

INSIDE

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Table Hopping

Coffee singer, psychic to help celebrate 10 years of 3rd Coast

By Gina McIntyre

Kathy Carey loves her job. As co-owner and manager of Chicago's only 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week coffee house, Carey has seen a unique 25-seat venture grow into a big-name, 25-employee operation in the space of 10 years.

The 3rd Coast, 1260 N. Dearborn St., celebrates a decade of serving Chicagoans coffee and meals, on April 7.

"We started with 25 seats and we've grown to 74, so we've tripled in size. The menu was limited. We didn't have a kitchen.

We made eggs espresso on the espresso machine. Now we've grown to a full-service restaurant," Carey said.

The 3rd Coast on Dearborn began serving coffee and light breakfast fare in April 1985, in the lobby of the Tuscany Hotel (now the Claridge). One year later, the shop moved up the block to its present home.

But the 3rd Coast is not just another caffeine center dotting Chicago's North side, Carey said. "We are unique in the city. It's more of a grown-up coffeehouse. We have a varied clientele. We get high school students, business people in the neighborhood, or medical students who come in at 3 a.m. to study. Being open 24 hours makes us unique. It doesn't really feel like a coffeehouse. We get a lot of people who come in for a drink after dinner," Carey said.

In fact, Carey said 10-15 percent of the business comes from alcohol sales, 20 percent from coffee, and the remaining percentage from food.

Gregg Patton, a waiter at the 3rd Coast for eight years, said the coffeehouse is a great place to work. "It's not pretentious. A lot of the same people come in. I know a lot of the regulars by name, and they're nice people to work with," Patton said.

He said his job has afforded him several unique experiences. "I've seen so many crazy things happen here. We do occasionally get celebrities in here, but we try to treat them like regular customers. I waited on Alec Baldwin five days in one week. That was rather unusual," Patton said.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary, the 3rd Coast will host the "Toast the Coast," birthday party, Friday, April 7, with proceeds benefiting the Greater Chicago Food Depository. Beginning at 7 p.m., employees will clear out the tables to make way for a free-form event designed to honor "all things 3rd Coast." Admission is \$10.

Coast co-owners Carey and Ike Eichling will preside over the bash with a burlap-bag ripping, Beaujolais Nouveau-style introduction of the new 10th Anniversary House Blend. Samples from 3rd Coast's new wine list, baby scones and a selection of the coast's most popular appetizers will be served throughout the evening with a background of live music.

Guests will also be invited to join staff behind the coffee bar for one-on-one lessons on how to create perfect cups of espresso and cappuccino, or visitors may participate in a chess and backgammon tournament.

Jorianne the Coffee Psychic will divine the future using an old Hispanic cultural tradition—exam-

ing customers' cups of coffee. "I use a cup of coffee for a crystal ball. I pour half and half into it and watch as the cream develops images. Sometimes I see numbers, letters, faces, body parts, landscapes—all sorts of different things in there. The images can be literal or symbolic for what's going on in the person's life. I also read the steam that comes up from the coffee," she said.

"It [coffee reading] turned out

to be so accurate for me. I think it is more clear. The pictures just come right up in the face of the coffee," Jorianne, who has been a professional coffee-reader for 10 years, said.

Readings are \$40 for 25 minutes, or \$60 for 50 minutes.

Chicago performer/writer/pedicab driver/harmonica player/