



# Bean Soup

## Entertainment & Stuff

To Bean or not to Bean?

Volume 12 Number 2

April 2008 - June 2008

Free\*

### Dinner at the Bean - Tasteus Maximus

When just opened in 1989, the Vanilla Bean Cafe offered the same menu choices for both lunch and dinner. In 1992, we began to explore dinner specials. Customers enjoyed the variety in the evening and in 1995 we published our first regular dinner menu and hired our first employee solely devoted to dinner. At that time, customers ordered from our regular dinner menu approximately 70% of the time and our specials menu accounted for only 30% of our dinner orders. As the years passed, we became more creative in our specials, focusing on seasonal and locally grown ingredients when available. We also increased our sales price upper threshold, allowing us to present a wider variety of specials. During the past three years, specials have accounted for 72% of our dinner sales leaving 28% from the regular dinner menu. A variety of favorite choices are available on the regular dinner menu while the specials menu items gives our chefs an opportunity to really shine.

**Brett Laffert** is our head chef and has been with us for nearly five years. Since graduating from the New England Culinary Institute in Montpelier, VT, Brett's hard work has paid off and he has become an excellent chef. Brett's work in various fine restaurants alongside top notch chefs has granted him 18 years of diverse restaurant experience. Most recently, Brett

worked as a sous chef in Flora, an Arlington, MA restaurant. Before Flora, he worked in Boston at L'Espalier under the tutelage of chef Frank McClelland. According to Brett, his most valuable experience came from working in Big Sur, CA with chef Craig Von Forester at a restaurant called Sierra Mar located in the Post Ranch Inn. Before moving to CA, Brett spent many years working in various restaurants on Nantucket.

**Laura Friedrich** is our sous chef and has been with us for close to two years. Laura studied culinary arts at Windham Tech and has worked at Stoggy Hollow in Woodstock. Laura cites her most valuable work experience as a sous chef in

the professional kitchen of 176 Main Street, Tavern and Terrace in Keene, NH known in that area as the premiere spot for casual gourmet dining.

Our order-at-the-counter service creates a relaxing evening for our guests. After ordering, guests can create their own pace for their evening. Self-service coffee means no wait for refills. Dessert is available (and tempting) at any time and there is no pressure to finish and leave to make room for other guests. Oh, and the food is really good too!

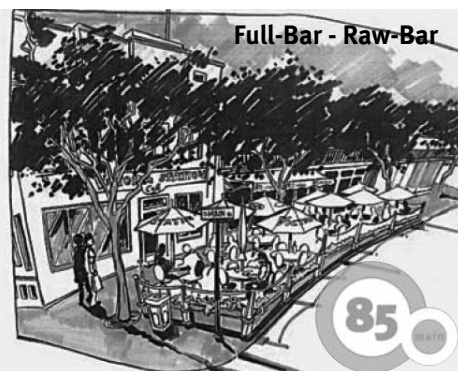


### 2008 Connecticut Magazine Readers' Choice Awards

- \*Best Lunch\* - Windham County
- \*Best Desserts\* - Windham County
- \*Best Outdoor Dining\* - Windham County
- \*Best Vegetarian\* - Windham County

### Our Sister Restaurant

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## The Vanilla Bean Café

Things we would like you to know...

The Vanilla Bean Café opened in 1989 with 16 seats.

The Café is owned by the Jessurun Family.

The Café is open 361 days each year - we close on:

Easter Sunday  
Fourth of July  
Thanksgiving  
Christmas Day

### Business Hours:

Monday	- 7:00 am - 3:00 pm
Tuesday	- 7:00 am - 3:00 pm
Wednesday	- 7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Thursday	- 7:00 am - 8:00 pm
Friday	- 7:00 am - 9:00 pm*
Saturday	- 8:00 am - 9:00 pm*†
Sunday	- 8:00 am - 8:00 pm

\*We may close early during colder months.

†Entertainment night - serving dessert, beer & wine until 10:00 pm.

We offer an extensive selection of beer and wine.

