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Coffee Shop Hits the Spot for Customers and Owners

Seven years and 30 stores from its beginnings, Saxbys Coffee recently added another family-operated franchise at 284 W. Central Ave in Springboro. In addition to the full complement of small-batch roasted, 100 percent Arabica coffees, Saxbys also offers many variations of lattes as well as chai teas, loose leaf teas, Frolattes!, all-natural fresh fruit smoothies, seasonal specialty drinks and more.

Saxbys Springboro, opened less than three months ago, and is piloting the introduction of Cremoso, Saxbys' second proprietary blend of frozen yogurt. "It's lower in fat, yet still creamy and decadent in flavor. We offer a great selection of toppings including chocolate, caramel, M&M's or a variety of other sweets," owner Kerri Ritter.

Customers also can take the healthier route with non-fat Original Tart frozen yogurt topped with seasonal fresh fruit! "We have choices for every taste-bud; however, we're constantly striving to offer healthier alternatives in all of our offerings."

This shop is a short walk from the city building and library. A drive-through window is quick and convenient for customers on the move. The interior was designed to provide a comfortable yet sophisticated atmosphere for customers. "Tasteful décor with locally inspired elements, comfortable furniture, a flat screen TV, and an inviting fireplace make us the perfect neighborhood hang-out."

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Woodhull Garners Award

Woodhull LLC in Springboro recently earned the Renaissance Award from Ricoh's Executive Management Team. The Springboro company was chosen from more than 500 independent dealers across the nation. Woodhull President and owner Susie Woodhull accepted the award at Ricoh's annual convention in Las Vegas in June. Other corporate officers are Bertrand Trick, Vice President and Bill Kilker, CFO.

The award is based on Woodhull's sales professionalism and performance, customer service, quality of its service technicians and other factors.

Woodhull is the only authorized Ricoh dealer in Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky. Its managed print services include sales, service, and a full line of office printers.

Local Company Really Celebrates Holidays

Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's displays have already been designed, constructed and shipped from InnoMark Communications. Valentine's Day now looms large for the retail display experts at 3233 South Tech Blvd. in Springboro.

InnoMark produces permanent and temporary retail displays from conception to construction for familiar names such as Procter and Gamble, Dick's Sporting Goods and many others. About 50 sales offices are spread between the two coasts.



"We're above our target revenue goals for the year and we've landed some significant new accounts, mostly big box companies," says Kevin Neureuterk, Vice President and General Manager of the Graphic Divisions. He's been with InnoMark almost a year and is now overseeing a local expansion effort, as well his routine responsibilities.

The company is finalizing the move and expansion of its digital presses and operators to what is known as the Millat Building on Ohio 741, near its 62,000 sq. ft. facility. The move is being done in phases, and when it's completed, about 50 employees will be based there, operating the digital presses used for large-format digital displays and signage. The building also will house about 10 administrative staff.

Many displays employ cutting edge technology, incorporating light, sound and motion, along with digital magic to attract attention. A few of InnoMark's unique efforts are highlighted on its website, InnoMark.com. Kiosks, shelf displays, end caps and outdoor displays, packaging, fulfillment and more are part of the product lines.

InnoMark began life as a Printing Services Company in Dayton 22 years ago. Over time temporary, semi-permanent and permanent Point Of Purchase displays, specialty packaging, pre-press, digital, screen-printing and litho were added to their services.

The company relocated to Springboro in the late 1980s and now has more than 400 employees spread across seven facilities. In addition to Kevin, the local management team includes Steve Zick, vice president of Client Services and Jeff Laking, vice president at InnoMark's finishing and permanent display facility in Fairfield.

There's Much More to Balloons Galore

Five lines of American-made greeting cards, wine from The Winery at Versailles, even Clifford The Big Red Dog items and more, form the eclectic mix at Balloons Galore & Gifts in The Marketplace at Settlers Walk.

Mark Specht's balloon creations, including a 5,000 balloon B-2 Bomber, have been featured at corporate, retail store, school, prom and other events for more than 24 years. He also has written several articles and designed balloon creations for international trade publications. Mark moved the business here from north Dayton 15 months ago. "Our delivery business was primarily south, so when our lease was up, we followed our customer base," he says with a smile.



The former teacher bought the balloon business from a fellow teacher in 1988, paying only \$250. Mark's career became a victim of a school levy failure and his home-based business ballooned into a storefront and new career path.

The 'gifts' component now dominates store space and Mark has carefully chosen the wide-ranging inventory. "We have unique costume jewelry made in Vermont, 5 lines of greeting cards, selected wines, items from Rothschild Farms, Trophy Nut and other uniquely American products. We make every effort to buy American. It's something we feel strongly about." New lines of gourmet tea, scented candles, even onesies for newborns are among the new offerings.

A certified balloon artist, Mark has worked with many corporations during his career. Balloon creations featured on the store's website and in its portfolio, include that B-2 bomber. "We created it for the inauguration of the Spirit of Ohio. It took more than 5,000 balloons and 2 ½ days to create. Some people thought we had just covered a real B-2 with balloons. We've also worked on event displays for two presidential campaigns."

