

The worst of the worst

UNL students handle bad, bad Christmas gifts

BY JESSICA FARGEN
Staff writer

One bottle of Turtle Wax wash and a wax kit.

A tube of green lipstick, a lawn chair and a small slot machine.

A 5-pound pillow that looks like a potato.

Bizarre, overly practical and just plain stupid gifts top University of Nebraska-Lincoln students' lists of worst-received Christmas gifts.

The culprits: usually aunts and grandmothers.

The well-meaning relatives gave the strangest gifts, which rarely got thrown away and always required proper gift-opening etiquette, students said.

Josh Reiners, a junior animal science major, said he opened a too-practical gift from his aunt and uncle last year.

"I got a bottle of Turtle Wax wash and wax kit," he said. "I still haven't used it. That was kind of weird."

But Reiners has yet to part with the car-shining liquid. In fact, he brought it to college with him.

"Maybe some sunny day, I'll use it," he said.

Beth Rademacher's gift was also green, but it wasn't for her car.

The junior communications major got a tube of green lipstick that turned bright red when she put it

on. She has not used the lipstick since her grandmother gave it to her a couple years ago, but she has not thrown it away either.

Throwing away bad gifts and making sour faces when they are opened isn't proper, Reiners said — no matter how ridiculous the gift is.

"It's essential that you act like you love it," he said. "Especially when it's from relatives."

Scott Jefferson, a freshman pre-medicine major, agreed.

"You just kind of give a cheesy grin and say, 'Oh thanks,' but you don't really mean it."

Jefferson had an experience similar to Reiners' when he received a lawn chair from his grandmother.

Jefferson was 10 years old when he and his brother got the lawn chair.

"They thought we might need it," he said.

Jefferson said his mother used the chair more than he did.

Deborah Lee, a junior psychology major, said she usually gets normal gifts from her family members — with the exception of her dad.

He always puts a bottle of "stuff" in her stocking. The stuff, she said, goes in her gas tank to make her car start better in winter.

"He just started putting that in my stocking when I came to school," she said. "He's not much of a gift person, but he usually gets us that.

"It's essential that you act like you love (the gift)."

JOSH REINERS
animal science major

"It's his way of taking care of his little girl."

Robin Clevenger, a junior psychology major, got a slot machine from her aunt before she was even old enough to gamble.

The toy was stuffed under Clevenger's bed for several years.

Michelle Wiemer, a senior business major, said her grandmother gave her and her sister 5-pound pillows that looked like sacks of potatoes.

"Me and my sister thought it looked like bird seed, and it was very embarrassing," said Wiemer, who was 20 years old at the time.

She hasn't used the potato pillow, but it might still be around.

"I have no idea where it is now," she said. "We brought it home, we laughed about it, and Mom took them somewhere."

"It was a good laugh."

Newest shopping center ready for holiday traffic

BY MICHELLE SITORIUS
Staff writer

When the busiest shopping day of the year arrives Friday, Lincoln's newest shopping center will be waiting with open doors.

Six new stores will open that day at South Pointe Pavilions' open-air shopping plaza at 27th Street and Pine Lake Road.

Abercrombie & Fitch, The Buckle, Gymboree, Lenscrafters, Athlete's Foot and Bed, Bath & Beyond will join four stores already open at the plaza, said Scott Rehorn, a partner in R.E.D. Capital Development.

Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Old Navy, Hallmark Creations and Chili's opened this fall.

"We don't have these stores anywhere else," said Amy Jappert, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman who works at Hallmark Creations. "This way, I don't have to go to Omaha."

Rehorn said planning for South Pointe began more than two years ago. The exterior construction should be finished within the next two months, and the interior of the mall will be completed by summer 1999.

South Pointe's open-air layout is different from that of a typical mall, Rehorn said. It adds atmosphere and gives shoppers a better shopping experience than an enclosed mall does.

Scott Victoryskocil, general manag-

er of Gateway Mall, agreed that South Pointe Pavilions offers shoppers a different option than Gateway, the other large mall in Lincoln.

Other stores that will open at South Pointe after the New Year's holiday include Gap, Gap Kids and Landmark Luggage. Old Navy was the first store to open at South Pointe.

Daniel Reimnitz, Old Navy general manager, said the store has had steady traffic since its opening.

Chili's, South Pointe's only restaurant, opened at this fall because of the development in the area.

Steven Drake, service manager at Chili's, said the mall brings people to the restaurant.

"We have people coming in droves," Drake said. "We got killed last week."

Chili's will not have problems handling holiday business, he said.

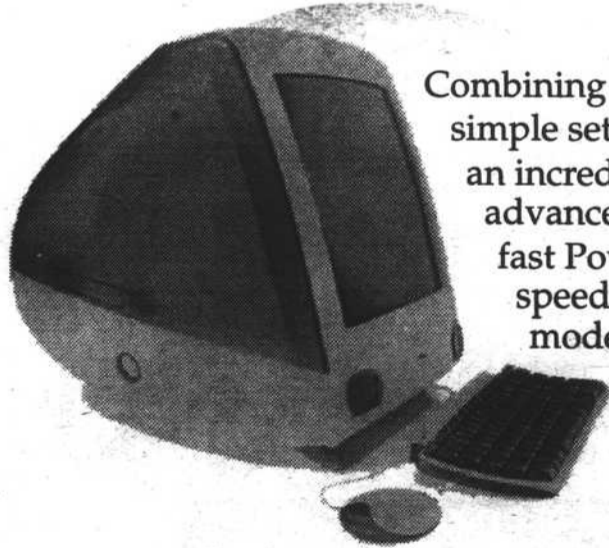
T.J. Hesser, store manager of South Pointe's Barnes & Noble, said he also expects the mall to draw a huge number of shoppers to the store.

People will stop into the bookstore during their holiday shopping trips to other South Pointe stores, he said.

Barnes & Noble has much more to offer than books, he said. The store also has listening stations for music, Starbucks coffee and a gift area.

"Usually, Barnes & Noble is a destination store," Hesser said. "But South Pointe Pavilions is going to be a destination mall."

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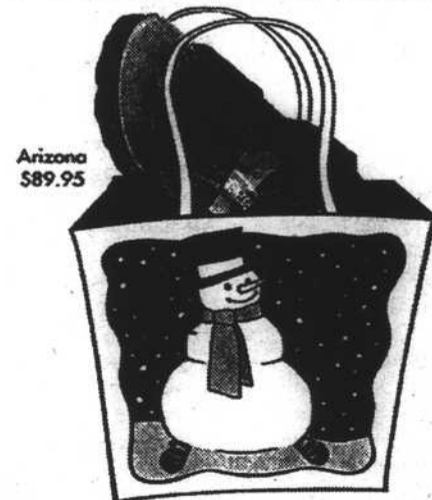
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