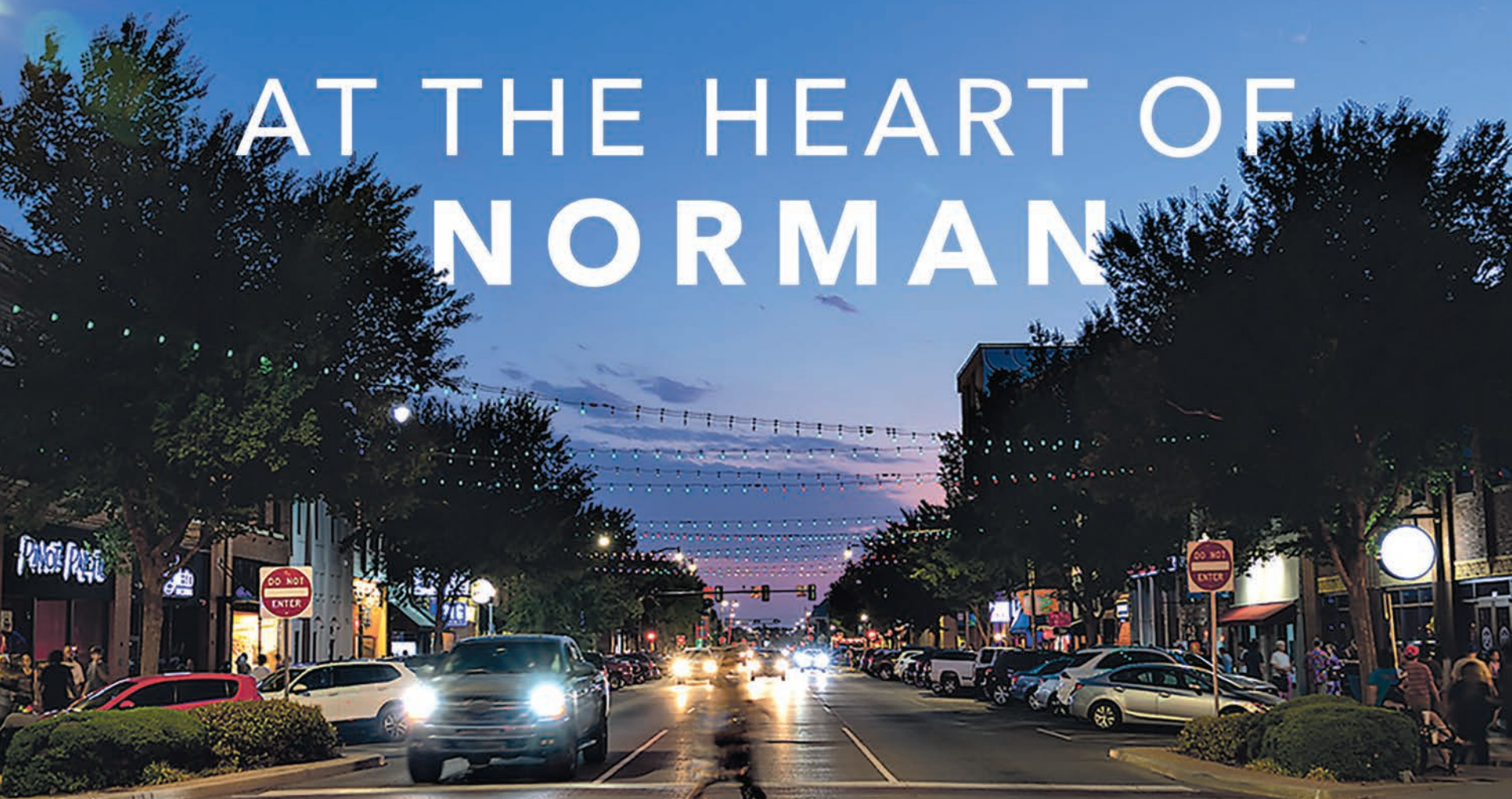


OU
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G U I D E

BEST OF NORMAN
SEPTEMBER 2023
OUDAILY.COM

AT THE HEART OF NORMAN



Oldest restaurants:

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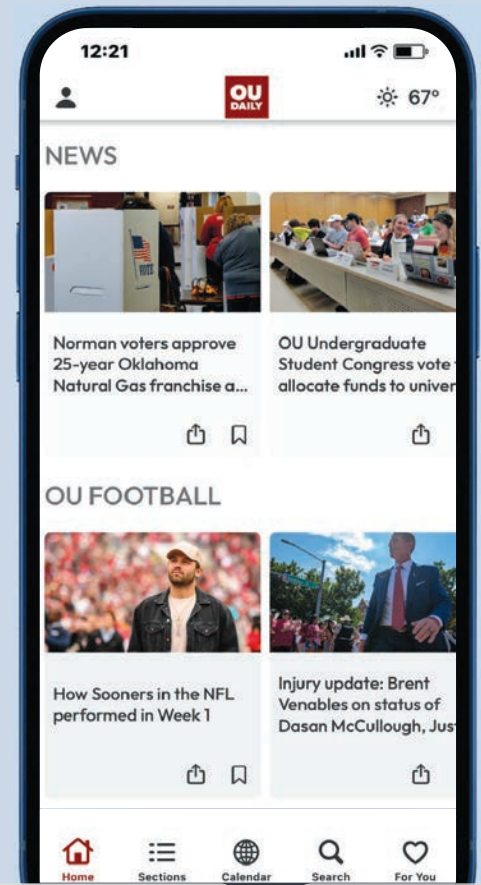
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BASED OFF THE PLAY BY VAN DRUTEN AND STORIES BY CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD



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FROM THE EDITOR



BELLA GRAY/OU DAILY

An illustration of The Depot in downtown Norman. It was originally built in the late 1800s and named the Santa Fe Depot. In 2003, the building became a performing arts studio. Visitors can attend concerts, seminars and view The Depot Gallery.

Bringing you the community's top picks



Emma Blakley
Culture editor
emma.l.blakley-1@ou.edu

I arrived in Norman in the midst of COVID-19, struggling to grasp the culture and community of the city in which I would spend my next four years. With so many

online classes, my first introduction to Norman was my job as a barista. The second semester of my freshman year, I secured a job as a server at a restaurant near campus.

Even now that I have found my place at OU and connected more with my campus community, I feel a strong sense of solidarity with those I have met in the service industry.

On campus, I've met people from all over the state, the country and from around the world, but my time in the service industry has introduced me to

the people of Norman.

Menus can be found online and Yelp reviews can be skimmed in a matter of seconds. But neither can tell us why our favorite places exist, who created them or the intent and attention of those whose livelihood depends on the community showing up.

Our 2023 Best of Norman is split into nine categories that highlight a handful of different ways that the people of Norman gather. Within each category, three businesses or venues were selected for the community to vote on.

As the culture editor, I chose the following categories for this year's guide: oldest restaurants, main street shopping, food trucks, breweries, happy hour, art, Campus Corner, game day eats and movement.

To create a short list for community polling, the returning members of the fall OU Daily culture desk collaborated to decide on these businesses. I created a Google Form that was distributed to the culture desk, and members voted on their favorite businesses in Norman that fell under each category.

I looked through the answers and discussed a possible short list with

the Daily's editor-in-chief Karoline Leonard. A second round of voting was conducted within the culture desk. The businesses and venues that received the most desk votes are featured in the following guide.