**Bean Soup** is the Café's quarterly newsletter and entertainment guide.

**Stella**, the English Mastiff you may occasionally see around the café, is very social and great with children.

**Web site:** [www.TheVanillaBeanCafe.com](http://www.TheVanillaBeanCafe.com)

**E-mail:** [info@thevanillabeancafe.com](mailto:info@thevanillabeancafe.com)

**Address:** **Corners of Routes 44, 169 & 97  
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**Phone:** **860-928-1562**

**Music booking:** **Maria Sangiolo**  
[maria@thevanillabeancafe.com](mailto:maria@thevanillabeancafe.com)

**Art booking:** **Randy Markes**  
[randy@thevanillabeancafe.com](mailto:randy@thevanillabeancafe.com)

**Bean Soup ads:** **Barry Jessurun**  
[barry@thevanillabeancafe.com](mailto:barry@thevanillabeancafe.com)

## Accolades and Awards

### The New York Times

"The food...is freshly made, well seasoned and extremely tasty."

### The Boston Globe

"...great food - homemade soups, sandwiches, burgers, and the best fish cakes around - in a relaxed atmosphere."

### Yankee Magazine's Travel Guide to New England

"Editors' Pick" 1997, 2003 & 2004

"One of the outstanding reasons to visit New England."

### Connecticut Magazine Readers' Poll

*Windham County - Various years*

Best Family Dining - Best Sandwiches

Best Desserts - Best Business Lunch

Best Vegetarian - Best Outdoor Dining

### Norwich Bulletin - Dining Guide

Food: ★★★★★

Atmosphere: ★★★★★

### The Hartford Courant

"This is a place that serves excellent food and brings in some of the better performers on the New England coffee house circuit..."

"The Vanilla Bean Café in Pomfret is one of those rare places that truly has something for everyone..."

Oh, yes - the food is truly delicious, too."

### The New London Day

★★★

"The soups are homemade and delicious, the sandwiches unusual and served on breads that are positively delicious..."

### www.VisitingNewEngland.com

"the Vanilla Bean Cafe is one of those places you simply don't want to leave."

### www.HiddenBoston.com

"This impossibly funky Connecticut restaurant is full of character (and characters), and is truly in a class by itself."

### Recipient University of Connecticut's Nozko Family Business Leadership Award

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- Irving Wallace



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## April Entertainment

### Friday - 4 - Open Mic



**Host - Bonnie Lee Panda - Feature - Kat Mulvaney** has a strong voice, with a breathy/whispery female John Mayer like quality to it, but she also can let loose and belt it out when she wants to. This, combined with some interesting chord choices, sets her apart.

### Saturday - 5 - Andrew McKnight

Since leaving his corporate engineering career in the mid 1990's, singer, writer and guitarist **Andrew McKnight's** musical journey has traced over miles of blue highways and small towns across the country, crafting his cinematic vignettes of Americans and their landscapes in music, poetry and prose in between 125 performances each year. Wherever McKnight takes the stage, audiences are spellbound and relaxed by his entertaining stories delivered with down home humor, the literary thread connecting his diverse array of songs from his 4 CDs, all wrapped in his warm and supple voice and effortless guitar grace. While he is the first to say that his life's work as a performing songwriter is full of blessings, McKnight is deeply committed to giving something back every day, both individually and collectively with his record labelmates at Falling Mountain Music. He has become a passionate advocate for the preservation of rural heritage and its landscapes, using his words and music to tell those stories with heartfelt reverence. He is one of 50 citizen activists profiled in the pictorial book *SAVING THE BAY: People Working for the Future of the Chesapeake* (Johns Hopkins University Press) in the marble halls of the JFK Center, on a festival stage, or in the intimacy of a house concert, an evening with Andrew McKnight's songs and stories is an experience waiting to be savored like a fine wine by a crackling fire.



### Saturday - 12 - Ninesixteen

**Ninesixteen** is a Pomfret-based band that features music ranging from bluegrass to Badfinger, from Van Morrison to James Taylor, plus original works. Led by keyboardist/vocalist Donna Bessette and drummer/vocalist Andre Bessette, the band also features David Carter on lead guitar, flute and vocals, Putnam native Greg Nichols on rhythm guitar and vocals, Brian Bastow on bass (and one vocal number per gig...it's in his contract), and Patrick McCarthy on lead and backing vocals. The band blends solid musicianship with tight vocal harmonies to create a unique sound among local bands. The group is also the "house band" at Christ Church by the name Living Water.



