

Edwardsville's 222 Artisan Bakery Talks Coffee, Community and Life After COVID

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EDWARDSVILLE - Main Street's 222 Artisan Bakery doesn't just offer coffee, pastries and sandwiches, though that is a big part of their menu. This spot in the heart of downtown Edwardsville is a refuge for residents to connect every morning.

“The coffee is fantastic. The company is good,” Edwardsville Alderman Will Krause said. “It’s a downtown staple. Just a place to feel welcome when you come in...You don’t get that sitting at a Starbucks.”

That’s what owner Kim Goodner has always aimed for. Krause, who sits at the window and drinks coffee every morning, calls Goodner “the mom of Main Street.” With several regulars and an endless supply of hot coffee, 222 Artisan Bakery has become a second home to many people in the Edwardsville community.

Goodner owns the bakery with her son, Trevor, who used to work there as a barista. The duo knows almost all of their regulars by name. Goodner can point to each table and rattle off who sits there; a Bible study group in the back on Mondays, a Habitat for Humanity crew on Thursdays. Many of these customers have become her friends.

And the customers feel the same way. On an early morning, the bakery is already bustling with people on their way to work or lounging at a table and splitting a pastry.

Roger presides over the Edwardsville High School Class of 1965 breakfast table. He can usually be found outside the bakery by 5:45 a.m., waiting for Goodner to unlock the doors at 6. Edward, the owner of Weber and Rodney Funeral Home two doors down, joins him to chat about Elvis Presley and classic cars.

“It’s a good place,” Edward said of the bakery. “Kim’s really nice. She does a wonderful job in the community, and they support her. You meet all kinds of different people, which is nice.”

Across the room, another full table can agree with that. Nicknamed the Morning Crew, this group of regulars meet up every day. Libby and Jeff explained that they first came to the bakery in 2005, and the rest is history. They’ve amassed a group of friends, other regulars who come in to chat over mugs of coffee, 365 days a year.

“It’s a good start to your day,” Libby said. “I go to work every day and I come in here first.”

The group, which is also the unofficial/self-appointed Board of Directors, has little in common with one another. Some of them are retired. Others, like Libby, stop in briefly before work. Nobody works in the same field or went to the same schools.



They know each other only from this morning ritual: Every day, they settle in at their reserved table, talk about life, and sip countless cups of black coffee; anything else is, in Goodner's words, "frou-frou."

Their travels are a favorite topic of conversation. Goodner and Libby went together to King Charles's coronation earlier this year. Marc, who Goodner simply calls "Grumpy," complained that they never stop reminiscing about England, while his tales about traveling in the Amazon are always cut short. He wrapped his hands around his mug, which is printed with a picture of Grumpy from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," and began a story that was promptly interrupted.

Why do all these people love the bakery so much?

"It's not the owner, I can tell you that," Jeff said immediately. Goodner rolled her eyes.

But it's affectionate. After all, these friends have been through a lot together. Like a lot of small businesses, the bakery took a hit during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Grief flooded the shop when Goodner lost her husband to the virus.

Throughout this time of immense sadness and change, 222 Artisan Bakery was still standing. The Morning Crew still drank their coffee on the benches outside, masked up and distanced but together. In the midst of personal tragedy, Goodner offered free breakfasts every day to anyone who needed it. The bakery was already a place for people to build community, to feel less alone; as virus rates lowered and life moved on, those who were still reeling found comfort in it once again.

“Especially during COVID, it was really hard to make friends and also have any sense of community,” Molly Roberts, one of the baristas, said, chatting as she steamed milk. “But here it’s cool, because most of the people who come in, I see every day. And I just love the staff here...Kim and Trevor just go above and beyond for us. They’ve just always been there to help out if anything’s going wrong in my life and stuff in a way that I haven’t had with other jobs.”

You can see this care in the little things. One of Goodner’s favorite customers, [Matthew Butler](#), recently passed away. His memorial cards are stacked by the register. Bags of coffee grounds are available for purchase, and Trevor carefully samples and selects each flavor before it hits the shelves. Marc has a sandwich named after him. On Fridays, \$1 for every pizza sold goes to a local charity; they’ve supported their Main Street neighbors [Restore Décor](#) throughout the month of July.

“They do so much for the community, and they’re very quiet about it,” said Sherrie, who rides her bicycle from Glen Carbon to the bakery every day to share breakfast with her husband. “It’s welcoming, right? They recognize you. It’s nice to walk into a place and say, ‘How are you?’”

As Goodner surveyed the bakery, she grew reflective. The Morning Crew was chuckling at their normal table. The Class of 1965 chatted about the most recent Cardinals game. When Alderman Krause left for his office, a trio of friends immediately took his place at the window overlooking Main Street. A barista greeted a dog by name and then sheepishly asked for the owner’s so she could write down his order; they both laughed. Goodner finally spoke.

“We survived COVID because of two things,” she said. “Number one, our employees. Number two, our customers. We had very loyal customers. They didn’t want us to fail, and so they supported us through so much.”

Those customers would probably say the bakery did the same for them.

To learn more about 222 Artisan Bakery, visit their [official website](#).

