

GROUNDED

in the COMMUNITY

You pick: Coffee Grounds owner George Shumay said his business's best seller usually is the regular Coffee of the Day.

Tribune-Star/
Joseph C. Garza



COMMENTS TO REMEMBER

■ Sue Jacks of Clinton voted for any cup of coffee because "drunk among friends the memory can last a lifetime."

☆☆☆

■ Anna Schomer, meanwhile, not only voted for Reflections at Westminster Village, but took the time to write a poem about her choice.

Santa, Santa on your midnight trip

Westminster Village, Terre Haute do not skip!

Have a cup of coffee Good to the last drop!

It's Reflection

It's perfection and It'll warm your heart

Before you depart



"I don't feel like we just sell coffee. I think what we really sell is a sense of community, connection."

George Shumay, owner of Coffee Grounds

BY ZACH TAYLOR □ TRIBUNE-STAR

If the results of the Tribune-Star's Best of the Wabash Valley Cup of Coffee survey are any indication, it takes many things to make a good cup of joe.

But to be the best – that takes something else and it isn't necessarily in the cup.

"I don't feel like we just sell coffee," said George Shumay, owner of Coffee Grounds. "I think what we really sell is a sense of community, connection."

Shumay may be onto something. Coffee Grounds – with locations at 423 Wabash Ave. and the Indiana State University commons and Cunningham Memorial Library – was the runaway contest winner with Tribune-Star readers. Java Haute at 3805 Wabash Ave. was second, followed by Coffee Break at 663 Wabash Ave. and Company Coffee at the Honey Creek Mall.

While many words were used to describe Coffee Grounds' java, from fresh and flavorful to wonderful and hot, the resounding theme that leapt from the contest entries was a reference to the nearly 12-year-old business's friendly, smiling staff.

"Our staff is really the ones responsible for receiving accolades," Shumay said of his 40 employees. "It's a small business. It's not a career; it's a way of being. It's a lifestyle."

"We're involved in the community. We're involved in fund raisers and charities. It's definitely a part of all that as well."

Shumay does add, however, that the coffee knowledge and fresh roasted choices his business offers to the community didn't hurt his chances of winning either.

"We got in this business when the coffee craze was just starting," he said. "We've made a concerted effort to keep up on the trends, traveling to other areas of the country [for research]."

"I'm really humbled by all this. We still received everybody's vote in spite of a changing landscape in terms of coffee."

COFFEE GROUNDS DRAWS FAVORABLE COMMENTS

The people there are wonderful and knowledgeable.
– Desa Curry, Clinton

The coffee is always fresh and hot.
– George Issa, Terre Haute

Smiles. Knows what I want when I walk up and fixes it right every time.
– Stacy Foodick, Brazil

It's ground, brewed and served fresh. Plus it's the best atmosphere in town.
– April Simma, St. Mary-of-the-Woods College

I've always felt welcome. The owner, George Shumay, has taken time to teach me a great deal about making good espresso at home.

– Rod Bradfield, Terre Haute



Tribune-Star/Joseph C. Garza

Cup of joe: Gary Daily enjoys a cup of coffee at the Coffee Grounds on Tuesday.

BEST OF THE BEST

1. Coffee Grounds, 423 Wabash Ave.
2. Java Haute, 3805 Wabash Ave.
3. Coffee Break, 663 Wabash Ave.
4. Company Coffee, Honey Creek Mall

Honorable mention: Reflections, Westminster Village, 1120 E. Davis Dr.; The Coffee Cup, Paris, Ill.; Lincoln Trail Restaurant, Lincoln Trail State Park, Clark County, Ill.; Fran's General Store, 11234 E. Rio Grande Ave.; Sullivan Newstand; Randall Manor, Dana.