## April Entertainment

### Saturday - 19 - Jeffrey Foucault

Holed up in Iowa City for the coldest week of the year,



**Jeffrey Foucault** teamed with legendary blues guitar player and producer Bo Ramsey (Greg Brown, Lucinda Williams) to create *Ghost Repeater*, a country and blues album at the crossroads of love and lament, exploring the hopefulness of new love and the seasickness of contemporary

American living. *Ghost Repeaters* are empty radio stations scattered around the country to re-broadcast demographically tailored playlists, endless echoes of American market culture, from thousands of miles away. Epidemic sameness, big-box stores, and the retail news cycle of ghost prisoners and *God on Our Side* create a backdrop against which *Ghost Repeater* unfolds a story of love and uncertainty. There are no declarations to be had here, no easy politics, but the details of living are parsed in a language by turns elegantly plain or vividly abstract, and Foucault circles the heart of each tune warily. Against the broadcast echoes of an America long gone, Foucault lays out the particulars of love in a country contending with its own ghost. In songs of love and empire, dream and memory, *Ghost Repeater* delivers the honesty of country, the raw-boned desperation of blues, and the simplicity of folk to achieve a document that's timeless and poignant. "Jeffrey Foucault is a young man with an old soul, contemporary and timeless." - *The New York Times*

### Saturday - 26 - Jack Hardy

**Jack Hardy** is "a more literate Celtic Townes Van Zandt, grave in his tone and generous in his ideals, as rooted in the present soil and sky of Ireland and America as he is fascinated by the legends of the past" (Roy Kastan, *St. Louis Riverfront Times*, February 3, 1999). It is a strange mix of themes ranging from the American West



to the ballads and jigs of Celtic ancestors that somehow seems to make sense in the musical world Jack Hardy has created. And it is a separate world to which the listener is transported; a timeless place inhabited by tinkers and cowboys, saints and sinners, elves, virgins and crones. From his extensive travels and reading he has forged an endearing non-academic approach to literature, one that is more at home in the pub than in the classroom. "He clearly seems to enjoy making his listeners think. He may dare his audience to figure out what he is saying, but he also credits them with the intelligence to do so" - Tom Nelligan, *Dirty Linen*.

"Luck is a matter of preparation meeting opportunity." - Oprah Winfrey

Linda M. Byrne  
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"Don't cling to your own understanding. Even if you do understand something, you should ask yourself if there might be something you have not fully resolved, or if there may be some higher meaning yet" - Dogen



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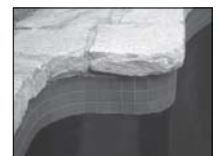
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## May Entertainment

### Friday - 2 - Open Mic



**Host - Bonnie Lee Panda - Feature - Jenny Goodspeed - Under the Ash Tree** is a stunning debut full of verve and honesty ten years in the waiting. As the CD makes its way out into the world, Goodspeed is garnering attention and accolades including a showcase finalist spot in the 2008 Plowshares Songwriting Contest.

### Saturday - 3 - Joel Cage

Since the release of his debut CD Last Hard Road



(1997), **Joel Cage** has exhibited a consistency and dedication one could only attribute to "a true lifer." An extensive touring/performance schedule of 200+ shows a year, along with Joel's candid one-on-one approach to audience commu-

nique' has yielded an ever-growing fan/friend constituency that spans the country. "With husky, heart-felt vocals and an aggressive acoustic guitar style reminiscent of Steve Stills, his performances offer more than the standard bill-of-fare of most folk singers, and more musicality and sensitivity than your average rock band. Somewhere in between, with a comprehensive knowledge of both, Joel Cage's performances are both powerfully energetic, and subtly moving. He is evocative, mesmerizing, and totally musical, a showman with miles of experience behind him, and an honesty that is truly engaging." - *Black Mountain News, NC.*

