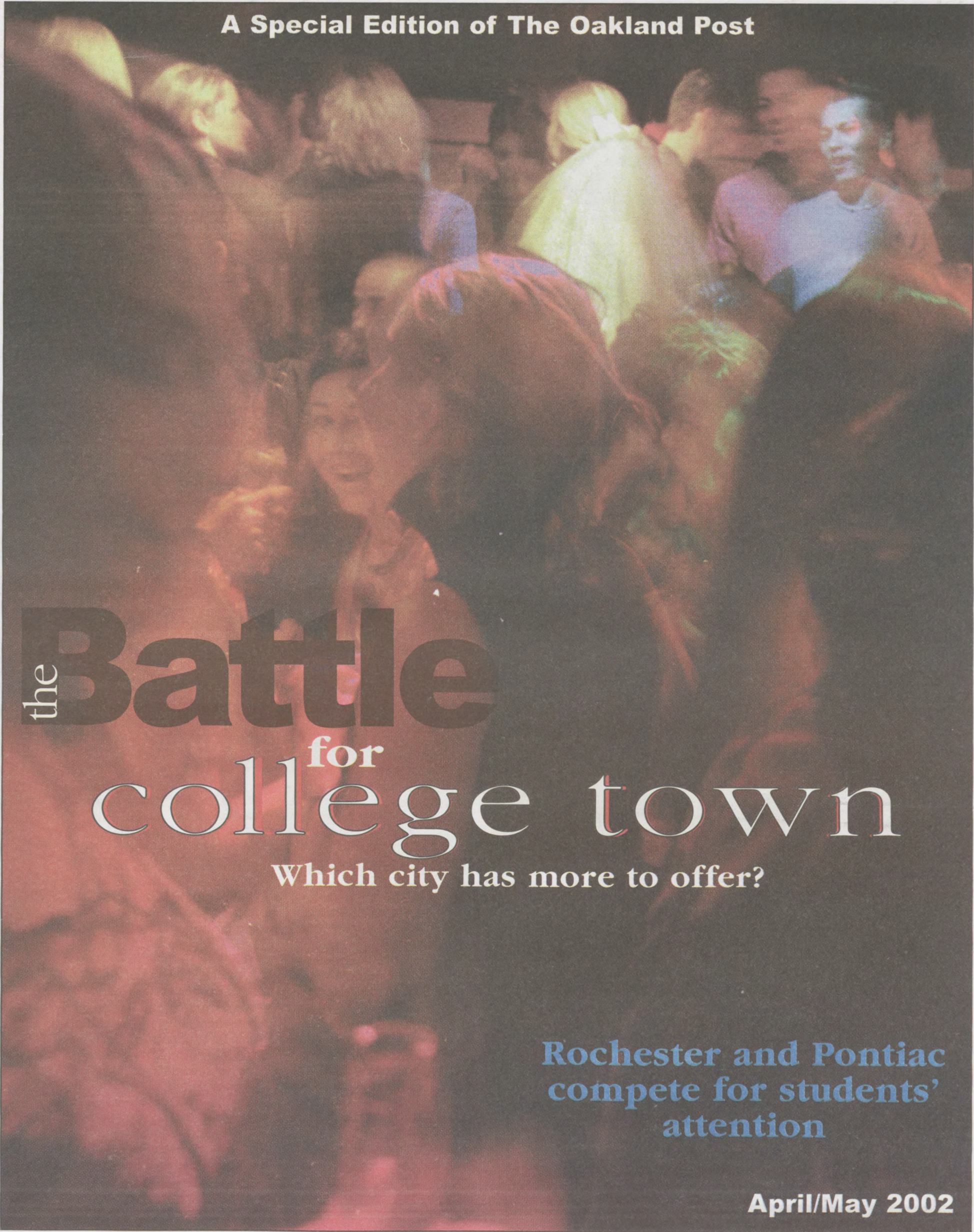




A Special Edition of The Oakland Post

the **Battle** for college town

Which city has more to offer?

