

## Coffee with the Mayor

### Ser 37 (25-11) Retail

No significant coffee activity of late. Just the usual cup of Keurig at home and sometimes a second cup at the office. Guess I need to start branching out and experimenting again.

A positive observation around town is the recent construction of the new Domino's Pizza and the on-going construction of the car wash and drive-through coffee shop out by Tractor Supply. Growth in a community contributes to more opportunities for the citizens. It also contributes to the overall assessed value and the tax base in addition to offering much needed jobs. Add to this list the Leaping Lizard Bakery, Sparklight Home Health Care, TekShack, Clause's Ace Hardware, Smokin' Joes Barbeque and Main Street Boutique & Gifts. There are probably a couple more businesses I'm not aware of. Those openings are an indication that people are seeing potential in a community and taking the risk, with no guarantee of success, to invest in the city, and their future.

As one can imagine, starting a new business is not easy. I have a limited background in business but can understand the hurdles that need to be overcome to reach that point when the grand opening happens. All this begins with an idea to advance a hobby, provide a product or engage in some way with the public. Startup capital, or funds, may be the first hurdle. Location is another important consideration. How much space, fixtures, and lighting are just a few aspects to be considered along with potential remodeling, access and regulatory requirements. Then there's inventory. How many or how much of what configuration will sell and at what cost? Insurance! What will the cost of insurance be to cover inventory, liability or any other potential concern that may happen? Then staffing the business with dedicated employees that will add to the success of the business is a must along with advertising. Trying to consider all the aspects of starting a business can be daunting and time consuming. I appreciate those that have gone through this process and stepped out, taking on the risk of potential success, opening a business.

There are organizations involved in assisting those who want to take on the responsibility of going through the hurdles in opening a business. The city's Redevelopment Commission has made funds available to assist startups or business owners. There are county and state resources available as well, although I don't know all the names. I'm sure they can be found using internet searches. Doing the research and finding assistance and sources of funding will go along way in reducing the risk.

When the doors are open and the ribbon cut, it is now the responsibility of the community to support that business. If the product meets the expectations of the consumer, chances are the word will get out and business will grow. If it doesn't meet that expectation, then

maybe some adjustments to the business need to be made. The business owner has to make that determination. There may be a timeframe established to monitor sales making sure revenue eventually exceeds expenses. Business success or failure is determined by the quality of the product and support of the local community. Ordering similar products online for a slightly less cost does not benefit the local business owner or community. If we, as a community, want more retail businesses both downtown and elsewhere around town, then we, as a community, must be willing to support those businesses hoping to make a profit and, often times, a living.