Locally, Balloons Galore & Gifts delivers balloon bouquets, custom gift baskets and other items from Troy to the northern Cincinnati area. Their website feeds long-distance sales, and also works with Balloonplanet.com. "Foot traffic here is good, and our website and Facebook drive much of our business. We frequently receive international orders from all over the world, including Canada, Great Britain, India, Germany, Australia and Asia."

That \$250 purchase evolved into a family business, with his daughter Michelle working fulltime in the shop with him. His son, Chris, fills in as his fulltime job allows, as does Mark's wife, Sharon, a registered dietitian.

Balloons Galore & Gifts is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, 9 to 5 Saturday and closed Sunday. Their website is www.balloonsgaloreandgifts.com and they can also be found on Facebook.

Old Gold, Coins Find New Home at Liberty Gold and Coin

When Richard Hanna opened Liberty Gold and Coin in Springboro Pointe, he found both an expanded customer base and clients who are well versed in the value of items they have decided to part with.

Traditionally downtown urban areas have served as home for businesses for buyers and sellers of gold, coins and gems. Today, along with other traditional urban businesses, many gold and coin dealers are finding new homes and markets in suburbia. The economy has many people looking at their old jewelry, coins, and other saleable items, with new eyes.

"Most of my clients are very knowledgeable and it's not unusual for them to pull out a phone and check the spot prices of the items they want to sell," he says.



Richard manages the store at 253 West Central Ave. and is Senior Numismatist. "Gold and numismatics go hand-in-hand. I have about 15 years experience in the field and am certified by the American Numismatists' Association."

His interest began with his grandfather giving him coins when he was a Boy Scout. After college, he worked with a Cincinnati gold and coin dealer for nine years, and most recently managed a shop in Kettering.

Springboro has been a great location, he says. Its demographics, including residents' median income and educational level led to choosing the Springboro location. Its proximity to Interstates 75 and 71 and low crime rate also drove the decision. The store opened about 18 months ago.

Browsers and clients often ask Richard if all dealers pay the same amount for items they purchase. "I tell them 'absolutely no.' Our willingness to negotiate price separates us from many others in this business.

"Many of my clients often know the full melt prices of gold and other metals, but they also understand we have to make a profit. People who sell gold or other precious metals should know that the law requires that precious metals be weighed in view of the seller. It's important to deal with an ethical and educated buyer."

While he still buys diamonds and the store focuses on them, that market is glutted right now because much gold jewelry has been sold. The diamonds or other gems are removed from their settings and put on the market.

Liberty is open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., until 8 p.m., Friday and 5 p.m. Saturday. For more information call 937-748-8918, or access the website at www.libertygoldandcoin.com or e-mail libertygoldandcoin@att.net

Coffee Shop Hits the Spot for Customers and Owners

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Kerri and her husband Kurt chose to reside and raise their family in the Springboro community about seven years ago. They liked the coffee shop model due to its simplicity and growing appeal to all age groups. "We were attracted to Saxbys Coffee specifically, because it allowed us to leverage professional branding and proven processes from a national company that appreciates and encourages a focus on the communities in which the owners live.

"After more research and further comparisons of Starbucks vs. mom-and-pop coffee shops, we knew that Saxbys could provide us with the perfect model: A simple yet profitable set of operations that allowed us the opportunity to participate with, and support local organizations and businesses. Our goal is to provide the best gourmet coffee experience possible, by combining award winning Saxbys Coffee products with best in class customer service in an upscale yet comfortable environment."

In addition to being active owners and operators, they are Area Developers for Ohio and Northern Kentucky. They own a second Saxbys in Centerville and are partners at the Newport on The Levee shop in Northern Kentucky. As Area Developers, they help other potential owners/investors realize the dream of owning a small business by opening additional Saxbys Coffee locations across the state and in surrounding areas.

Saxbys is open Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, 8 to 8. The shop's website is www.saxbyscoffee.com and it also has a Facebook www.facebook.com/saxbyspringboro. For more information, call 937-748-9031.



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Proposed Water & Sewer Rate Increase Eliminated for 2013

In March 2011, City Council made the difficult decision to increase water & sewer rates over a 3-year period due to a number of factors – increased cost of providing the services, paying off the \$32 million debt of the expansion of the water and sewer plants due to residential and commercial growth in the community, and unfunded federal and state mandates.

Ever since the increase was made, City Staff and City Council have been analyzing the actual financial data to ensure that the increases were enough to cover all the items above or to determine if it could ever be reduced or eliminated. Due to a host of factors listed below, it was determined that the 20% proposed increase for 2013 can and will be eliminated.

A number of factors lead to the decision to eliminate the 2013 increase, namely:

- *When the projections utilized to determine the appropriate increase were updated with actual revenue and expenditures for 2010 and 2011, the data showed that the two prior increases were sufficient to keep the water and sewer funds solvent for the foreseeable future;*
- *Actual expenditures in water and sewer were kept to a minimum and less than projected in 2010 and 2011;*
- *The City refunded the 1997 Sewer Revenue Mortgage Bonds the 2004 Sewer Revenue Mortgage Bonds (thus saving about \$1,400,000 in interest over the life of the bonds).*

The only increase businesses will see on their water & sewer bills in January 2013 is the customary inflationary adjustment that is made every year.