### Saturday - 10 - Tony Bird

With a mesmerizing intensity, a unique voice, vision, guitar style and persona, Malawi born songman **Tony Bird** is a complete original. Growing up in southern Africa in the era of colonialism and Apartheid, Bird developed a sharp, conscious universal eye with an expansive repertoire, ranging from topical and historical commentary to love songs, musical tone poems and exotic travelogues that roam from bushmen to bicycles. Tony Bird has been called "The Father of African Folk-Rock." Yet, he is even more. He's an inventive, passionate and theatrical performer who delivers the moving, searching anthems of a mature poet. The extraordinary experience of a Bird concert is not to be missed. "The finest, most impressive folk poet in years" - *The Village Voice.*



*"One should guard against preaching to young people success in the customary form as the main aim in life. The most important motive for work in school and in life is pleasure in work, pleasure in its result, and the knowledge of the value of the result to the community."* - *Albert Einstein*

*"I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends."  
- Abraham Lincoln*

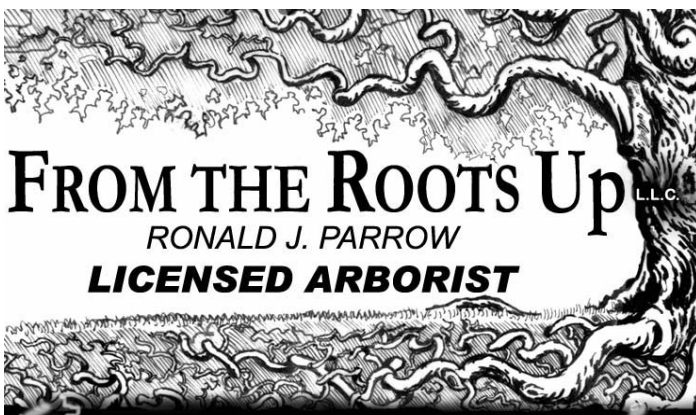
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## May Entertainment

### Saturday - 17 - Grass Routes

Performing on the New England bluegrass scene for 27 years, **Grass Routes** has appeared on radio and television and has pleased audiences at concerts, coffeehouses, festivals and many other venues in the Northeast. The band features the traditional bluegrass instruments of banjo, mandolin, fiddle, guitar and upright bass. Grass Routes performs a broad repertoire of songs ranging from straight-ahead traditional bluegrass to more contemporary folk and country material.



### Saturday - 24 - Steve Tilston

**Steve Tilston** is a celebrated British singer-songwriter, winning as much praise for his superb guitar playing as his songwriting and vocal style. His canon of work is widely recognized within the world of folk and contemporary music throughout Europe, Australia and the USA. Born in Liverpool and raised in the Midlands of England, Steve has been ploughing his own artistic furrow, turning out quality albums since the early 1970s. From a career that spans more than thirty years, some of Tilston's best known songs include, "The Slip Jigs & Reels", "The Naked Highwayman" and "Here's To Tom Paine" (adopted recently by The Tom Paine Society Of America as its theme song.) Tilston songs have been recorded by Fairport Convention and Dolores Keane, amongst other fine artists. tary work.



### Saturday - 31 - Atwater-Donnelly Trio

The much acclaimed, internationally recognized folk duo, Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly present delightful programs of traditional American and Celtic folk songs, a capella pieces, hymns, dance tunes, and original works. Elwood and Aubrey blend gorgeous and unusual harmonies and play guitar, Appalachian mountain dulcimer, mandolin, tin whistle, harmonica, banjo, bones, spoons, limberjacks, and other surprises including Appalachian clog dancing. Joining Aubrey and Elwood is Cathy Clasper-Torch, a remarkable fiddler, cellist and vocalist who, in a word, blends. Cathy contributes a deeply rich third dimension and mastery, knowing just where to add an exquisite cello line, an exuberant burst of old-time fiddle, and a third and utterly unique voice. Thus the **Atwater-Donnelly Trio**.





**Celebrations**  
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## June Entertainment

### Friday - 6 - Open Mic



**Host - Bonnie Lee Panda - Feature - Larry Zarella** - His songs have been used on television, compilation cd's and featured on Boston's WUMB folk radio. Larry is quickly becoming recognized as a top notch performing songwriter, often sharing the stage with the legendary Bill Staines. "Larry is a great songwriter, not only are his lyrics and melodies compelling, on top of that, he has something worthwhile to say." - Bill Staines.

