

THE HEART IS IN THE DETAILS

Owners of Let's Do Coffee & More put their unique stamp on West Linn locations

by Rebecca Ragain

A little girl dressed in pink toddles around the coffee shop, her watchful mom trailing behind her, while a businessman works on his laptop from a couch at the back.

The comfortable atmosphere at Let's Do Coffee & More in West Linn encourages customers to slow down and enjoy their visit. This homey feeling can be attributed to the fact that owners Brad Davis and Craig Shannon pay personal attention to almost every detail of their business.

For instance, consider the coffee—if such an integral part of a coffee shop can be called a detail.

"We tried all the roasters in town, and a couple of others up in Seattle," says Davis. They settled on Caffé Vita, a Seattle micro-roaster, because of the coffee company's commitment to both quality and customer service.

"We know that every batch of product we get from them is going to be exceptional," says Davis.

Tea lovers can choose among 50 flavors from the Republic of Tea, plus select options from a smaller company called Revolution. La Provence in Lake Oswego provides the shop's pastries, sandwiches and salads.

Customers who spend time in Let's Do Coffee & More know that the business is, well, more than a delicious place to spend an afternoon drinking coffee. It is also a complete gift destination.

Shannon and Davis carry staple choices like candles, greeting cards and lotions, but not the department store varieties. Every line is chosen with care, and several items are exclusive.

Davis says few stores in town carry the uniquely scented candles from Tyler Candle Company. And he thinks no one in Oregon offers a wider selection of Brian Andreas' whimsical StoryPeople creations.

"Since we've gotten to know so many of our customers in here, it's nice to know that when they are buying stuff they are truly going to enjoy it," says Davis.

Susan Reese, a regular who lives in the neighborhood, says, "It's someplace you can go and buy something of quality that doesn't cost a fortune."

Patrons also appreciate the way Shannon and Davis have immersed themselves in the community.

Parents have thanked them for keeping the shop open late, because it gives their kids a safe place to go. Kids come in to use the free Internet, play games or do their homework.

The owners also contribute to the local school system through special fund-raising days. An ongoing receipt program kicks back 10 percent to area schools.

Let's Do Coffee & More is setting a strong

example for other gay-owned and gay-friendly businesses in the West Linn area. When the shop opened in November 2003, Davis felt that some of the other gay-owned businesses were afraid of being too forthright with the community.

But he and Shannon didn't shy from the public eye. "We never hid ourselves," says Davis.

When the couple married in March 2004,



Brad Davis (left) and Craig Shannon work together to make a queer-friendly place in West Linn.

their picture ended up on the front page of the local paper. They wondered what the response would be.

"It was great," says Davis. "We had people who had never been in before stopping in to congratulate us. The community is just wonderful."

Davis thinks his and Shannon's high visibility as a couple has helped other gay-owned businesses in the area open up to the community. As more gays and lesbians hear about the coffee shop, they are making special trips to come in and support it.

Shannon and Davis opened a second coffee place Jan. 31, doing a makeover on The Perfect Cup in the historic district of West Linn. The new location is solely a coffee shop, with a small selection of gifts.

Though the space is different, and the clientele is already established from the shop's earlier incarnation, Shannon and Davis have made the place their own.

And that may be the secret to their success. Commercial landlords who have heard about Let's Do Coffee & More have contacted the couple, wanting them to set up similar shops in other retail centers.

"It tells us that we did something right," says Davis.

Their customers second that.

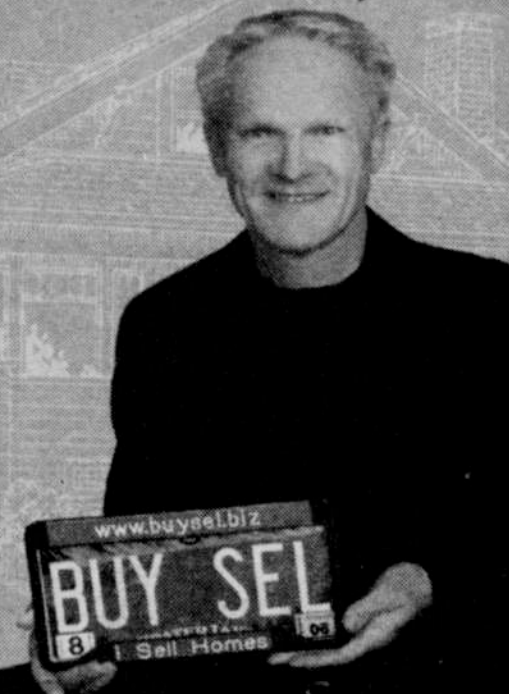
"I think Craig and Brad have really made this place. It would be just a space, but they've made it feel really homey and welcoming," says Reese. "I think this could have been opened by other people and not have been the success that it is." ■

LET'S DO COFFEE & MORE is located at 19373 S.W. Willamette Drive in West Linn, 503-635-4224.

THE PERFECT CUP is located at 1721 Willamette Falls Drive, 503-722-1722.

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