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Last call

Famous chili, variety of beer make Tiny Tavern charming hang-out spot

Open Mic Night and Disco Night keep things entertaining during week

BY AMY LICHTY
PULSE REPORTER

Tiny Tavern has been a part of downtown Eugene since 1938. Appealing to both old and new customers, Tiny Tavern has managed to maintain its old-fashioned neighborhood tavern feel, despite a new century and a new owner. It has handled a move, a fire and a redecoration, but has been able to hold on to its most famous asset — Lucile Johnson's chili recipe.

Johnson and husband R.B. were the original owners of Tiny Tavern, at 394 Blair Blvd. The Johnsons sold Tiny Tavern to current owner Jeff Malos 11 years ago.

"We're known for our chili. It's about a four-to-five-hour cooking process and we make three to four batches a week, which is about five gallons," Malos said. "We used to sell at UO on Fridays, and we used to sell about ten gallons of it every Friday. Chili dogs and chili nachos are also really popular."

After sampling some of this famous chili, which has been around just as long as Tiny Tavern has, it's obvious why it is the specialty. Made with hamburger, a fifty-fifty mixture of pinto and red beans, celery, mushrooms, onions and 13 different spices, among other items, the chili is simply superb. And, perhaps most importantly, it's inexpensive: Just \$3.95 will get you a bowl of chili with cheese and onions on top, crackers and a piece of garlic bread.

Even though the chili accounts for around 90 percent of the food sales at Tiny Tavern, much more is offered for



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Lou Honton enjoys the famous chili at Tiny Tavern at 394 Blair Blvd. The recipe comes from Lucile Johnson, one of the original owners.

cheap prices. Sandwiches, quarter-pound hot dogs, tofu dogs, chips with salsa and homemade potato salad are just a few of the menu items — all for less than \$6.

The most expensive item on the menu is the nachos at \$5.95 — but you get what you pay for. The nacho chips are topped with chili, cheese, onions, olives, jalapenos, sour cream and salsa and are sure to satisfy even the hungriest of people.

Although Malos has yet to obtain a hard alcohol liquor license — which he plans to do in "the next few weeks" — Tiny Tavern serves a wide variety of beers and wines. Pints of microdrafts can be purchased for \$3 and pints of domestic beers such as Coors Light and Budweiser sell for just \$2. Glasses of wine go from \$2.95 to \$3.75, with the options of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, White Zinfandel and others. Tiny Tavern also serves bottles of imported beer for \$2.50 and Mike's Hard Lemonade or

Cranberry for \$2.50 a bottle.

Come during happy hour and get drunk for even less. Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., pints of Pabst and Olympia are only a buck. All weekdays from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. and Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 p.m. until midnight, all micros are just \$2.

Tiny Tavern also likes to mix things up a bit entertainment-wise. There's an Open Mic Night every Monday and a Disco Night on Wednesdays. Malos also books live music on the weekends and has never charged a cover.

Although not the most popular place for college-age students, Tiny Tavern is a great place to grab some lunch or dinner or to meet up with friends for a laid-back evening of cheap boozing. Located catty-cornered to Sam Bond's Garage, it's a great place to begin or end a night of fun. And don't forget to try the chili.

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