Rochester and Pontiac
compete for students'
attention

April/May 2002



Sidewalks lined with shops and restaurants make finding something to do in Rochester easy.

A tale of two cities

*Is OU stuck in the middle?
Both Rochester and Pontiac have
much to do and see, but which town
students prefer is hard to answer.*

By Rachel Rybicki

Rochester and Pontiac are the two closest cities near OU that could resemble a typical "college campus town."

So which town do students prefer for a hangout? Which best fits the needs of a 20-something student? What about a 30- or 40-something student?

Tom Skrobola, finance director for the city of Rochester said the two cities complement each other more so than "compete for students to come downtown," and said he feels both towns cater to students' needs.

"Pontiac is very different, but I feel we complement each other more than compete because we serve a downtown hub like Rochester Hills and Oakland Township," he said. "We have a pretty good downtown that we are noted for, especially with the downtown shopping and restaurants that we have."

Skrobola also said that depending upon where students live would determine where they would hang out.

"If they live off campus, our impact is limited, but we are a quick drive," he said. "We have a very active downtown area and lots of things to do. Our downtown is more or less family oriented, but we see many students out here."

Rebecca Kelly is one of the students who said the two towns both have the potential to be good college towns.

"Pontiac and Rochester are both the same except one is a

club scene and one is a laid back bar scene," said Kelly, senior, communication.

Some students disagreed with Kelly and said both towns fail to work with the lifestyle of a college student.

"Neither caters to the college student. Pontiac tries to stay completely separate from the campus, and so does Rochester," said Mike Madden, senior, history.

"The bars are geared to the dance-style with no sort of college atmosphere, like sports. You can't go to Pontiac and watch OU play basketball."

Madden also said the cities are not conducive to college students who like to go out later.

"We all know that college holds a variety of hours, and no stores hold long hours. Even Starbucks closes at 10," he said.

OU student Kenton Lewis agreed with Madden and said the two

towns aren't college material.

"Pontiac just doesn't have the makings. It has the bars but not the housing and other things students look for," said Lewis, sophomore, bio-chemistry.

"Rochester has the ability to be our college town, but it rejects youths and has no housing that would be suitable for students' needs."

While both of the cities have bars and some aspect of nightlife, neither has places specifically for students, some students say.

"The bars are okay, but to have a successful college atmosphere, we'd have bars

Pontiac and Rochester are both the same except one is a club scene and one is a laid back bar scene.

Rebecca Kelly
senior, communication

close to campus, within walking distance or a short drive," said Lewis. "I like walking around downtown Rochester, but there's not much to do besides sitting and drinking coffee."

Rochester has been said to be more of a college town because, unlike Pontiac, Rochester has a downtown area for shopping.

"I think Rochester would be a better college town because downtown Rochester is really cool. And, there are two malls, 10 or 15 minutes away," said Kelly Long, sophomore, business management. "Everything's a lot closer to each other."

Some students said laws are keeping the cities from prospering.

"Rochester has excellent potential to be a college town, but it is hindered by too many city ordinances. And, the higher drink prices reduce the party atmosphere," said Matt Shipes, junior, finance.

Skrobola said that even though Rochester is designed for families, college students can still find something that will suit their needs.

"It depends on their interest. We have festivities, and we have a pretty active promotions effort for a connection point between students," said Skrobola. "Use and experience the downtown. That is why it's here. Let us know what you want. Ask and see. We may not be aware of (the wants of students), and we could do something to change that."

Jim Fitzpatrick, owner of several buildings along the Saginaw St. strip in Pontiac and owner of Pike Street Catering Company, said the daytime life of the city has not yet been discovered.

"Daytime hasn't been realized yet," he said. "It's coming."