In our shortlist selection process, OU Daily prioritized locally owned businesses when possible and when it correlated with culture desk responses. Businesses could only appear in one category. Polling took place on the OU Daily's website between Aug. 1 and Aug. 27. The winners are announced in this guide and will receive a certificate from Daily staff.

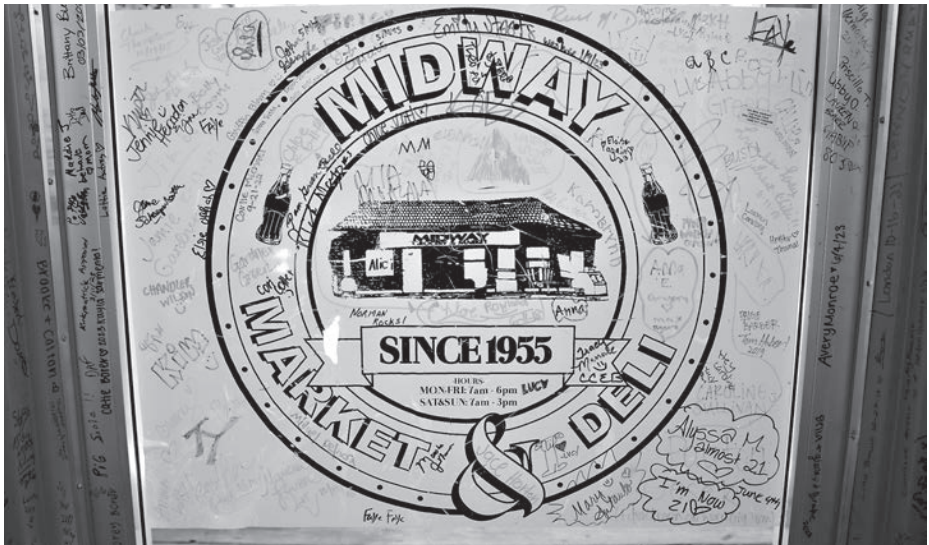
The following businesses, restaurants and venues are the heart of Norman culture. I am thrilled to present the OU Daily 2023 Best of Norman Guide and share the stories of these local businesses with you. Their stories tell of their unique visions for their businesses and capture the joy, struggles and perseverance that have made these places such successful and central parts of our city.

OLDEST RESTARAUNTS



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Bob Thompson and former OU football coach Barry Switzer have fostered friendship at Midway Deli. Switzer frequents the restaurant.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Midway Deli has been serving Norman since 1955. The restaurant has customers signed names all around its walls.

SERVING NORMAN SINCE 1955

Midway Deli’s journey from grocery store to beloved sandwich shop

BY MAVI COLE • MAVICOLE@OU.EDU

When Bob Thompson purchased the Midway Deli market in 1985, he had no clue what transformations were in store for the historic site.

Midway Deli, originally a grocery store and meat market founded in 1926, is now Norman’s hot spot for sandwiches, live music and former OU football coach Barry Switzer sightings.

Midway Deli still operated as a grocery store until 2000 when it started to transition into a sandwich shop due to competition with larger Norman grocery stores. The transition proved tough but things changed when OU faculty, staff and students started frequenting the place.

“In about 2013, we finally got discovered by the university, really by the Greek community,” Thompson said, “and it just took off.”

Thompson said it didn’t hurt that Switzer became a regular customer.

“Students would come in and see Barry, or they’d be in with their parents on a special weekend and the parents would meet coach Switzer. That helped a lot,” Thompson said. “He’s meant a lot for us just by being here, but getting the attention of the student body was a real key.”

Midway’s personal and intimate environment factored

into its success. Thompson was raising his children when he bought the store, allowing him to bond with other couples in the area who shopped there. He got to know his customers, and it’s a trait he and his employees still value and practice today.

Thompson said when a customer walks in, they’re met with a warm welcome, and when they’re asked how their food is, it’s a genuine question.

Jordin Shaver, an assistant manager, said a great part of the job is getting to know Norman locals. Shaver said the close proximity inside the deli helps her see a more human side of the football players and coaches, such as Switzer, that frequent the restaurant.

“It’s just nice because you get to know everybody, and we’re a smaller space, so you get to talk to them one-on-one,” Shaver said. “They’re really curious about you, and you’re curious about them.”

Thompson said his wife, Maricha, is one of the driving forces behind Midway Deli. She is the creator of many of the deli’s famous dishes, such as Maricha’s Gumbo and Mac & Cheese.

“She has a knack for finding recipes that are simple enough to have young people learn the recipe and repeat

the recipe,” Thompson said.

Thompson grew up in a small town, so being around and talking to so many people was new for him when he started, but he grew to love it. Thompson’s favorite part of owning Midway Deli has been his contribution to the Norman community and the people he has gotten to know in it.

“I’ve had people come and tell me how much they appreciated that we had revived such an important landmark place,” Thompson said. “The thrill of it is that my success makes other people feel successful. It means something to them because of their connection.”

The deli will turn 100 years old in two years, and Thompson will approach 40 years of being the owner. Thompson had no idea the significance Midway Deli would grow to have in Norman. Years of dedication to both the shop and Norman has led Midway Deli to become a long-lasting triumph.

“For some 60 other years, other people sowed their seeds of life and we’re pretty lucky to be able to harvest that,” Thompson said.

Midway Deli is located at 601 W. Eufaula St. and is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day.

OLDEST RESTAURANTS



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

The Diner is located in downtown Norman. The restaurant serves traditional, American homestyle and Tex-Mex food.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

The Diner is family-owned and operated. The restaurant is open for breakfast and lunch every day.

CLASSIC DINING DOWNTOWN

The Diner maintains a legacy of good food and community

BY MAVI COLE • MAVICOLE@OU.EDU

Bonnie Ampsacher, owner of The Diner, has continued a Norman legacy of a restaurant that not only serves homestyle food, but feels like home.

The Diner, located on Main Street, has been a favorite among Norman locals since Ampsacher's father, Mark, opened it in 1989. The building itself has been a staple in the community for over 100 years, housing several different restaurants, yet maintaining the same tight-knit atmosphere.

Ampsacher believes the longtime success of The Diner is due to returning customers, the sense of community and the staff.

"It gives people a sense of connection and belonging," Ampsacher said. "I think those two things make us present here in the community."

Ampsacher also said as downtown Norman has become more vibrant, business has grown. The area is always bustling, which is a recipe for success when coupled with The Diner's recognition, despite more competition.

Ampsacher and The Diner faced some struggles during

the COVID-19 pandemic, and it ended up closing for six months.

It later opened back up at half capacity, which was difficult for such a small space.

Despite those roadblocks, The Diner recovered and continues to serve the community and create a good work environment for employees.

Miriam Izaguirre has worked at the restaurant for over a year. She said the work environment at The Diner has good energy, teamwork and a caring boss.

"Coming from jobs that didn't have that and now coming into (a) locally owned (business), you can really feel the difference," Izaguirre said. "Bonnie really cares about everybody and we get to know her on a different level."

Izaguirre also said that aside from her coworkers, the customers make working at The Diner a special experience.

In 2009, The Diner was featured on "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives," a popular television show on Food Network that features Guy Fieri. Though the show has brought in

many guests over the years, what really keeps The Diner going is their regulars.

Many of the regular customers have been eating at The Diner since before Ampsacher was around, and they keep coming for the classics and nostalgia. Things like her father's chili recipe have remained the same since the 1980s.

