

Bridgewater College Welcomes New Starbucks

Considered Since Last Fall

Coffee Shop Opens First Location Outside City

By ERIN FLYNN

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BRIDGEWATER — Bridgewater College students started the fall semester getting their Starbucks fix and they didn't need to drive to Harrisonburg to do it.

On Monday, the first Starbucks in Rockingham County opened its doors to students and community members at the Crimson Cafe inside the Wright-Heritage East Link.

Senior Allie Reaves, 21, of Virginia Beach, was among the more than 120 visitors the Bridgewater College Starbucks saw Monday.

Reaves, who ordered a vanilla bean frappuccino, was pleased by the location, which is near her classes. Before the cafe opened on campus, the closest Starbucks was on Port Republic Road in Harrisonburg. In addition to the Port Road location, there are two Starbucks shops on James Madison University's campus and in-store locations at Target and the Barnes & Noble bookstore.

"It's very convenient because I don't have to drive forever to get to Starbucks," Reaves said.

She admitted the service was a bit slow, but that's something she expects since the cafe just opened.

"Once they get into the swing of things, I'm sure it'll be faster," Reaves said. "It's a learning curve."

The espresso shop was the center of attention on social media this past weekend and as classes began Monday, when the news quickly spread.

"Students have been taking pictures and word is getting around," said Tony Williams, general manager of dining services for Parkhurst Dining.

Bridgewater College spokeswoman Abbie Parkhurst said the institution's Facebook post about the new Starbucks had more than 200 shares.

"That, I think, shows that the demand is there and shows the excitement of the students and the community," Parkhurst said. "We're happy it's been so well-received."

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Heather Hamilton, an employee at Bridgewater College’s Crimson Cafe, serves a Starbucks drink on Monday. This is the first time a Starbucks store has opened outside of Harrisonburg in Rockingham County.

Austin Bachand / DN-R

Starbucks FROM PAGE A3 The college has been considering the idea since last fall, she said. The Seattle-based coffee company’s popularity was the driving force behind opening up the cafe. “ We know that people love it and want it ... so it was something important to bring in,” Parkhurst said. “ We wanted to make sure we were meeting student needs and making them happy.”

The Bridgewater College Starbucks is among several Parkhurst Dining has added throughout Virginia and Pennsylvania. The Homestead, Pa.- based company provides food service for higher education and corporate clients, as well as catering. “ As far as having it on campus and having it in large campuses, it’s becoming very popular,” Williams said. Bridgewater College’s Starbucks not only pleased students, it also got the town’s stamp of approval.

“ We’re very pleased to see Starbucks open at Bridgewater College,” Town Superintendent Jay Litten said in an email. “ Not only is it a great amenity for townspeople, it strengthens the college. And whatever strengthens the college, strengthens us all.”

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