While Pontiac is still a work in progress, students said it is



(Clockwise from top) The view of the Pontiac strip from the Phoenix Plaza Center, and area art galleries are a few of city's signature draws. Rochester's Main St. is always busy, and the Paint Creek park is a haven within the city.

not anything like other college towns, such as Ann Arbor and East Lansing.

"Pontiac is a place for an urban lifestyle. There is a smattering of restaurants, an active nightlife and there was a thrust of art galleries," Pontiac

business owner John Levin said.

Levin said he feels Pontiac would be a great place for a college graduate to set up a business.

"The city is surrounded by wealth and offers low overhead costs," Levin said.

Gary Harmon, vice president of Mobile Animated Displays, which does advertising for

Pontiac's Arts, Beats, and Eats festival, agreed with Levin and said Pontiac has potential in its rebuilding process.

"Originally, Pontiac was trying to recreate a Soho type atmosphere. It has started to lose its art feel, but it is still better than a vacuous Troy," he said.

"It's artsy, electric, youthful and edgy." ❖

**It's artsy, electric,
youthful and edgy.**

Gary Harmon
pontiac business owner



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Cover
 photo
 taken at
 Tiki Bob's
 in Pontiac
 by Cara
 Plowman.



At night, cars and limos line Pontiac's Saginaw St.

A cup of Joe

Blue Note brews fun

Populated by college students, young intellectuals and art school types, the Blue Note Café serves up a full menu of delicious deli sandwiches, as well as some of the finest caffeinated beverages in the north Woodward area.

Make sure to indulge in the vanilla chai tea.

Providing a smoker-friendly atmosphere, the Blue Note is open until 4 a.m. on weekends, making it a great place to relax after a night of shows or clubs.

Live music is also featured on weekends.

The Blue Note Café is located at 7 North Saginaw St. in downtown Pontiac and is open until 1 a.m. Mon.-Thur., until 4 a.m. Friday and Saturday and until 10 p.m. on Sundays. Call 248.332.9678 for more details.

-By Patrick Labadie

Get your freak on

Students flock to Pontiac clubs to dance

Pontiac has gained the reputation of being one of the best club cities in Michigan, and rightfully so.

Along the Saginaw St. strip in downtown, Tonic, Tiki Bob's, Have A Nice Day Cafe, Crazy Moe's and Clutch Cargos open their doors wide for the drones of college-aged kids that flock to the epicenter of dance.

With cover hovering around \$5-10 for most of the clubs, it's common to see people lining the sidewalks waiting to get into any of the clubs.

The largest club, Clutch Cargos offers four floors of rock star partying. Almost all types of club music are available, including techno, hip-hop and pop. Plus, the large dance floors and open

atmosphere means less overcrowding and overheating, which is a definite advantage for the hollered-out church.

Those looking for a Studio 54 remake need look only as far as Have A Nice Day Cafe with its 1970s style design and atmosphere. KC & The Sunshine Band and The Bee Gees resonate on the mid-sized dance floor underneath a disco ball and tons of lights.

Tiki Bob's is quickly becoming an oasis in the middle of a desert because of its affordable drink specials and cheap cover (usually \$6). Happy hour parties are also a big draw for the beach party bar.

"Tiki Bob's has happy hour parties and cheaper drinks. The atmosphere is better, and it's not as

crowded as Have A Nice Day," said Justin Doescher, sophomore, business management.

On special nights, Tiki Bob's teams up with Have A Nice Day Cafe for club crawls. Dancers pay cover at one club and can boogie down at both.

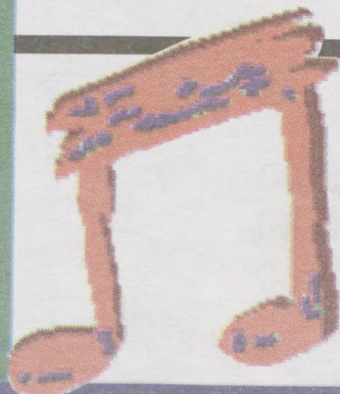
Pontiac has more than just great clubs. It also has some groovy bars, such as the Coyote Club, JD's Key Club and Bo's Brewery.

