



Jay Weatherly, who owns High Five located on Broadway Street which offers a wide variety of drinks and a cozy area for studying.

Local coffee shop adapts to Asheville's vibe

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A line of people extends outside the doors of High Five. Baristas hustle behind the counter taking orders.

Every order is written on a plastic card, attached to a metal ring on a line and pushed down to where all drinks are made.

Outside the cafe, people sit on metal chairs having casual discussions with their friends and colleagues. Some conversation is lost to the noise of passing cars speeding by.

People in the cafe focus on what is in front of them — books, laptops or another person. Music plays over the speakers as a medium volume, blending with the sounds coming from behind the counter.

The brick built cafe opened 10 years ago on Broadway Street. With an indoor and outdoor seating area, customers have plenty of space to relax and enjoy themselves.

Jay Weatherly, owner of High Five, said he fell in love with coffee shops and their culture when he was in college. Working in these shops gave him the inspiration to open his own and create a functional place to bring the community together.

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“Coffee shops have a pretty unique place in a community,” Weatherly said.

High Five has three locations, each with a different atmosphere. The Broadway Street and Rankin Avenue locations have similar atmospheres with earth tones and wooden furniture.

Their third and newest location on Riverside Drive in Woodfin serves as a drive-through with a few grab-and-go items. Weatherly said an important part of coffee shops is the ability to adapt to the

local vibe.

Emily Lipstein, a sophomore psychology student, said she prefers local coffee shops over chains. She was attracted to the cafe because of the location and found it offers a home-like feeling. While looking for a place to study near campus, she stumbled upon High Five and has been a patron ever since.

“The service has always been great. When paying at the register, the staff are always personable and ask how my day was or try to make conversation,” Lipstein said.

Weatherly said most people who come to the cafe during the week are regulars. On the weekends tourists come to check out the local business.

Sophomore psychology student Sarah Montgomery said High Five is a cool coffee shop, a great location, and has an environment where she can get schoolwork done.

Lauren McKeel, a junior management student, said she enjoys going to High Five because she can get away from the library but still get work done.

“I like that they have different specialty coffee drinks every day that are always really unique,” McKeel said. “Most importantly, it’s a nice, quiet space but not dull.”

Weatherly said the cafe serves local baked goods every day and uses coffee from Counter Culture, located in Durham.

“Coffee is a really great industry that has lots of fascinating aspects as far as the process of growing the plant to bringing it to the shop,” Weatherly said.

Hanging above the back counter, a blackboard menu lists the beverage selection. High Five offers customers daily specialty and seasonal drinks.

Weatherly said his goal for the shop was to create a place where anyone could come into the cafe, tell the barista what they like and get served a drink they enjoy. Guests do not need to know a lot about coffee to get a good drink.

Each staff member goes through training to ensure they can create well crafted beverages for each customer. Weatherly said he wants his employees to feel passionate about what they do and the products they put out.

“High Five has a chill atmosphere compared to your average Starbucks where you feel rushed to leave,” Lipstein said. “There’s caring staff and amazing coffee that keeps you coming back!”