The Diner strives to uphold their tradition of good food and unity of Norman locals, according to Ampsacher. She feels satisfied with her work when connecting with customers or observing the bonds they form.

"I really like it when people are having a good time. When they come in and they're happy and enjoy their food, and they enjoy talking to the staff or other customers and when they leave, their day is better," Ampsacher said. "It makes me feel good about what I'm spending my effort and time on."

The Diner, located at 213 E. Main St., is open from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

BREWERIES



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Suzette Grillot is the founder of Equity Brewing Co. Equity is an all-women-owned brewery in Norman.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Equity Brewing Co. features books and art for purchase. The business has donation drives to benefit the Norman and Oklahoma City communities as well.

OKLAHOMA'S 1ST ALL-WOMEN-OWNED BREWERY

Equity Brewing concocts a safe space along with great drinks

BY EMMA LOU BLAKLEY • EMMA.L.BLAKLEY-1@OU.EDU

Established in 2021, Oklahoma's first women-owned craft brewery is a dedicated safe space for members of marginalized communities and a hub for progressive Normanites.

Suzette Grillot, former dean of the OU College of International Studies, founded Equity Brewing Co. and is co-owner alongside her daughter, Hannah. When the brewery opened its kitchen in May 2023, Equity chef Yvonne Menja became a co-owner.

"The Norman community, I think, was looking and waiting for a space where the progressive folks in the community could come and feel safe and comfortable," Grillot said. "I hear people refer to it as 'Norman's progressive living room.'"

After a visit to a brewery during graduate school, she was inspired to open one of her own. While many brewery owners learn to brew before deciding to start a brewery, Grillot said her vision came before anything else, and she taught herself to brew along the way.

Grillot said when she opened Equity, there were women in Oklahoma who co-owned breweries with their spouses and who participated in the brewing process, but no female head brewers.

"There were definitely women in the industry, but there wasn't an all-women-owned operation," Grillot told the OU Daily. "There wasn't really a space that was intentionally progressive, intentionally created for people to feel safe and comfortable in a bright and open space."

Equity's mission made all the difference for bartender Emma Watkins. Despite living in Oklahoma City, Watkins chose to commute to Norman rather than find a job closer to home.

"Maybe there are other breweries that have (a) similar mission and values," Watkins said. "But I knew that Equity was the only all-women-owned brewery in Oklahoma."

Equity hosts a writing group, a book club and other events throughout the month, including its drag brunch. One of Equity's resident drag queens, Olivia Lycan, also doubles as the kitchen pastry chef.

"I wear many hats, and wigs," Lycan said.

Lycan has been with Equity as a drag performer since the brewery opened and said the performances have been received with a wealth of positivity.

Lycan said despite recent attacks on drag shows, Equity's community provides a safe space for performers that is void of criticism.

"They're not brave enough to say it to our faces, really," Lycan said of the criticism. "Especially here is a very welcoming space, that's the name of the game. So here especially, we're all safe."

Lycan took on the role of pastry chef a few months ago after leaving a corporate job in Oklahoma City. Lycan values the personal and community-oriented aspects of Equity as a workplace.

"We're not working for someone that we never meet and we never know. We're not working toward a goal

we can never meet," Lycan said. "We are actually trying to build something community based, and it's not some amorphous business entity that is here solely to take advantage of us."

Equity partners with community aid groups such as Red Dirt Collective and Care-A-Vans to serve the community. Through its Taps for Humanity program, Equity brews specialized beers dedicated to charity organizations in the region, and donates a percentage of the beer sales to the organizations.

"Everything we do here, we try to do ethically and for the community," Lycan said.

Equity brews its beer in small batches to allow for a variety of beers to be available at any given time. The brewery's current selection includes darker beers like the Crème Brûlée Golden Stout and Blood Orange IPA, along with lighter options like the Peach Basil Blonde and Pineapple Sour.

Equity also features a selection of cocktails, many of which are crafted using beer. For non-beer drinkers, they brew seltzers and have a variety of wines.

Equity also serves mocktails and coffee drinks, and has a food selection that includes flatbreads, salads and pasta.

Equity Brewing, located in Norman at 109 E. Tonhawa St., is open noon to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, from noon to 10 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. The brewery is closed on Monday.

READERS' CHOICE

1

405
Brewing Co.

2

Equity
Brewing Co.

3

Lazy Circles
Brewing

BREWERIES



REGHAN KYLE/OU DAILY

Lazy Circles Brewing co-owner Stephen Basey is the head brewer. The brewery has six IPAs.



REGHAN KYLE/OU DAILY

Lazy Circles Brewing specializes in small batch beer. The brewery is located in downtown Norman.

DOWNTOWN TAPROOM WELCOMES ALL

Lazy Circles Brewing fosters community involvement with a myriad of events

BY EMMA LOU BLAKLEY • EMMA.L.BLAKLEY-1@OU.EDU

Beginning as a garage-based brewing operation, Lazy Circles Brewing is a welcoming taproom with community involvement at its core.

Stephen Basey began brewing beer in his garage with his sister and brother-in-law, Holly Basey-Swanson and Stephen Swanson, in 2013. At the time, Basey was in the U.S. Navy and both Swansons were working at a bicycle store in Oklahoma City.

In 2017, Basey's Navy retirement coincided with a change in Oklahoma law that allowed breweries to sell their own products on-site.

The three decided to turn their home brewing into a full-fledged taproom.

Located on Main Street, just east of Porter Avenue, the brewery opened its doors in November 2017. Lazy Circles Brewing is the third craft brewery in Norman and the oldest standing taproom in the downtown area.

Basey said as the craft brewery industry has infiltrated Oklahoma, the brewery saw an increase in interest toward craft beer in its nearly six years of business.

"A lot more people are like, 'Oh, this is cool, this is new,' and they're trying it, or maybe they're just happy they

don't have to go far," Basey told the OU Daily.

Taproom manager and bartender Melanie Caudle first discovered Lazy Circles while finishing her undergraduate degree and said the brewery was key to feeling at home in Norman.

"Lazy Circles is such a special place to me," Caudle told the OU Daily.

Caudle has worked at the brewery for about three years now. She said the welcoming environment at Lazy Circles is what makes guests come back and is a focal point of cultivation for everyone who works there.

"We really try to create a real hospitality-forward kind of familial, comfortable setting," Caudle said. "Bring your kids, bring your dog. We will pretty much bend over backwards to make you happy."

Caudle said the taproom sees guests who are new to craft beer, and those interactions are some of her favorites.

"We have a lot of people who aren't familiar with craft beer, and those are the ones that we love having the most," Caudle said. "We have all the patience in the world for people to ask questions and try beers."

Lazy Circles hosts a variety of in-house events, including

Drag BINGO on the first Sunday of every month. The brewery partners with local businesses for events such as Beer and Yoga in partnership with Fusion Fitness and Yoga. Basey said Lazy Circles is almost always involved in a fundraiser for a local charity.

The brewery is involved in the community at a citywide level in events that include the Norman Music Festival, the Norman Art Walk and the Medieval Fair. One of the brewery's biggest partnerships is with Norman Pride.

"Pride has got to be one of our top, our favorite events to participate in," Caudle said. "We brewed the official Pride beer this year and will again next year, so we're really proud supporters of all things Pride."

Lazy Circles is located at 422 E. Main St. and is open from 4 to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, from 3 to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 3 to 8 p.m. on Sunday. The brewery is closed on Monday.