"If you just want to go and hang out, you go to JD's 'cause you can sit down and talk," said Rob Pankau, freshman, business. "Tiki's is cool because they spin cool music ... The other clubs are more of a physical interaction 'cause you go to dance."

-By Cara Plowman



(L-R) Long-time employees Meganelise Crimmins and Christina Floriani serve up fresh brews at Blue Note.



JD's Key Club

A popular hangout for OU students, JD's Key Club, smack in the middle of the strip in downtown Pontiac, offers tons of drink specials and

great tunes.

Two piano players sit at opposite ends of a stage in the center of the bar and take requests for songs, old

and new.

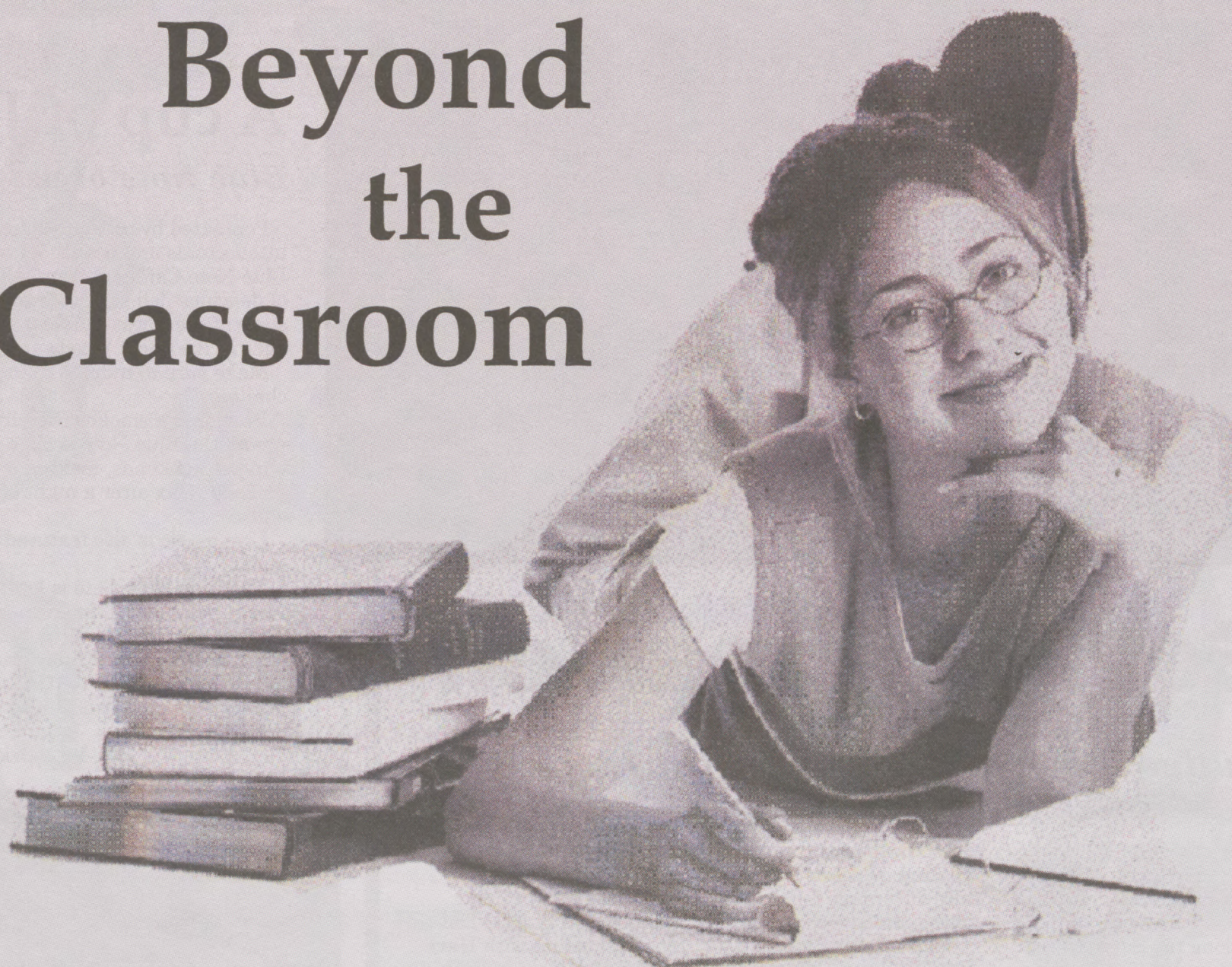
"If you don't like to dance, it's a good place to go. I don't like to go clubbing a lot. So, I'd rather go somewhere like JD's," said Kelly Long, sophomore, busi-

