



Ted Mathias photo

Michael Outten takes advantage of the wireless Internet access at The Artful Bean, a coffee shop and art gallery in Bethany Beach, Thursday, Aug. 10.

The Artful Bean: A treat for the senses

By Roxann Moore
News Editor

Open the door of The Artful Bean at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Central Boulevard in Bethany Beach and the first thing that you notice is the aroma of rich coffees.

Further in the door, patrons who've come in for a delightful drink are tempted to linger as they view the works of art displayed on the walls and examine the pieces of pottery and jewelry tucked in display cases.

Immediately, they know they are in an establishment that is much more than a coffee house. "It's not just a coffee shop — it's also a premium, well-crafted art gallery," said Kim Doughty, owner/artist.

She said all the art work is carefully selected and displayed along with her own ceramic creations. There is handblown glassworks from a Dagsboro artist, photography, watercolors and acrylic works also on display.

BUSINESS ESSENTIALS

NAME: The Artful Bean
OWNER: Kim Doughty
LOCATION: At the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Central Boulevard, Bethany Beach
HOURS: Daily from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
CALL: (302) 541-8160
WEB SITE: www.theartfulbean.com

Doughty said she opened the shop on New Year's Day with the hopes of showcasing her work and the works of her friends and artists she meets. She said it was her way of getting those who wouldn't normally enter a gallery to come in and check it out.

Whether the patrons inside this day are the ones that would normally visit galleries or not, they seemed quite comfortable.

One couple played a game of chess while sitting on an overstuffed sofa sipping their drinks. Other patrons sat in

comfortable chairs, their laptops perched on their knees working or surfing the Internet. Still, others took up tables or sat in the computer nooks.

Sweeping her eyes around the room, Doughty said, "People who are on so-called vacations can get work done. It's not loud and disruptive here."

They can stay in touch with friends and family at home or labor away at their jobs in an all so charming setting.

Eclectic music plays softly in the background while life hums along at the coffee bar.

Hot or iced coffees, lattes, Chai and tea are waiting for patrons who want to enjoy a break from the hot sun. Each is made to order. A nicely-stocked refrigerator filled with juice, sodas and bottled water is across the way.

"We have premium Italian Espresso," Doughty said, explaining it's popular with coffee drinkers.

Doughty said she came up with the idea of combining a coffee bar with an art gallery after her years of experience working in galleries in Philadelphia where she went to art school.

She relocated to the area and worked for a neighboring business when she struck up a friendship with business operators who previously occupied the Artful Bean.

When they closed up shop, Doughty decided to take the plunge and is delighted with the results.

"I love a lot of things about it," she said. "And we're just a block from the beach."

The Artful Bean, located at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Central Boulevard in Bethany Beach, is open daily from 7:30 a.m. until 8 p.m. through the summer.

Doughty said her winter hours will be announced later.

■ Reach Roxann Moore by e-mail at rmoore@dmg.gannett.com.