MAIN STREET SHOPPING



MEGAN O'CONNELL/OU DAILY

Green Feather Book Company's owner, Heather Hill, works on expanding the back room. Hill wants to include even more books and an additional cozy place to read.



MEGAN O'CONNELL/OU DAILY

Green Feather Book Company is Norman's oldest bookstore. The shop has new and used books available for purchase.

VISIT NORMAN'S ONLY USED BOOKSTORE

Green Feather Book Company opens newly-renovated doors to the public

BY SHELBY EMERY • SHELBY.E.EMERY-1@OU.EDU

After a year under new ownership, Norman's only used bookstore completed renovations in August, providing the store more opportunities to cultivate community.

Green Feather Book Company opened in August 2022. The space was most recently known as Gray Street Books, but has been selling used books since 1973 under various owners.

Heather Hall, owner of Green Feather, worked for previous owners of the used bookstore, then called The Book Stall, in the 1990s while in university.

Hall graduated from East Central University in Ada in 2019 with a bachelor's degree in legal studies and planned to attend law school the following year.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, her plans were put on hold. At the time, Hall's two children were transitioning to online school.

"I was like, 'There is no way I am doing law school (online),' " Hall told OU Daily. "I have children at home who need help."

By the time her children returned to school in person, Hall's goals changed. She decided to open a business selling books due to her love for reading. When the opportunity arose in March 2022, Hall purchased the store. The following months were spent rearranging and renovating the interior.

"There's a huge need in Norman for bookstores that has

been severely under met for decades," Hall said.

Inside the store, books both new and used sit side by side, some of them from the store's original owners. Hanging lights shine down on the books, illuminating the shelves against dark green walls. Pastel couches provide visitors with a space to relax or socialize while shopping.

Jess Henderson, a regular at Green Feather, said its vibe is what makes the store unique and the welcoming environment is what brings her back.

"It's not just that it's a used bookstore that's here in town or even that it's close to me," Henderson said. "It's being able to find new things, but also the personality of the staff and the welcomeness."

Hall said her goal for Green Feather is to be a community space that holds regular events. With the recent renovation, Hall said she is excited for the store to have a better flow of traffic.

In the renovation, the store's event space was transformed into a nonfiction section with seating and a new archway.

Since opening, Green Feather has found ways to get involved in the Norman community. The store has participated in fundraising and book drives for schools in the Norman area, as well as served as a space for community events.

"It's my goal to be as active in the community as I have

time to be active in the community," Hall said.

Hall said she is an avid opponent of book banning. Last year, when a Norman teacher resigned after receiving criticism for sharing a QR code to access banned books, Hall took action.

She gave out T-shirts and buttons featuring the QR code, which was linked to the Brooklyn Public Library Books Unbanned initiative.

Green Feather received mixed opinions about its stance on book banning. The store has a banned book section near the front of the store with the Books Unbanned QR code displayed on the shelf.

"My purpose as a bookseller is to be outspoken in places where librarians can't, where teachers can't," Hall said.

Green Feather offers a system that allows books to be traded in for credit, offering \$1 credit for paperback books and \$3 credit for hardcover books. Hall believes that everyone should have access to books. While Green Feather does offer new books, customers can find used books at a lower price.

"Sometimes socioeconomic concerns create a divide in a community," Hall said. "Having a bookstore like this gives the entire community a place to come together."

Green Feather is located at 300 W. Gray St. and is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

READERS' CHOICE

1

Green Feather Book Company

2

Guestroom Records

3

STASH

MAIN STREET SHOPPING



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Guestroom Records has been serving Norman and Oklahoma City since 2003. The store buys and sells vinyl records and CDs.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

A customer browses records in Guestroom Records. The vinyl records take up most of the store.

MUSIC YOU CAN HOLD IN YOUR HAND

Guestroom Records celebrates 20 years of business

BY SHELBY EMERY • SHELBY.E.EMERY-1@OU.EDU

Independent record store Guestroom Records celebrated 20 years of business in September, bringing the Norman music community together.

Justin Sowers and Travis Searle started selling records door to door and at garage sales in 2002. After the pair's success, the first Guestroom Records store was opened in Norman the following year.

Guestroom sells a wide range of genres, curated based on customers' interests. The store has a large selection of classic rock and indie alternative albums. Featured artists include Radiohead, Dolly Parton and Taylor Swift.

Guestroom sells new and used records, and there is a section for CDs and cassettes. Visitors can also sell their own records to the store or search through its online inventory. When Guestroom first opened, most of the inventory consisted of CDs. Now, due to their increased

popularity, the store primarily sells records.

Will Muir, Guestroom Records manager and employee of 16 years, attributes this to the continuity and high quality of records, which have the ability to deliver a smoother sound and more dynamic range than other forms of listening.

"We always say that vinyl's forever, that those magic pieces of plastic will continue to spin and make noise," Muir told OU Daily.

In a digital age where streaming music is easier than ever, records remain desired by many. Muir said the listening experience is enhanced by the physical aspects of records.

"People just want something to hold in their hand," he said. "But also, records are super, super fun to look at."

Guestroom has been involved in long-time community

events such as Norman Music Festival and the 2nd Friday Norman Art Walk. The store also participates in Record Store Day, an annual celebration held by independent record stores internationally that features activities and special releases.

The store has also held live performances and seen notable artists walk through its doors, like when Tommy Stinson of Guns N' Roses stopped by the store for a performance after headlining the Lloyd Noble Center in 2011.

"It was just like a dream," Muir said.

Guestroom Records is located on 125 E. Main St. and is open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday.

FOOD TRUCKS



MEGAN O'DONNELL/OU DAILY



MEGAN O'DONNELL/OU DAILY

Riko's Tacos is run by Miguel Godinez with the help of his daughter. The truck has been on Campus Corner since 2019.

Riko's Tacos offers a variety of delicious and inexpensive tacos on Campus Corner including sides such as elote.

SMALL KITCHEN, BIG HEART

Riko's Tacos cooks with passion on Campus Corner

BY ISABELLA STONECIPHER • ISABELLA.A.STONECIPHER-1@OU.EDU

Tucked behind Norman's bustling Campus Corner, Riko's Tacos has served the Norman community through a small food truck window for the past four years.

Miguel Godinez had worked in the service industry long before opening his beloved taco truck.

Throughout Godinez's 25 years of restaurant experience, he learned how to cook a wide range of food while working in various Chinese and Indian restaurants. In 2014, Godinez opened a Mexican restaurant on Lindsey Street called Cocina Don Miguel.

Due to a lengthy construction project on Lindsey Street, which began in 2016, business slowed down. Godinez made the decision to close the restaurant in 2018.

"Business was going great, and then it just went down due to them closing the street," Godinez, whose daughter helped translate for the interview, said.

Still wanting to pursue and share his passion for cooking with the Norman community, Godinez reimagined his cooking and opened Riko's Tacos in February 2019. The truck originally parked on Flood Avenue before settling in its current spot on Asp Avenue in September of that year.

"Due to all the stress from having (Cocina Don Miguel)

and having to close it down, I didn't want to reopen a restaurant but I still wanted my own business," Godinez said. "I wanted to keep cooking."

Godinez said while he loves cooking, the best part of his job comes from the connections he makes with his customers.

"(I enjoy) cooking and seeing people come back and be happy to come talk to me," Miguel said. "I actually still have students, OU alumni, that will reach out to me via Instagram to see how I'm doing when they're not even here anymore."

Wills Greene graduated from OU in 2021 and currently lives in Dallas, Texas.