ness management.

Open Monday-Saturday, this dueling piano bar hosts two great college nights, on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

-By Cara Plowman

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Galleries breathe life into Pontiac

Artists working to revive city



(Above) The glass exhibit currently on display at Gallery XVIII, at 18 Saginaw St. in Pontiac, features colorful vases and dishes available for purchase. (Right) Dramatic works by local artist Nora Chapa Mendoza adorn the walls of Gallery XVIII.

There is a little known secret of artistic potential just 15 minutes from OU's campus known as Saginaw Street, where art galleries hide amongst the long forgotten buildings in the bohemian city of Pontiac.

At one time there were as many as five art galleries within a half-mile of the street, now three stand hoping that artistic minds will lose themselves within their spaces.

One of Pontiac's artistic treasures lies in the heart of Splash Gallery. The glass face of the showroom spices life onto Saginaw St. with its colorful view of the treasures inside. Through year-round exhibits, the Splash Gallery offers connoisseurs of art the opportunity to revel in the beauty of the creative spirit. The pieces are on sale or open for window-shopping, but a tour of the facility is open by appointment only.

Gallery XVIII holds a more diverse arrangement of art pieces ranging from sculpture, paintings, prints, pottery, glass, to jewelry. It even offers specialty framing.

Although Gallery XVIII is much more shopping oriented, it makes a great find for unique and one of a kind artistic gifts, with pieces ranging from \$2-\$600.

As with Gallery XVIII, the Lawrence Street Gallery offers a variety of artistic works as well. Established in 1987, this gallery was formed to help showcase local artistic work ranging from paintings to ceramics.

Each of Pontiac's art galleries support one another with show openings in what are known as "Gallery Crawls." On the first Friday of every month art lovers 'crawl' from gallery to gallery in support of the artistic life in downtown Pontiac.

-By Kerry Campbell



Roof-top venue great for summer concerts

Phoenix Plaza Center, located in the heart of downtown on Saginaw St., is one of the area's best places to see a concert. Under the stars, seeing a live show here is a treat.

Phoenix is actually a parking garage with a stage and

park-like area on top.

Even if there isn't a show to see, the center is the perfect place to hide out or take in a great view of the city and the main strip.

During the day, locals can be found enjoying a picnic on the

grass or brushing up their skateboarding skills.

Upcoming shows include the 89X radio station's Birthday Bash, featuring Our Lady Peace and Dashboard Confessionals on June 1.

-By Cara Plowman



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Rochester's rockin' restaurants

*Downtown eateries
offer variety, bargains*

Variety is the spice of life. And in Rochester, a wide variety of restaurants align Main St., which is a staple of the downtown area.

The restaurants in downtown Rochester have something to offer for any occasion, be it a romantic dinner or a casual night out after finals.

More importantly, they can satisfy hunger while still being cost efficient.

It's music to the ears of any college student.

One of the better known dining areas in Rochester is Kruse and Muer on Main. Who could ignore the two individuals on the face of the building sharing a meal and a drink? More importantly, who can ignore the bread?

