

# SAVAGE Pacer



## Depot coffee shop approved

Submitted by Nancy Huddleston on January 17, 2007 - 10:02am.

Local news The Savage City Council unanimously approved a lease agreement with Dan Patch Coffee Depot on Tuesday night (Jan. 16) to open a coffee shop in the old Savage depot in downtown Savage.

Annette Grant, a third-grade teacher at M.W. Savage Elementary, plans to open the coffee shop in late spring/early summer and will not only serve coffee, but also sandwiches, candy and other assorted items.

The Depot is currently being restored through a partnership with the city and the Dan Patch Historical Society. New windows and doors have been installed and the exterior siding is being replaced right now. During the process to take off the old siding, the old paint layers have been discovered. The original color of the depot was red, followed by brown, then gray and then back to brown. When the new siding is painted it will be painted the original color, which has been described as a rusty red.



## Toast to the town

For Annette Grant, the decision to open Dan Patch Coffee Depot has been a leap of faith. She's a third-grade teacher at M.W. Savage Elementary School, is married and she and her husband have two children - something that amounts to a full and busy life. So how'd she get into the coffee business?

According to her, it's been a mix of fate and faith.

Annette has always had a passion for history, and, as a teacher with a classroom in a school bearing the city's namesake, she's embraced it. She's also a strong believer in community and that the people who live in a city need to help one another.

So, when the idea of opening a coffee shop in the old Savage Depot became a topic of conversation, it "lit a fire under me." That fire was fueled by the fact that Annette had been searching for a way to pay back a community that supported her six years ago when she was involved in a bad accident and was seriously injured.

"This community embraced me like no other and I'd like to take this opportunity to embrace them back, to open up a place they can call their own," she said.

"I've seen people come out to serve me and my family in our time of need and it makes life very special," she said. "Making a difference happens one person at a time."

Now, Annette wants to be the person making the difference in others' lives. She envisions the coffee depot as a place that serves a variety of needs in the community - from a gathering place, to a way to learn about history, to a building that provides a focal point for other community events in the historic Hamilton District.

## **Big step**

But before those dreams could be realized, Annette had to step into the business world and convince the city to lease the space to her. That hurdle was achieved this week, when the Savage City Council unanimously approved a five-year lease agreement.

Doors are expected to open in late spring. The city is in the process of finishing restoration work and Annette will be responsible for finishing off the work to the coffee depot space on the inside.

Her rent will add up to \$12,870 per year, but the first six months will be free. Annette is responsible for all operational expenses, utilities and taxes.

"I went into this knowing nothing," she said. "I had no idea what it would take - I didn't know how to put together a business plan."

Annette also made a promise to her family that the endeavor wouldn't throw a monkey wrench into their finances. She's been out promoting the depot with coffee mugs and by developing her own line of candy. And she's found investors who share her dream for the coffee depot.

"It's been a lot of hard work, but not just for me and my family," she said. "Others have shared this dream and want to be a part of it. They've stepped up to help me with many things to help make this business a strong part of this community."

One of those ways is through a collection of custom coffee mugs - which sell for \$28 each. The cups are numbered and afford the buyer special discounts at the coffee depot. Artist Joanne Andreas of Lakeville designed the mugs, which bear the coffee shop's name and a famous picture of Mr. Savage and Dan Patch on the front.

"The mug encompasses all that we're doing with the shop," Annette said. "It is a blend of the past and the present - it involves the depot, Dan Patch, Mr. Savage and Minnesota - so all the bases are covered."

The mugs are being sold at the Razor's Edge Barbershop and Salon on Ottawa Avenue in downtown Savage, via the coffee depot Web site at [www.dpcoffeedepot.com](http://www.dpcoffeedepot.com) or by calling Annette at (952) 445-0000.

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