### Saturday - 7 -

### Dave Potts and Jud Caswell

A singer/songwriter with a gift for melody and a poet's eye for detail, **Dave Potts** crafts contemporary folk songs with shades of country and Americana, infused with Southern charm. It is the combination of his music and humorous, poker-faced stage presence, however, that defines Dave as an artist. His engaging live shows have established him in the house concert and listening room venues of the modern folk scene where he continues to develop a loyal following throughout the country. Dave Potts is, he deadpans, a seriously funny guy. Whether reflecting the world through the eyes of a career minor league ballplayer or the spouse of a soldier overseas, Dave brings his stories to life with what Dirty Linen Magazine calls "lines that will tug at even the most jaded heart." Vivid story-teller, accomplished guitarist, and gripping entertainer with a smooth, flannel voice, Dave Potts is indeed many things. As his t-shirts wryly proclaim, Dave is "Always in style, breathtakingly handsome, He's good folk."

**Jud Caswell** lives where the two Maines meet: where ex-hippies play cribbage with fishermen and a kind of rural poetry is salted with Yankee gumption. He grew up on a little farm in Morrill, Maine, picking carrots and milking goats; listening to records by Cat Stevens and the Beatles, reading Mark Twain and Kahlil Gibran. A multi-instrumentalist from an early age, he wandered through jazz bands, orchestras and medieval ensembles before finding his home on the acoustic guitar. Heralded by Sing Out! magazine as "one of the leading singer-songwriters on the current scene," Jud has won eight nationally recognized songwriting contests, including the Dave Carter Memorial, Boston Folk Festival, and Kerrville New Folk contests. His song "Blackberry Time" is being taught in the songwriting curriculum at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Jud is currently supporting the release of his latest CD, "Blackberry Time," released in 2007.



## June Entertainment

### Saturday - 14 - The Generators

This is not your average blues band. The four members of **The Generators** have the good sense and taste to throw funk, soul and rock into the mix to keep things interesting. Individually they have toured nationally with artists as diverse as Ben Orr (of the Cars), Must, Johnny A., The Joshua Tree and Heavy Metal Horns. Their eclectic tastes give them the ability to capture the soul and grit of early R&B while keeping an ear to the present and future. At a Generators show, you'll hear some great obscure 50s rock 'n' roll, 60s soul and 70s funk, and beefed-up arrangements of classic blues numbers.

### Sunday - 21 - The Starlings

Led by the magnetic harmonies and songwriting of Joy Mills and Tom Parker, **The Starlings** produce lyrics and vocals are all at once wistful and fierce, haunting and soothing. Their approach is contemporary and inventive, inspired by the classics of country, folk and Appalachia. Guitar, banjo, harmonica and mandolin give front porch flavors to the songs, while Aimee Zoe Tubbs and Jack Quick provide the solid and stylish foundation on drums and bass, respectively, as well as backing vocals. Elemental themes create The Starlings' solid repertoire – from a pin-dropping ballad to a foot-stomping barnburner, their images linger - empty boxcars, twilight on the prairie, divining rods, river beds, the long drive home, and an underlying wonder at the mystery of it all. "The Starlings hark back to an earlier, simpler time, when folks gathered on front porches with mandolins and harmonicas, singing away the day in dusty twilight."

### Saturday - 28 - Mad Agnes

**Mad Agnes** is not one person, but three, and they're mad in only the most inventive way. Margo Henebach, Adrienne Jones and Mark Saunders stir up elements of classical and folk, cross singer/songwriter poignancy with street-theatre smarts and infuse it all with courageous harmonies, complex counterpoint and rich storytelling in a powerful live performance. Their lyrics are intelligent, their delivery warm, and insightful. Not surprisingly, each has arrived at the trio from a long list of solo accomplishments. Their lyrics, vocal intricacies and instrument prowess make their music "music for thinking people." They've been called genre-bending - with classical, rock and old-world backgrounds they play everything from contemporary original to madrigals, to Celtic traditionals, to harmony-driven folk pop.



