

Claybrook brews coffee, soothes students' worries

BY JENIFER CALANDRA
Staff Reporter

Tosha Claybrook said she doesn't know her official job title, but it might include smoothie artist, barista and sometimes impromptu counselor.

Claybrook said that in addition to her duties at Jazzman's and Freshens in the Student Union Building, eight or nine University students regularly talk to her and ask for advice if they have a bad day.

This interaction with the Jazzman's and Freshens regulars is part of why Claybrook enjoys her job so much, she said.

"Every kid has their own personality," she said. "You're guaranteed [to laugh] at work."

Claybrook said she estimates that about 80 percent of the students she sees in the SUB know her by name, an indication of how her presence is valued by students.

She said she feels especially attached to those students whom she has seen progress from their freshman year to their senior year.

"Each year you get to see the



freshmen come a long ways," she said.

Claybrook said that before working at the University, she was not interested in making coffee or smoothies and that she had never done either previously.

"I had never thought about [working in a coffee shop]," she said. "I don't drink coffee really. ...The closest I came [to making coffee for others] was instant coffee for my dad."

Claybrook said she does not know why she originally applied to work at Jazzman's and Freshens but that she enjoys interacting with people. She said she tries to get to know as many students as possible through her job in the SUB.

"I try to associate with them, and when I scan their cards, I look at their names," she said.

Claybrook was born in Fort Seal, Okla., and moved to the Kirksville area, where she graduated from Knox County R-I high school in 2000 and then attended Moberly Area Community College. Claybrook lives in Kirksville with her pit bull puppy, Spiderman, and her immediate family lives in Kirksville and Novinger.

Claybrook said she got Spiderman when he was eight weeks old and weighed only two pounds. He was infected with internal parasites and near death, and Claybrook nursed him back to health, she said.

Although Claybrook said she is not a fan of the "Spider-man" movie series, she named her puppy after the superhero because of his red coloring and his actions, which include spinning backward in circles, running into



Mark Hardy/Index

Tosha Claybrook, native of Fort Seal, Okla., works in the Student Union Building making smoothies, coffee and friends. She said about 80 percent of students know her by name.

a wall and attempting to climb up the wall.

Although Claybrook's hobbies do not include watching superhero films, she said she enjoys Disney movies, especially "The Aristocats." She said she

sometimes enjoys doing crafts, cleaning her house and spending time with her mother.

For fun in Kirksville, Claybrook said she often will go to Wal-Mart and occasionally to a bar.

Claybrook said she has

thought about moving to Columbia, and if she does, she would like to work at the University of Missouri-Columbia because she enjoys the college environment.

"But I'll probably be here for a while longer," she said.

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Get through holidays without heartburn

Holiday decorations, family festivities and merry gift-giving are holiday staples for many. Add rich food, a lack of exercise and maybe a cocktail or two, and you have holiday heartburn just waiting to happen.

For the 50 million Americans who suffer from heartburn on a regular basis and especially during the holidays, knowing the foods that might trigger the burning of heartburn might help them navigate a holiday smorgasbord.

Many of the foods and beverages served at social events and holiday get-togethers might cause heartburn. Those trigger foods include:

- marbled meats
- rich sauces
- creamy cheeses
- citrus products (tomatoes, lemons, oranges and/or grapefruit)
- caffeine
- alcohol

These foods tend to relax the sphincter between the esophagus and the stomach. The sphincter is a band of muscle that contracts and relaxes to allow food into the stomach. When it contracts, it prevents digestive enzymes and stomach acid from re-entering the esophagus and causing irritation.

Heartburn happens when stomach acid flows backward or up into the esophagus. Diet and medication can contribute to heartburn by relaxing the sphincter, increasing the amount of acid produced in the stomach and making the esophagus more sensitive to stomach acid.

Foods that tend to be high in fat slow the process of digestion, which means that acid and food remain in the stomach cavity longer. The acid

then has a greater chance of moving back into the esophagus. Alcoholic beverages, soda and citrus juices raise the level of acidity in the stomach, causing the esophagus to become even more irritated.

Episodes of heartburn also might be caused by the positioning of the body and certain movements such as lying down and bending over or strenuous activities.

