

TASTE

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Meg Enns is co-owner of the Filling Station, a coffee shop in a building that used to be a service station. The shop's logo combines a fuel gauge and cup.

BARBARA HADDOCK TAYLOR: SUN STAFF

Falls Road coffee shop stirs strong interest

By KATHY HUDSON
SPECIAL TO THE SUN

Meg Enns distinctly remembers the summer morning a year ago when she went to buy produce and noticed a "for rent" sign on the old stone filling station at the intersection of Falls and Shawan roads. She immediately pictured a coffee shop at this busy junction.

"But I said to myself, 'Don't do it. Don't do it. Get it out of your mind,'" says Enns.

For a few days she didn't say a word to anyone about what she envisioned. A Florida native, she had been in Maryland only six months and had just been

laid off from her job at an Internet company.

She had already operated a successful coffee shop in Atlanta, where she had lost her lease just before the 1996 Summer Olympics. For four years afterward, she had lived in New York and traveled all over the country as tour manager for the jazz trio Medeski Martin and Wood. She wanted stability. She was fighting the idea of having her own business again, but finally, she had a friend, Mary Kremzner, call the number on the sign.

"When I saw it, I knew it was her destiny," remembers Kremzner, who has known Enns 15 years. "She flourishes when she is her own boss. I saw her shop in Atlanta. ... She has an amazing way of creating a unique environment that is warm and inviting."

Three months later, with Kremzner's financial support and partnership, and

Filling Station offers fuel for body

design and construction help from friends and family all over the country, Enns opened her coffee shop, the Filling Station, on Falls Road.

With a logo that combines a fuel gauge and coffee cup, the Filling Station is the perfect name for a business in a 1938 building that was just that. For 50 years it was a service station, but since 1978, a series of other businesses, including a florist and a laundry and dry-cleaning company, have leased the site.

Sturdy gray tables and chairs fill the shady portico where cars once pulled up to the pumps. An old gasoline nozzle by the green coffee shop door says, "Gas Pumps Open."

"I fuel up every day," says horse trainer Elise Boyce of Sparks, who stops in for breakfast. "This is the best coffee around." Boyce is one of a growing number of regulars who [See Station, 4F]