Other than the delicious, mouth-watering bread, Kruse and Muer offers a wide variety of dishes including pastas, fish, pizza and chicken. One unique feature that Kruse and Muer on Main has is that it extends a choice of sitting in either a casual or non-casual dining area for those who are trying to impress that special someone on that special occasion. The meals at Kruse and Muer may tend to run a little more on the expensive side if someone is just looking for a quick bite to eat. Nonetheless, the meals are well worth the extra cash.

If one's looking to pinch a couple pennies while still filling their stomach, Krazy Greek Restaurant is a magnificent

place to go. Krazy Greek's specialty is that it prides itself in offering foods unlike any other in the downtown Rochester area.

"We have the best Greek salad anywhere," boasts Barb Prapas, owner of the 26 year-old restaurant.

All patrons of Krazy Greek enjoy homemade food specials that include soup, salad or coleslaw, the meal, and dessert in prices ranging from \$6.50-8.

For those looking for something a little different, Krazy Greek is the place to go.

Sometimes college students are looking for a place where they can relax, watch TV, play pool and drink some beer. Rochester satisfies those needs with restaurants such as Mr. B's and Rochester Mills Beer Company.

Mr. B's is the kind of place great for lunch, dinner or just for happy hour. Here, one can sit back, watch a Red Wing's game and drink the night away.

At the Rochester Mills Beer Co., not only can individuals drink the night away, but they can tip back some of the best homemade pale ales and local

brews. Other than its unique assortment of finely brewed beer, Rochester Mills also has fine dining that's sure not to crash the pocketbook.

Another staple of Main St.'s unique eateries is Red Knapp's Dairy. For more than half a century, Knapp's has served up a piece of Americana to the downtown Rochester area with its specialty of fries, milkshakes and burgers.

"We've been doing this since 1950. We do everything the old way, and we don't change our menu a lot," said Myles Knapp, chef and all around handyman,

for the '50s style diner.

Red Knapp's offers its burgers and fries for reasonable prices, perfect for anyone looking to take a blast into the past to a good 'mom and pop' diner.

From grilled chicken fettuccini to self-brewed beer, from spinach pie to burgers and fries, downtown Rochester has a little something that's sure to wet anyone's palate.

-By Brian Urreta



(Top) Bartender Kellie Simmons pours a pale ale at Rochester Mills Beer Co. (Above) Rochester residents enjoy burgers, fries and milkshakes at Red Knapp's Dairy.

Rochester Public Library

Like the National Enquirer, The Rochester Hills Public Library is for inquiring minds that want to know. Outside of the Kresge Library at OU, this is most likely the best library in the area. With two

stories of all you could desire, the library will whet the whistle of any college student who wants a quiet place to study or a venue to chill out on a Sunday afternoon.

The collection of music will

put a smile on everyone's face, so make sure to check out a bunch of CDs. Burn 'em and return 'em, kids. The magazine and video racks are two areas that beg to be explored.

The Rochester Hills Public Library is located on

University Dr. just east of Main St. in downtown Rochester.

Library hours are Monday-Thursday 9:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m.-9 p.m. and Sunday 1-6 p.m. Call 248.656.2900 for more details.

-By Patrick Labadie

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Main Street Billiards

Pool, live shows, great crowds

Rack 'em. Main Street Billiards is the place to go if you want to party on the felt.

Fourteen pool tables means there's rarely a wait, and The Alley, in the back, offers great live shows, an intimate bar and a dance floor.

Many locals can be found here shooting pool, watching sports on one of the five big screen TVs, playing

air hockey or groovin' to some funky local tunes.

On the weekends the huge space is often packed with people looking for an alternative to the clubs.

Main Street Billiards also serves lunch and dinner.

Located at 215 Main St., at the south end of town, the bar is open everyday.

-By Cara Plowman



Oxford residents Don Randall (L) spends time shooting pool at Main Street Billiards with his wife Anna.