During his undergraduate studies at OU, he walked to Campus Corner and followed the smell of something delicious past White Street. Around the corner, he found the food truck in an empty lot.

Even though Greene no longer lives in Norman, he makes sure to stop by Riko's Tacos to check in with Godinez while in town for OU football games.

It was not just the food that kept Greene coming back. Greene said Godinez offered incredible service and a

welcoming attitude.

"He's one of the friendliest guys out there. ... The reason Riko's is different is because of the customer service," Greene said about Godinez. "Miguel is one of a kind. He's always happy and wants to put a smile on people's faces with his food."

Although many may presume the name Riko's Tacos is coined from the name of a person, it actually refers to the food itself. The word means delicious or tasty in Spanish.

With food prices on the rise, Godinez has tried his best to keep his menu affordable for everyone, especially students who often stop by the food truck for lunch.

Despite slight increases on a few menu items, it is still one of the most affordable places to eat near campus. Prices range from \$3 for a sope to \$9 for a flautas plate.

"We're here for the customers, and because of the customers," Godinez said. "As long as I keep having the customers, I would love to keep being here."

"Cook with love. That is the most important thing: cooking with passion."

Riko's Tacos is located at 722 Asp Ave. and is open 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.

READERS' CHOICE

1

Riko's Tacos

2

The Dump Truck

3

El Mexicano

Score!

OU students and staff,
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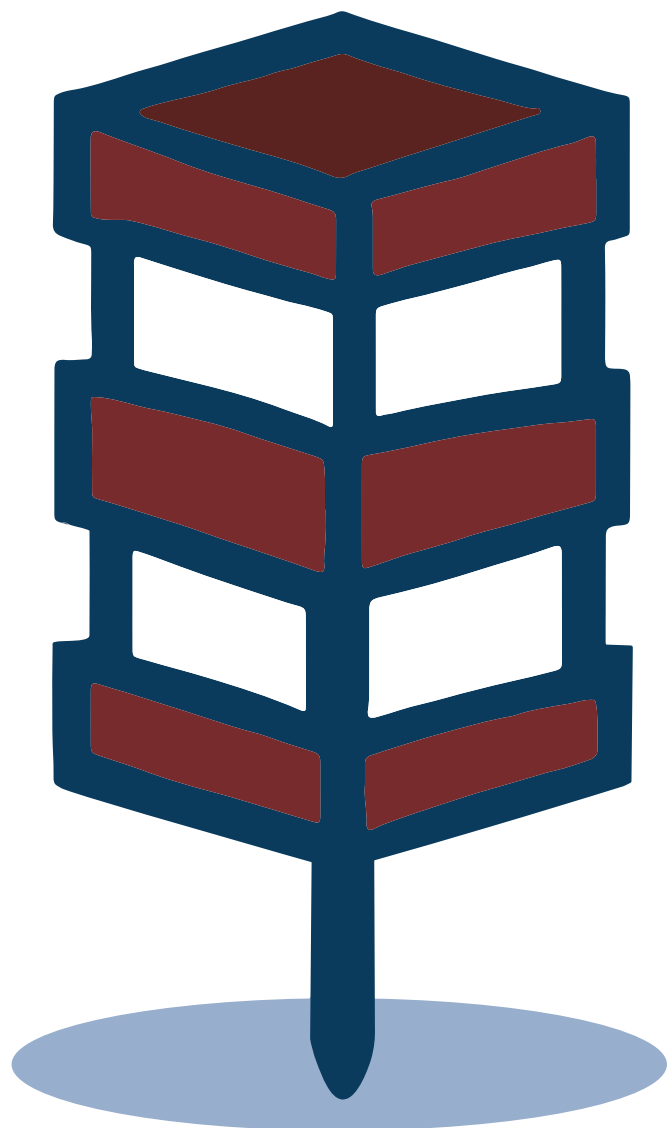


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HAPPY HOUR



MEGAN O'DONNELL/OU DAILY

The Winston is a new-American restaurant located on Main Street. The restaurant is best known for their happy hour deals for their signature cocktails.



MEGAN O'DONNELL/OU DAILY

The Winston features pictures and tributes to Winston Churchill throughout the restaurant. Churchill is the restaurant's namesake.

LOOKING TO SHAKE UP HAPPY HOUR?

The Winston offers innovative drink selection and nontraditional menu

BY MADELINE HOFFMANN • MADELINE.G.HOFFMANN-1@OU.EDU

After opening in 2018, The Winston has quickly become a Norman mainstay for its stylish environment and adventurous food and drinks.

Area partner Rick Patino and managing partner Brandon Kistler founded The Winston with the intention of owning an innovative and standout establishment.

"Anything that was weird and different that wouldn't work at another concept, they brought here, and it just all fell together," General Manager Scarlett Burnett said.

Located on Main Street, The Winston takes pride in its extensive drink menu. It features a unique rotating selection of cocktails, beer, whiskey, wine and mocktails.

On top of its extensive happy hour between 3 to 6 p.m. daily, the restaurant also hosts \$2 Tuesdays, where select menu items are \$2.95 all day, and Whiskey Wednesdays, where the restaurant's large whiskey and bourbon selection is discounted.

"Whiskey Wednesday is a fun way to experience our bourbon wall," Burnett said. "It helps anybody who wants to get bourbon try it for cheaper."

The Winston cycles through new cocktails seasonally, sometimes by replacing an individual drink at a time. Occasionally, special drinks, such as a homemade eggnog,

are incorporated into the menu for holidays.

"It's always fun taking away one item," Burnett said. "I'm so happy to add something that's crazy because then everyone gets excited about this new cocktail."

Burnett's favorite cocktail is the "I Can Sea Clearly Now." The drink is a clarified milk punch that includes Kasama rum, Ciroc brandy, falernum liqueur, cinnamon star anise syrup, lime and pineapple.

Customers are often hesitant to order the drink because of its dairy base. However, clarifying the drink involves a straining process that removes the milk proteins along with the acidic elements of the cocktail.

"It's unbelievable, but a lot of people are afraid of it," Burnett said. "It's like science. The cocktail is crystal clear, and it's to die for."

Around the holiday season, The Winston hosts specials and events such as the Elf on the Shelf special in December, which showcases the restaurant's bourbon collection by serving half pours for half the price.

"We find and allocate bourbons or rye scotches that are really hard to find and only have three or four (bottles) available for purchase," Burnett said. "A lot of places charge \$65 for one single pour, but if we have it on our list,

you can get half a pour for \$30."

The Winston differentiates itself and its menu from other restaurants by incorporating nontraditional ideas. Assistant manager Trevor Grose said the restaurant always looks to transform basic concepts into something unique.

"We want to elevate every basic thing you could think of," Grose said.

The Winston's convenient location makes the restaurant a prime spot for students and families.

"Parent's weekend is one of the best weekends ever. The moms and dads are so pumped up and they're ready to party with their kids," Burnett said. "Even on game days, everyone will leave campus and walk down to the party here."

The Winston always aims to go above and beyond to ensure customers feel seen and cared about, whether it be hospitality or the quality of food and drinks.

"People that come in aren't strangers. Every guest that walks in the building is family," Burnett said.

The Winston, located at 106 W. Main St., offers discounted craft cocktails from 3 to 6 p.m. daily.

READERS' CHOICE

1

The Winston

2

The Library

3

Ted's Café Escondido

HAPPY HOUR



REGHAN KYLE/OU DAILY

Ted's Café Escondido general manager Kyle Wolfe has worked at Ted's for eight years. Ted's is a Mexican restaurant with 10 locations throughout Oklahoma.