Luckily, one handy defense mechanism against heartburn is gravity. When a person stands upright, gravity tends to prevent acid from moving up into the esophagus, reducing the chance of heartburn. Lying down or bending alters the center of gravity and increases abdominal pressure, increasing the chances for heartburn.

When preparing to host a family gathering or attend social festivities, keep the following tips in mind:

- prepare dishes with less fat
- eat smaller portions
- do not eat late at night or before going to bed
- exercise daily
- dilute alcohol with water or club soda

Heartburn does not have to ruin the holiday season if you are mindful of the foods and drinks you consume.

For more information regarding heartburn and its effects, contact Dr. Sparks at 660-627-1560.

Taste of different culture inspires change in attitude

Confidence is sexy. I first read that somewhere many moons ago — most likely at a time when feeling comfy in my own shoes was an entirely foreign concept.

Of course, we all understand how difficult feeling flawless can be when faced with adolescent ailments such as bad skin, a haircut reminiscent of Paul McCartney and, worst of all, a laundry list of rejections and broken hearts.

As teenagers, young adults or whatever you want to call us, we try various methods to resolve these feelings of inadequacy. We buy trendy clothes, purchase highlights or frosted tips or adopt new habits and eventually regret all our lame attempts. Seriously, guys, if you still think having two-tone hair is badass, it's time to evolve.

So when all else fails, fly to Italy. I realize I've offered this advice before and, indeed, for other reasons, but just hear me out.

The Italians have a way of strutting their stuff that's partly intimidating, partly mystifying and mostly impressive. Getting dressed, the women pull on their iridescent purple leggings, throw on some black ankle boots and a leather coat and call it high fashion. And from the way they carry themselves, soon you're convinced every donna you pass is Italy's next Alessandra Ambrosio, and your own American Eagle jeans pale in comparison.

Then how does living here boost self-assurance?

Here's the secret: Even in Italia, where fashion is kind of a big deal, it's not about the clothes. It's about the attitude, the swagger and absolutely owning whatever it is you've got.

True, I cannot speak for the gents, but stay with me, signori, for there's a lesson in here for you as well.

My first experience with this phenomenon happened just a few days into my stay in Florence.



la dolce vita

with Sara DeGonia

Walking through the open market — a fantastic prospect in itself — I heard a man say, just as I passed, "Ciao, bella."

And there it was. Unable to ignore instincts, I turned back to see the face of my admirer — a young, attractive local, smiling at me — no doubt trying to make a sale. Yet, as I continued, I walked a little taller.

A few days later I strolled into the popular clothing spot, Oviesso. After purchasing (no lie) two pairs of men's sweat pants and a pack of men's white T-shirts, I was stopped at the exit by the store's security guard — a handsome man dressed in a crisp gray suit — who greeted me, identified himself as Eheb and asked where I was from. After a brief chat, the charmer proceeded to compliment my "beautiful blue eyes."

All in a day's work.

Now, obviously the flattery of European men — from this boot-shaped country in particular — are not exactly rare. And to the sensible

mind, these compliments can be reduced to petty ploys for the contents of my pocketbook.

But I choose confidence. I pick the option of finding delight in a simple comment. Certainly not for the prospect of anything: I'm perfectly happy with the Mr. Mister waiting for me at home.

In fact, each passing day offers more opportunities for internal pride without the help of vocal alpha males.

Learning a difficult recipe, mastering a new flamenco step or acing a midterm all provide me with a boost.

And just a few days ago, I encountered a moment so perfect in its entirety that I can't help but share.

Walking to class in my new black jacket and matching cashmere pashmina, I strolled across a busy street having calculated an oncoming car as far enough away for me to pass safely.

Something in my certainty must have recommended me because waiting at the other side were two women with suitcases who stopped me, asking in Italian for the location of a particular street.

Magically, I not only understood the question but also knew the answer and immediately pointed them in the correct direction.

Absolutely thrilled at being mistaken for a local and for not betraying my secretly limited knowledge of the language, I practically skipped along to class.

By this point, I'm sure you've realized — perhaps with the exception of the outgoing men — that my increasing positivity could easily be duplicated without setting so much as a foot outside of Kirksville.

So, at the risk of sounding like a self-help book or full of formaggio: Choose confidence.

Discover the sexy beast within, and strut proudly.

All the Italians are doing it.

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