Window shopping

Gift stores, boutiques line downtown strip

Rochester offers a wealth of downtown shopping opportunities. From men's and women's clothing to the finest in home furnishings, the city is sure to satiate the most ardent of shoppers.

Clothing shops are a staple of the downtown area.

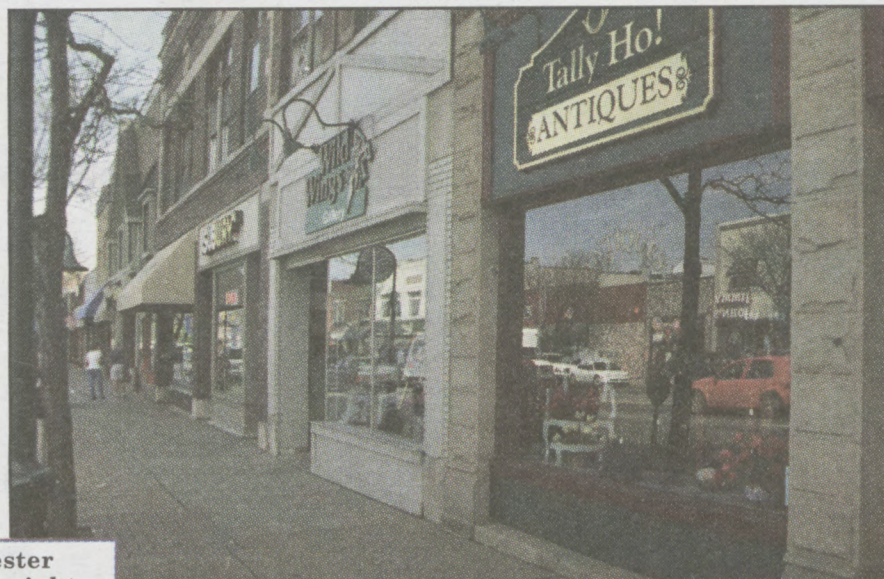
Sporting some of the finest fashions for both men and women is Charlotte's Boutique, located at 309 Main.

Another fine fashion outlet is Born to Shop, located at 527 Pine.

In addition to the wealth of apparel stores, the city also has two fine formal wear retailers. President Tuxedo, located at 205 Main, and Molnar's Tuxedo, located at 405 Main, will provide the necessary formal wear for that big night out.

Rochester also sports a ton of

What Rochester may lack in night life, it makes up for during the day. Downtown is a great place to shop.



home furnishing shops.

Home Traditions, located at 331 Main, offers a large collection of "affordable" accessories for homes. The store features a wide variety of beautifully framed prints and mirrors, unique accessories and so much more.

Ballen Design, located at 431

Main, specializes in architectural decorative interior and exterior enhancements for the home, such as wall niches, ceiling medallions, mouldings, corbels, louvers, gables and swags.

Finally, rounding out the shopping pleasure are the many antique shops.

Chapman House, located at 311 Walnut, offers some of the finest antiques from around

the world. The store has become a magnificent showroom for classic antiques, linens, accessories, gifts and tableware that is rarely matched.

Some antique shops that one may want to check out are Antiques by Pamela, located at 319 Main, and Tally Ho Antiques located at 404 Main.

-By Patrick Labadie



East Alley Records

East Alley Records has carved out a solid niche with its focus on import recordings.