MADE FRESH TO SATISFY

Ted's Café Escondido pairs great food with hand-picked drinks

BY CASSIDY MARTIN • CASSIDY.J.MARTIN-1@OU.EDU

An aroma of homemade tortillas, fresh chips, queso and sugar-coated sopapillas welcomes every customer into Ted's Café Escondido, an Oklahoma-based Mexican food chain.

The first Ted's opened on Oct. 3, 1991, in Oklahoma City, with the vision of creating a Mexican restaurant in Oklahoma that honored hospitality, handmade meals and happy guests.

Since then, Ted's has opened ten total locations across Norman, Oklahoma City, Lawton, Del City, Edmond and Tulsa. In 2007, Ted's opened its location along North Interstate Drive in Norman.

General Manager Kyle Wolfe told the OU Daily that the restaurant has gone through a meticulous process of trial and error to craft drinks that pair wonderfully with their food menu.

Wolfe was part of a team that flew out to a Patrón distillery and handpicked a barrel for the restaurant that

was best suited to the flavor profile of Ted's dishes. The restaurant features their selected Patrón in their "Perfect Margarita," a guest favorite on their cocktail menu.

Happy hour features select cocktails, Bud Light bottles, Coors Light bottles, house margaritas and margarita-sangria swirls.

The most popular Ted's happy hour drink in Norman is Tecate, a beer which can come plain or "Ted's style," dressed with lime pulp, a salt rim and a lime slice.

Alongside the delicious food, Ted's is known for their servers with selfless attitudes and impressive customer service skills.

"Ted's is very much the customer comes first," Hannah Ivy, an employee at Ted's, said. "If someone is unhappy with their entree, we will do everything possible, ... anything we can do to make their experience a five out of five stars."

Being located near OU impacts the environment and

sales tremendously, according to Wolfe. Some weekends bring in significant profits. Home football games, move-in weekends and national championship games make the most money.

Being located near a college town introduces many well-versed customers from all over the world. The employees work harder to ensure that everyone feels satisfied.

"I like being pushed by not only my staff but also the guests. If we can give them a pleasant experience, we get returning guests," Wolfe said. "And next thing you know, you see them coming in repeatedly. It just gives us a sense of pride, and we're doing something right."

Ted's Café Escondido is located at 700 N. Interstate Drive. Happy hour is from 2 to 5 p.m. every Monday through Friday.



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ART VENUES



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Opolis hosts a regular music event called Weirder Wednesday. The show is advertised for all ages, something the business prides itself on.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Julius is one of five owners at Opolis. The venue transitioned to be a worker-owned cooperative in February 2023.

LIVE MUSIC FOR ALL AGES

Opolis blends diverse entertainment with vegan dining

BY CHELSEA ROSE • CHELSEA.ROSE23@OU.EDU

Bringing music and vegan dining to Norman for over 20 years, Opolis is a must-go venue for people of all ages.

The building has a neighborhood concert feel with its garage door access. Once inside, visitors are greeted with a space for socializing: two bars, a seating area and the stage.

Opolis's table and bar seating encourages conversation among patrons, and it gives visitors the opportunity to interact with business owners. The bar is located at the front of the building, while the tables and chairs are positioned right up to the stage.

Some owners, like Julius, bartend while others handle the sound booth and prepare food.

"We want it to feel like a place where people can come hang out, enjoy a snack or drink and overall just be exposed to living and working artists that are here in the community," Julius told the OU Daily.

Julius began attending and performing music at Opolis in 2015 and worked shifts with its previous owners, becoming familiar with Opolis' operations and networks.

Founders Andy and Marian Nuñez opened Opolis in 2002 as a creative space for performers and visitors, owning the company for 20 years before retirement.

When the pair announced their retirement in summer 2022, 10 employees began working to purchase Opolis. Julius joined the co-op as the new year began.

The six owners officially gained ownership in February

of this year. Opolis is now the only recognized cooperative music venue in the U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives.

"Several of us were teenagers playing our first shows here, and it's hard for any of us to imagine a place like this not existing in Norman," Julius said.

Since taking over, the new owners have strived to make Opolis an inviting space for those stepping through its doors.

Julius said with the Nuñezes running the venue, hours were more difficult to maintain. Now with six owners, Opolis is open five days a week with daily events to make it more of a hub for families, teenagers and couples.

Opolis hosts open mic nights, karaoke, presentation nights and concerts with past performers including Big Thief, Lucy Dacus and Mitski.

A current performer at Opolis is Brad Hicks, the vocalist for alternative metal band Visions of Afterlife.

Hicks's first visit to Opolis was on his birthday in 2020 when he and his friends went to sing karaoke.

"Everyone's super cool with everyone," Hicks told OU Daily. "You have all these randos in the same room, and everyone's getting along and cheering each other on."

Hicks recalled looking around the venue and seeing country fans, rock 'n' roll fans and more.

"That's when I really realized how inclusive it is and that's why I appreciate (Opolis) so much," Hicks said.

Hicks knew from that night on he wanted to perform at Opolis, so he quickly became a regular of the venue.

Hicks began popping in and growing friendships with the employees who would later become the owners. When Hicks officially asked to bring his band in, he was immediately approved.

Most events at Opolis are free of charge, complimenting its vegan menu with most options under \$10. Opolis also offers takeout dinners for those seeking a vegan meal but home entertainment.

Dining options include vegan burgers, pizzas, sandwiches and more, along with beverages such as cocktails, mocktails and soft drinks.

"The previous owner, Marian, always referred to it as vegan comfort food," Julius said. "It's based on the school lunch kind of vibe."

Low prices and high quality entertainment make Opolis enjoyable for the heart and wallet, no matter one's music preference or age.

"It's the best place to be if you're trying to find community and trying to find something interesting that you wouldn't otherwise see at a venue here downtown," Julius said.

Opolis is located at 113 N. Crawford Ave. and is open 4 p.m. to midnight Tuesday through Saturday.

READERS' CHOICE

1

Sooner Theatre

2

Opolis

3

Resonator

ART VENUES



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

The Sooner Theatre is currently setting up for Cabaret. The show will debut in October.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

The Sooner Theatre has more than 55 year-round classes offered. The Studio of The Sooner Theatre hosts classes for those ages 3 to 18.

BREAK A LEG

Sooner Theatre remains a fixture downtown with an array of classes

BY CHELSEA ROSE • CHELSEA.ROSE23@OU.EDU

Providing Norman youth performance opportunities that go beyond city limits, Sooner Theatre has been a staple in the Norman community for nearly a century.

Built in 1929 as the first theater in the region to display talking pictures, the theater had, and continues to have, only one screen. But in combination with the city's first air conditioner and water cooler, audiences flocked to the Main Street attraction when it opened.

Normanites parked their cars along the street early in the day to watch movies indoors before having a front-row seat to Main Street's street races during the 1930s and 1940s.

The theater would remain a popular activity for 50 years. Popularity came to a halt in the 1970s when multiplexes debuted with more screens, closing the doors of the Sooner Theatre in 1975.

It took a near demolition to grab the community's attention. In 1979, a group of creatives approached the city in hopes to turn it into a nonprofit organization and performing arts center. The city agreed and its doors reopened in 1982.

The theater programs kicked off the same year Executive

Director and Art Director Jennifer Baker joined the team. The theater now hosts over 55 year-round classes for performers aged 3 and up.

