

The Changing Restaurant Scene in Vernonia

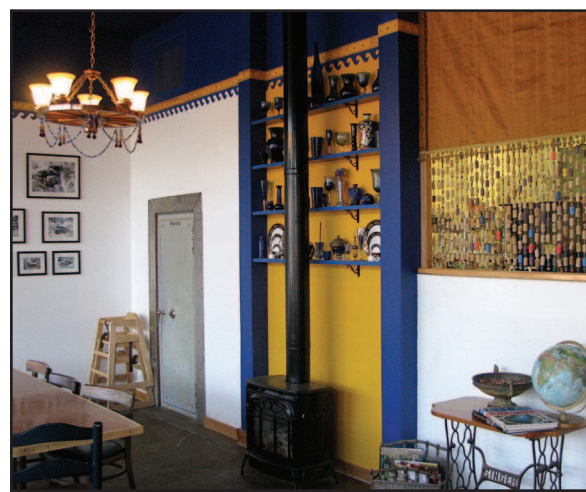
Some big changes are happening in downtown Vernonia, most notably where and when you can go out to eat and hang out. And more are on the way.

The Blue House Reopens -- Vernonians have been delighted with the reopening and relocation of the Blue House Mediterranean Cafe and Brewery. Sam and Elenora Semerjian had developed a loyal following at their old location five miles north of town. They have now completed their renovations of the old city hall building at 909 Bridge Street, and have opened the doors to their spacious, and finely-decorated new location. Lunch, dinner, and beer-drinking will never be the same in Vernonia!



The Blue House Cafe is now open in downtown Vernonia

According to Elenora, business has been brisk since the opening, although she attributes that, in part, to the novelty of the restaurant now being downtown. "We are doing three to four times as much business as we did at the old place," said Semerjian. "Of course, I'm not sure if it will last."



The interior of the newly reopened Blue House Mediterranean Cafe and Brewery

The space is colorful, with the interior painted their trademark blue, and the Semerjians spent lots of time with details, including blue-headed nails, and a hand painted wavy border around the high ceiling. And the unique restroom is the same, where guests are encouraged to grab a sharpie pen and permanently write a comment or message on the walls or ceiling.

The menu remains mostly unchanged, with the same fresh healthy gyros, appetizers and salads. Semerjian notes that she plans to add a simple pasta dish soon. They have also added a grill, but have yet to figure out how and what

they will use it for. Watch for new menu items in the future.

One other change the Blue House has made is to their beverage menu-- no more soda pop. Instead, the Semerjians are serving freshly-made Italian Sodas made from pure fruit molasses and filtered water. These are nutritious drinks and are more in line with the other healthy fare they serve.

Semerjian promises improvements to the exterior of the building as well. The Semerjians have been waiting for some demolition to be completed next door before beginning the finishing touches on the outside and store front. Expect to see that trademark blue as a major component to the outside rehabilitation.

With four taps for beer, the brewery is back up and running, and Vernonians are enjoying Brett Costley's creations once again. For many, a brewpub in downtown Vernonia is just what was needed-- a place to get a bite to eat, have a pint of good, locally-brewed beer and enjoy some conversation with friends. Now Vernonia has it, right in downtown.

Cafe 47 Serves Breakfast -- Another change to the Vernonia restaurant scene is at Cafe 47. Owner Bill Long recently got his grill going and starting opening at 5:00 AM, serving up breakfast to Vernonia residents and visitors alike. Excellent pancakes, French toast, omelets and scrambles are now available in the eclectically-decorated space that makes up Cafe 47. "Business has been really good," says Long about his breakfasts. "And the comments on the food have been fantastic. We're getting a lot of out-of-towners, many of whom are repeat customers, and we're seeing people from town we haven't seen before."

Long has discontinued his dinner service for now, although he is still serving lunch. He plans on restarting dinners in the near future, once he gets a handle on his breakfast and lunch routine. "It will be much bigger and better," says Long, about his dinner menu. He plans to continue the same type of fare, "...Americana and comfort food," with some additions like steaks and potatoes now that the grill is up and running. He says he is also taking suggestions for some easy to put out vegetarian dishes. Currently, Cafe 47 is open until 3:00 PM and Long says he will start reopening at 5:00 PM for dinner soon.

Vernonians have some new choices for meals with some more changes on the horizon. Things are looking, and tasting, pretty good around here.



Cafe 47 is now serving breakfast

SUPPORTING VERNONIA & OUR VIBRANT COMMUNITY

FIRST FRIDAY

JUNE 5, 2009

5-7:30PM

FEATURING...

- 1 Vernonia artist Dave Anderson's Holocaust Exhibit at the VCLC
- 2 Music: Strings On Fire
- 3 Open Air Market Starts Produce, Crafts, Collectibles & more...
- 4 Tillamook Forestry Display
- 5 Bring a book/Take a book
- 6 Local Merchants' Specials



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Interested in being involved? Call Erika Paleck 429-0898 VernoniaFirstFriday.org