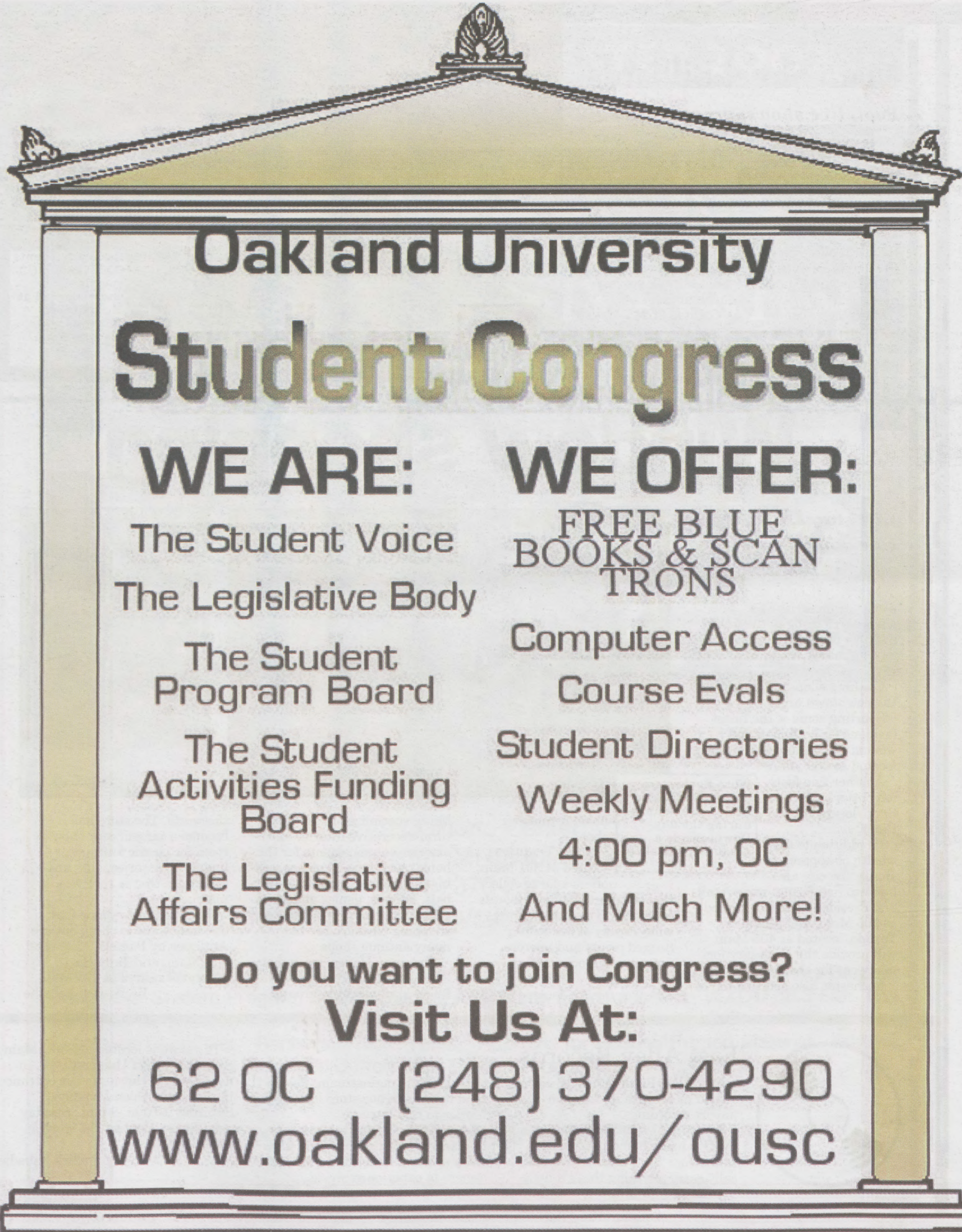
"We specialize in Brit-pop, indie rock, industrial and punk rock," said owner Bill Paskins. "We basically carry anything that's a little

outside of the mainstream. People tend to come to our store looking for harder to find music."

In addition to its extensive selection and knowledgeable staff, East Alley sports a lounge area for customers to experience music.

The store is located at 336B Main St. just south of University Dr. in downtown Rochester (store entrance in the rear). Open Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Sunday noon-5 p.m. Contact the store at 248.656.5003.

-By Patrick Labadie

The poster is framed by a classical building facade with two columns and a triangular pediment. The text is centered within this frame.

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