"It's a lot of students just looking to find their people, to find a passion, to find a place to fit in, to create and explore their talents," Baker told OU Daily. "Not meaning they need to go off and be a star, but just building the confidence and skills."

Norman Public Schools only had musicals available to high school juniors and seniors when Baker joined the team in 2003. A driving force in the Sooner Theatre's programs was providing opportunities to students not yet at the age to participate in their school's musicals.

Classes at the Sooner Theatre include dance, acting, singing, behind the scenes production work and strength training. For over 10 years, the theater has also hosted a class for children with Down syndrome. The class, Sooner Legends, consists of dancing with an emphasis on improving motor skills and strength.

The instructors at the Sooner Theatre possess an array of skills and many teach outside of the theater.

One of those instructors is Alex Irwin, an OU musical

composition and psychology senior.

Irwin first took the Sooner Theatre stage at 4 years old. He performed consistently leading up to his high school graduation and teaches at the theater while prepping for his December graduation.

"I've grown up in Norman and I know the high schools here have really wonderful fine arts programs. But in terms of theater, I think the Sooner Theatre is peak theater in Norman," Irwin said. "It involves so many people in the community and it's community-funded. It brings so much life and entertainment to Norman."

The Sooner Theatre is located in the Walker Arts District, which is home to murals, galleries, sculptures, frequent events and more.

"Whether you want to be a Broadway star or whether you want to be a doctor or a business owner, theater is going to help no matter what you go into," Baker said. "I think theater is good for so many more things than just singing and dancing."

Sooner Theatre is located at 101 E. Main St. Visit the Sooner Theatre's website to learn about classes, camps, instructors, upcoming performances and more.

CAMPUS CORNER



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Tea Café On the Corner is located between Balfour of Norman and Pepe Delgados on Asp Avenue. Tea Café's vast menu includes everything from stir fry to frappes.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Tea Café On the Corner has a large menu with a variety of Asian foods. The restaurant has takeout, delivery and dine-in options.

ENJOY HOMEMADE BOBA, WHOLESOME FOOD

Tea Café brings a flavorful, personal touch to Campus Corner

BY HANNAH RYSTEDT • HANNAH.E.RYSTEDT-1@OU.EDU

Conveniently nestled in the heart of Campus Corner, Tea Café On the Corner proves to be the perfect spot for a study date accompanied with fresh, homemade boba and Asian food originating from Taiwan with Vietnamese, Japanese and Thai influences.

Viet Nguyen, Tea Café's owner and manager, said when the establishment opened in 2005, boba was not as popular as it is today. Since then, their menu has grown tremendously and continues to evolve.

"Expect a quality product and something that has a lot of hard work behind it," Nguyen told OU Daily.

Nguyen said that a fan-favorite dish is orange chicken with chicken fried rice, although he personally recommends the pho.

"It's like home cooking," Nguyen said. "I cook it the way I like it."

Nguyen said the key to working on Campus Corner is adjusting to the fluctuation of business as OU students come in and out of town. He said despite the ever-changing nature of the location, the restaurant still maintains a steady stream of regulars.

"Students love this place," Nguyen said. "I appreciate them so much, and I know what they're going through.

They're just trying to (get through) the rigors of school, it's not easy. I'm glad that we're a part of their journey and that we can be able to provide that service for them."

In between bites of the chef's special fried rice and sips of taro milk tea, employee Andrew Thompson said his favorite part about working at the Campus Corner spot is the personal connections he makes on a daily basis.

"I get to see a lot of familiar faces coming in," Thompson said. "I'm not really a social person but working with others helped me open up a little bit more."

Carol Jarrett, Tea Café's social media marketer, was a regular customer for about seven years before landing her current job.

"The first order I ever got there was a rose milk tea with boba. It was the first time I ever had boba and chicken fried rice," Jarrett said. "And I swear I can still remember it."

As she began to manage the business's social media, she quickly witnessed the overwhelming community support.

"You have a one-of-a-kind experience where you can go in and you can either have formal dinner, casual dinner or simply get drinks," Jarrett said. "I don't know any other place on campus, let alone in Norman, that offers

something so unique as that, alongside a very local touch and hospitality that is unmatched."

Most recently, chai and brown sugar flavors for boba were introduced, which Jarrett said became instant hits.

"The drinks are always made fresh," Jarrett said. "We always try to experiment and try to create new drinks that we can add to the menu."

For a first time boba consumer, Jarrett recommends something simple like a vanilla or almond milk tea. And for the seasoned boba connoisseur, Jarrett recommends taro and coconut milk tea, a choice she says is a wonderful combination.

Much of Jarrett's work on social media is highlighting the menu options that customers tend to overlook. She said while having a go-to order is understandable, it can be exciting to see customers switch things up.

"If you're looking for a place that's local with amazing food, great people and all around the best environment and hospitality you will ever find, Tea Café is the way to go, hands down," Jarrett said.

Tea Café On the Corner is located at 788 Asp Ave. and is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and closed on Sunday.

READERS' CHOICE

1

New York
Pizza and Pasta

2

Thai Delight

3

Tea Café On
the Corner

GAME DAY EATS



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

Jeff Stewart is the owner of O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille on Campus Corner. Stewart enjoys being involved with local sports in Norman.



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille hosts sports events for OU and the Norman high schools. The restaurant supports the booster clubs for Norman High and Norman North.

FIND THE HUB OF NORMAN SPORTS

O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille scores with great food for game days

BY MADELINE HOFFMANN • MADELINE.G.HOFFMANN-1@OU.EDU

O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille has been a Norman game day favorite since 1968.

Normanites look at O'Connell's, known as O'Conn's to locals, as a city staple for those looking to immerse themselves in culture, food and drinks.

Before O'Connell's joined Campus Corner, the pub operated at the corner of Lindsey Street and Jenkins Avenue where OU's Headington Hall now stands. After OU purchased the land in 2007, O'Connell's opened a new location on Campus Corner a year later, operating out of both locations until 2011 when the original pub was demolished.

Now located on Asp Avenue, O'Connell's is known for its involvement in local sports scenes, ranging from high school to OU football. Owner Jeff Stewart purchased O'Connell's in the summer of 1979 and continues to embrace the pub's role in Norman's game days.

"I enjoy talking to people and meeting people, I always have," Stewart said. "My favorite part has got to be game day. It always gets exciting and everyone is cheering."

As thousands of fans flock to Campus Corner and Lindsey Street on OU game days, O'Conn's is filled with fans watching the Sooners on screens around the pub.

Server Mitchell Waltman knew O'Connell's as a staple among students and began working there around a year ago. Along with the fast-paced work environment of the

pub, game days are Waltman's favorite part of the job.

"It's a really fun and eccentric place to be," Waltman said. "It gives the staff a pep in their step and we're all on our toes."

O'Connell's bustling environment inside also carries outside for tailgating, one of the pub's greatest strengths.

Game days at O'Connell's are not limited to football though. Fans of all sports often crowd the pub. The pub sees spectators of Norman High and Norman North basketball as well as OU softball and gymnastics.

"It doesn't really matter which type of event. We get rugby, football, basketball and track," Stewart said. "You name it, we get them all."

Aside from game days, St. Patrick's Day is O'Connell's busiest day of the year. Stewart said every year on holidays and game days, customers often run into old friends.

"When you come in on a game day or St. Patrick's day, you're gonna run into somebody that you haven't seen in 10 years. Without a doubt, that always happens," Stewart said.