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- Zig Ziglar

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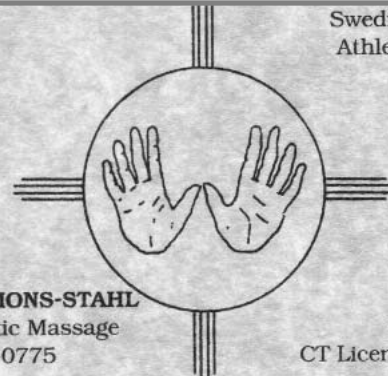
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*- Mary Kay Ash*

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## Weekend Breakfast

A full breakfast menu is served Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 am - 12:00 noon. We offer a variety of specials including Chipotle Benedict, English Bangers with Mushroom Gravy and Pumpkin Spice Pancakes. We use only 100% maple syrup and top-quality bacon. ☺

## Dinner at The Bean

We are open for dinner Wednesday - Sunday nights. Each night we run four or five dinner specials. Recent items include: Pan-seared Red Snapper, Baked Cod Provencal, Wild Mushroom Ravioli and Maple Glazed Scallops. We offer a truly quality dinner at a great price, in a warm and friendly atmosphere. If you haven't tried us for dinner yet, it's time you did. ☺

## The Artwork Gallery

The Café displays artwork by local artists year round. The shows are one or two months in duration. Some shows have openings and some do not. Most of the artwork is for sale and often prices are listed with the piece or on a list located in the room.

**One hundred percent of the sale price goes to the artist.**

April - Gilly Gordon

May - Tom Menard

June - New England Artist Guild ☺

## Entertainment

The Café is on the National Folk Music Circuit and attracts talent from all over the United States, drawing mainly New England performers. The majority of the shows are on Saturday night and start at 8:00 pm. The Open Mic night is the first Friday of each month. During the shows we separate our listening room from the tiled dining room and the kitchen with a theatre curtain. This helps keep the music in and the kitchen noise out. ☺

## On-Site WiFi

We provide complimentary wireless internet service. Bring your lap top to the Café, search for available networks and log on. Get a little work done or check your mail while you eat lunch! ☺

Gilly's Art

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adults & kids  
in  
painting, drawing,  
mixed media



1 mile from the Vanilla Bean

Gilly Gordon 974-1140

## The Café Cash Card

Our Café Cash Cards are always available for purchase at the register. This card works just like the popular gift cards available in most stores today. The Café Cash Card makes a great gift for friends and family members and is ideal for students at the local



schools. Purchase a card in any amount and it can be used to purchase any item on our menu. Also, you can add to your card balance at

any time. As a bonus, we give you an additional 10% when you purchase \$100.00 or more. This is our way of thanking our frequent diners (and people who don't mind paying in advance). With our register system, you must have your gift card with you in order to make a purchase, so carry it with you all the time!

*"Caring can be learned by all human beings, can be worked into the design of every life, meeting an individual need as well as a pervasive need in society."* - Mary Catherine Bateson

## Our Pricing Practices

**1. Sales Tax Included** - Our prices include the 6% Connecticut Sales Tax. The prices listed on the menu are exactly what you pay. Our prices may seem to be inflated; however, a \$8.50 menu item is actually \$8.02 + \$.48 sales tax. Furthermore, this practice makes it easier for the customer, especially if that customer is a child who has exact change for a cookie. What you see is exactly what you pay - what could be simpler?

**2. Not Market Standard Pricing** - We are not trying to fool the customer into thinking that \$7.95 is less expensive than \$8.00. We find this type of pricing insulting to our customers. However, the reason it is used so extensively around the nation is that it works effectively. We don't like that practice, and we also like to believe that our clientele is not so easily fooled.

**3. No Pennies, Dimes or Nickels** - Because our prices include tax and we do not price in the standard way, we do not have to use pennies, dimes or nickels. This is a service to both the customer and to us. We don't give you lots of change, and we only have to use quarters and fifty-cent pieces. This also helps our staff to be more efficient performing transactions, which saves time and money. An added bonus is that we don't have to count change at the end of the business day.

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- Mark Victor Hansen

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*"I can't do it" never yet accomplished anything: "I will try" has accomplished wonders."* - George P. Burnham



## Bear Soup

is an information and entertainment newsletter published by The Vanilla Bean Café.

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