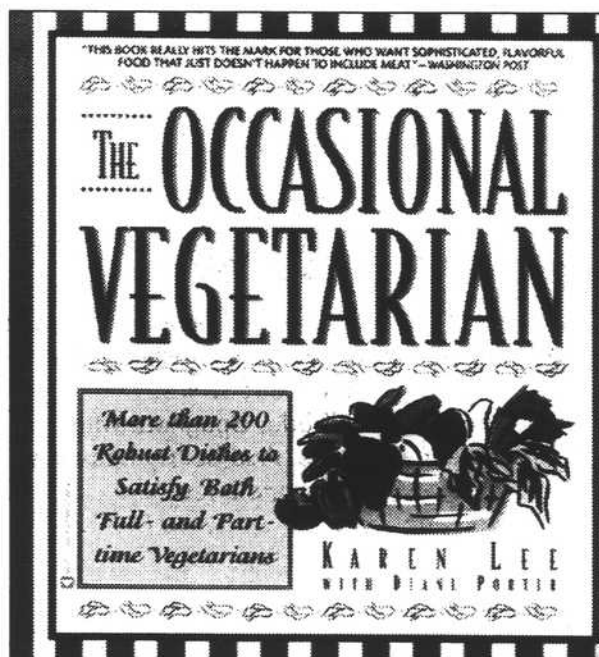
Lee recognizes the public's recent change in attitude toward vegetarian dishes; it's less about following a fad and more about making wise decisions when planning a healthy diet.

Because more people realize that omnivores, unlike die-hard vegetarians, can cross over the line to try new foods, the growth in the popularity of meatless dishes is sure to continue.

Trained in the European continental and Mediterranean methods of food preparation, Lee has carved herself a career in the cooking business that has spanned more than 20 years.

Recently she has been recognized for creating innovative specialties derived from traditional Chinese cooking techniques and ingredients.

This cookbook, unlike others pouring into the market, is not about flashy design and trendy cooking.



Rather, it outlines concisely and clearly for the beginning chef how to orchestrate simple and elegant meals.

The most valuable part of the book is the instruction for making homemade broths and

France and Italy as a child.

Now that fall has arrived, the release of the book coincides perfectly with ample food stocks in supermarkets and inhospitable weather that makes home-cooking even more appealing.

pastes that can be added to any dish, veggie and meat-filled alike.

With ample time and an eye on the end product, following tips for fresh blends of vegetables and spices ensures enriched quality and augmented tastes.

The book does make a few assumptions about the sophisticated nature of its readers, however. This tends to leave a few things to be desired. For example, the designers of the book should have included some photos to help readers identify rare ingredients and seasonings.

Pictures would have also been a great aid to demonstrate procedures for preparation.

Still, pointers in the margins offer great fun facts to know and tell, and they prove indispensable during preparation.

The pointers indicate the love the author has for creating robust dishes, which stems from the time she spent in

### Book review



Lee organizes the book's dishes by their place in a meal, but it's more interesting to choose individual dishes to fit the mood and style of an event.

The simple dishes such as the Mixed Vegetables al Forno, the couscous dishes and the carrot purée soup provide maximum taste in minimal time — a convenient choice for those who don't have time to prepare banquet dishes every day.

But when the formal occasion does arise, the book offers a bevy of pasta, rice and bean dishes that offer not only sustenance, but also a delightfully tasty experience for a small dinner party.

While the focus of the book is how to construct meals without meat, many of the pasta and rice dishes can be modified to include chicken or fish.

Without purporting to be the end-all, tell-all vegetarian cookbook, Lee's book offers the perfect first step for vegetarians and meat-eaters looking to expand their palates.

Those looking for inventive meals with new ingredients will have a heyday with this book. More importantly, they will end up with an effective and creative guide to diet management and healthy living.