

Community News:

Coffee Culture Permeates Brevard.

By jg : staff writer

In 1971 Starbuck's coffee company opened its first location in Seattle's Pike Place Market. It wasn't until 1993 that the first east coast Starbucks opened in Washington D.C. Today the coffee shop giant is spread all over the world in a thin, foamy layer totaling 7,225 retail locations. The undeniable need Americans have for coffee is only half of the question. The need for so many choices of coffee is the other.

In a sleepy little mountain town in western North Carolina, getting a Wal-Mart is inevitable. Life is sustained by the variety, the bargains, and the jobs that the retail chain provides. But who is responsible for introducing the amphetamine like buzz of a piping hot double, skinny, grande, mocha to this part of the world? Before there was espresso, there was only Maxwell House and other run-of-the-mill brands of unexciting Joe. How did people function?

Well, it seems that a luxury once had, becomes a necessity. Brevard is a remote little town, tucked into the mountains like the gold of Midas. Life is good here. The bothersome blabbering of the great American retail advertiser is simply not heard. There are just enough restaurants, one movie theater, two hardware stores, and five super markets. If you were a chronic over spender, this would be a great town to begin your rehab. There simply isn't much temptation.

So why is it that Brevard, of all places, has six coffee shops, all within a mile radius? Do we have that many caffeine addicts? Did Juan Valdez, the coffee king of Columbia, go missing? There are surely more places to get a latte in Brevard than there are in most towns our size. Here is a list by no official ranking: There is L and L Bagel, where the beans are good and the espresso drinks are half price on Tuesdays. There is the Essence of Thyme for the more hometown, local feel. There is Bracken Mountain Bakery where the rumor is...they brew the better Java in town, once again no official ranking is intended. Then there's Quotations, a fresh and new shop in the new Hollingsworth building, where you get a quote to ponder on every cup. Let's not forget the convenience of our own Java City with its most affable Mayor, Dave. OK, how many is that? Five out of six leaves the espresso machine at the something gallery on main.

Now this has not been confirmed, but there is a rumor that the mothership (Starbucks) is circling overhead with its blasters pointed right at Brevard. However this rumor isn't building any steam, so once again...this is an unconfirmed rumor. Just think of it, from Seattle to Brevard in only 33 years and not a moment too soon, this would make number seven! Do we need a seventh? Does it need to be a massive conglomerate that will nudge out the little guys? While its true Brevard has a whole lotta coffee, at least the local owners call the shots. Let's face it, a chicken has a better chance of touring the kitchen at KFC without becoming a sandwich, than a coffee bean has of not being smashed and brewed in this coffee-loving town.

Here's a thought... if Yoo-Hoo had traces of a stimulant, perhaps the beans could rest easier at night.