Each week, O'Connell's features Wednesday night karaoke at 9:30 p.m. and happy hour daily from 4 to 7 p.m. The pub also hosts around five events every year, one of the most recent being the Campus Corner Barbie bar crawl.

Along with the pub's usual daily activities, it also collaborates in special fundraisers and events, such as Norman's

annual sidewalk sale and the Norman Conquest, a bicycle race that raises money for children with developmental disabilities.

A signature O'Connell's event is inviting former football players into the pub before the annual spring game.

"It's really great to talk to them and hear their stories from OU, whether it's going through recruiting or when they moved on to the pros," Stewart said.

Though he is the owner, Stewart enjoys taking an active role at his pub, whether it be answering phone calls or making burgers. Stewart said he attempts to ensure customer satisfaction at the pub by prioritizing interacting with guests or touching tables.

The interaction from the employees is only one aspect of what makes the pub unique. To Stewart, the history behind O'Connell's is what makes it most special and what drives the return of parents and former students.

"The past demographics were primarily newcomers," Stewart said. "Now we get parents that bring their students in. We've already got a whole generation where students' kids bring their kids in."

O'Connell's is located at 769 Asp Ave. and is open from 4 p.m. to midnight on Monday and Tuesday, from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. on Wednesday and Thursday and from 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. O'Conn's is closed on Sunday.

READERS' CHOICE

1

O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille

2

Fuzzy's Taco Shop

3

Louie's Grill and Bar

MOVEMENT



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY



OLIVIA LAUTER/OU DAILY

The center island is an angled wall for more experienced climbers. Stratus Climbing, Yoga & Fitness has coaches to help those looking to start or improve in rock climbing.

Riley Byrne is the director of Oklahoma operations of Stratus Climbing, Yoga & Fitness. The gym recently changed ownership and its name, previously Summit.

CLIMBING, CAMARADERIE, COMPETITION

Stratus maintains mission despite change in ownership and rebranding

BY CASSIDY MARTIN • CASSIDY.J.MARTIN-1@OU.EDU

Despite a recent change in ownership, the rebranded Stratus Climbing, Yoga & Fitness continues serving Norman through its encouraging and expansive athletic environment.

Stratus is a 12,000-square-foot facility full of bouldering, top rope and lead climbing and auto belays. Other options, such as yoga and fitness classes taught by certified instructors, are also available.

The gym started as Climb Up in 2016 and has been a part of the Norman community since. Jason and Bridgette Groves purchased the property in May and changed its name from Summit Norman to Stratus.

Alongside Stratus, Stoneyard, Jason and Bridgette's company, owns The Silos in Oklahoma City and Ozark Climbing Gym in Springdale, Arkansas.

Riley Byrne, the director of Oklahoma operations, has been with Stratus and The Silos through the entire rebranding process. Transitions in employment, memberships and logos have been ongoing, but countless hours have been put into Stratus to make the gym its own, he said.

"It's definitely been a challenge, but it feels like we're finally starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel," Byrne told OU Daily.

Although the rebranding process has brought change, the community remains the same. People of different ages and climbing experience come together to exercise in an engaging way.

"There is so much diversity," Greg Heiple, a current member of Stratus, said. "You've got men, you've got women, you've got kids and babies and you've got old people, like myself at 59."

Heiple has been climbing for about nine years now. One day, he arrived home to his son hanging off the second floor of his house, about 20 feet high. After this scare, he decided his family would learn to climb safely.

Heiple craved a welcoming gym for his family, especially since they were new to the niche sport. He wanted his kids to feel supported as they navigated climbing. Stratus checked off all of his boxes.

"Stratus provides you with a safe opportunity to do an unbelievable amount of motion and activity you just don't get with regular exercise," Heiple said.

Throughout the year, many unique events take place. Stoneyard Suffering, the biggest endurance competition at Stratus, gathers teams of two to climb for eight hours. The teams can collect points throughout the day by finishing routes. The team with the most points receives two

tickets to compete in one of the biggest climbing competitions in Arkansas, 24 Hours of Horseshoe Hell.

Smaller events, like lights-out climbing, take place more frequently. Stratus also has two youth programs: climbing teams and climbing clubs. Employees work closely with each kid to teach them to climb and feel confident on the wall.

Sofia Enderica, a member of OU Climbing and an employee at Stratus, loves introducing her friends and teammates to the gym.

"In rock climbing, you sit down and have a conversation between the routes while resting. And people will give you tips, but they'll also compliment you," Enderica said. "They may even ask what you did and how you were able to do it. It's so community based and inviting."

The climbing community at Stratus has one goal. It's to watch you make it to the top of the wall.

"Honestly, it feels so motivating. Everyone is so passionate," Enderica said.

Stratus is located at 2701 Washington Drive. The climbing gym is open to everyone from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday. On Saturday, from 9 to 11 a.m., the gym is only open to members.

READERS' CHOICE

1

Stratus Climbing,
Yoga & Fitness

2

Oklahoma
Axe Factory

3

Simply Yoga

the RED CUP Q&A

separating alcohol fact from fiction

Q Is there anything to do on the weekend besides drink?

A **Plenty!** Believe it or not, not all college students drink every weekend. According to the 2022 Natl College Health Assessment, almost half of OU students reported they haven't had a drink within two weeks.

Through the OU Campus Activities Council, you can find plenty of sporting, cultural and artsy events to attend. This is a great way for new students to make like-minded friends.

Below are even more exciting things to do in Norman:

Plan ahead for these events

2nd Friday Art Walk is a free art event in the heart of downtown. Every second Friday at 6pm on Main Street

Norman Farm Market hosts vendors selling locally-sourced food and artisan goods. Every Tues & Sat at The Well

Restaurants

- 1 **Victoria's** historic Norman pasta shop
- 2 **Tarahumara's** showcases authentic recipes from Chihuahua, Mexico
- 3 **Neighborhood Jam** bustling brunch staple
- 4 **Tatsumaki Ramen** Japanese bistro with a stunning atmosphere
- 5 **Kebabish Bites** homey Pakistani cuisine based on family recipes

Cafes & Coffeeshops

- 6 **Gray Owl Coffee** worker's co-op with artisan coffee and great study vibes
- 7 **The Earth** quaint, hidden gem serving sustainable and plant-based food
- 8 **Second Wind** volunteer-led coffee shop with poetry and music nights

Games, Arts & Crafts

- 9 **Firehouse Arts Center** art exhibits and alongside art classes for adults
- 10 **Commonspace Game Cafe** countless board games for you and your friends
- 11 **Fred Jones Art Museum** dazzlingly collections of fine art right on campus
- Heyday** laser tag, arcades, bowling, mini- golf and more!

Parks & Rec

- 12 **Get Air** trampolines
- 13 **Stratus Climbing** rock-climbing and yoga
- 14 **Sutton Wilderness Park** 1.4 mile nature trail
- 15 **Oklahoma Axe Factory** axe throwing
- Lake Thunderbird** fishing, boating, picnics, swimming, hiking, bicycling
- Scissortail Park** picnics, events, concerts, canoeing, dog park, strolling
- Myriad Botanical Gardens** flower displays, concerts, movies, festivals
- Wichita Mountains** hiking, climbing, sightseeing, visiting Medicine Park

Helpful links

List of Student Orgs

Search over 600+ student clubs!
ou.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations

Campus Events

Find fairs and social events!
<https://ou.campuslabs.com/engage/events>



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