

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Coffee from page 4B

Owners Pat and Robert DuPell transformed a former Domino's pizza outlet into a sleek, Euro-styled coffee house complete with framed artwork, designer drinks and a no-smoking atmosphere. "It's a quiet place to stop in and have a conversation," said Darryl DuPell, the day manager. "The music stays in the background. There's Yahtzee and backgammon games for whoever wants it. Lots of newspapers to read. Customers are welcome to linger. You can't hang a 'No Littering' sign in a coffee house."

Thought stimulator

Coffee houses have a long history linked to literacy, politics and philosophy. The coffee tree is native to Ethiopia where historians believe the first coffees came from. Traders took the beans to the Middle East and from there into Europe in the 1600s.

Europeans were sold on the stimulating hot beverage and coffee houses serving the drink sprang up everywhere. Coffee houses became centers of literary and political discussions, which so worried King Charles II that he banned them as "seminaries of sedition," according to World Book Encyclopedia.

However, the beverage had become so popular he was forced to reopen the shops. From 1650 until 1850, there were 500 coffee houses in London alone.

Before newspapers came along, people visited coffee houses to learn news of the day. With the advent of newspapers, reporters found them a natural source of news and gossip. Businessmen kept regular hours at coffee houses, which eventually became separated according to the professions and religious beliefs of the clientele. This eventually led to the es-

tablishment of the private club. Espresso, brewed by forcing steam through finely ground darkly roasted coffee beans, grew popular in the 1940s. Espresso was the beverage of choice in the coffee houses that flourished on college campuses. In the '50s and '60s, beatniks and hippies frequented coffee houses to enjoy party readings and folk singers who performed their social commentary to music.

Brewing success

Business is brisk at The Coffee Exchange in downtown Birmingham these days. Owners Nemir Nadhir and Ed Miri have done so well in the 15 months they've been pouring java that they are opening two new coffee houses at the Boardwalk in West Bloomfield and University Plaza in Rochester Hills.

"We see all ages, all crowds," Nadhir said. "During the day, it's a business crowd, ladies lunching, walkers stopping in for a drink. At night, it's a place to go with a date, after a movie, or just a place to get out of the house for a drink and dessert and meet others."

Behind the Outback Gallery in downtown Plymouth, a cozy coffee shop is entering its second year serving an assortment of drinks and desserts. The gallery upfront lends itself to poetry readings 7-9 p.m. Thursday.

Owner Denni Englehart said Friday evenings are the busiest, a place to see and be seen.

That's the hope of Bob and Dennis Secuda, entrepreneurs who want to see their Grand Cafe (a few doors up from the Civic Theatre in downtown Farmington) become a community gathering place.

"We studied, we meticulously worked out details, we went first-

class in preparing this coffee house," Bob Secuda said. "We're perfectionists and I think patrons will see that when they visit our establishment."

It's really quite a place. Custom counter orders travel via computer to the kitchen where chef and manager Jack DuBroy creates soups, specialty salads and unique sandwiches. Patrons can sit at tables or on long-legged stools where the lamps can be adjusted for reading or romance.

Sense of fun

The artist of Janisse Lahti Larson and Dennie Larson leaps off a giant wall mural of ripe, red coffee beans over to a side wall where they've humorously turned some classics into charmers. The American Gothic, Whistler's Mother, a famous Dalí, Lichtenstein, and a portrait of George Washington — all manage to be holding coffee cups.

Thought-provoking wisdoms have been lettered across the coffee house's beams by the artists. Janisse has painted whimsical coffee art along the walls of the staircase leading into this low-level beanery.

Tom Corey Sullivan of Birmingham works at the Grand Cafe and will also get a chance to perform his folk music on Tuesday evenings beginning at 7 p.m.

"You know what I like best about this place?" Tom McCoy, a Farmington retiree, said during his second visit to the Grand Cafe. "It's comfortable for a man. It's genteel. You don't feel conspicuous sitting here. I don't have to scream over loud music. I'm not rushed. It's very sophisticated."

Lois Taylor of Farmington just finished lunch and said the food was delicious.

"I'll be back," she said. "The place is lovely."

The Grand Cafe sells 38 flavors

of coffee, granita drinks (coffee and fruit), 40 different flavored Italian sodas prepared from all-

natural syrups with soda water, 14 custom hot steamed coffees and six iced-chilled coffees.

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Changing from page 4B

urged them to:

- Adopt and use modern technology to operate centers as well as evaluate sales.

- End the adversarial role between tenant and owner, insisting that both sides work out "good deals" which lead to cooperation toward fighting high retail taxes, lowering insurance costs and establishing safe, secure shopping centers.

- "Value people," taking time to hire properly, train thoroughly, motivate, evaluate and then reward, or even fire, new employees. "People issues are big time stealers," she said. "But it's a responsibility for good business, as well as I hope, personal reasons."

- Focus on the customer and the sale. "Never lose sight of what it's all about," she said.

- Give back to the communities that support them. "We must adopt the ethic to protect and further our image in the community."

Maccardini challenged the audience to "create excitement" in their tenant mixes and merchandising.

"What creates the value, is how we tenant our center. How we market our center. How we market our center and what wrapper we put around it architecturally," she said. "That is the secret to creating value."

Jeanne Hildebrandt of the Livonia Mall, attended the Idea Ex-

change and called it "interesting and successful."

"It was a good day," she said. "The audience was attentive. I especially enjoyed the roundtable discussion on mall security where I learned a few things from the experts. I also found the panel discussion on super stores, or big box users, very interesting."

The International Council of Shopping Centers was founded in 1957 as the trade association of the shopping center industry. It has more than 25,000 members in 44 countries. Services to its members include conventions, conferences, state and regional Idea Exchange meetings, legislative action, professional accreditation programs and a monthly magazine, "Shopping Centers Today."

A TIME OF WONDER

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