

# People answers call open coffee shop with Christian flavor

PH FRIEDMAN

Herald staff writer

Teena Stewart understands the coffee shop mantra — It's not just coffee. It's a lifestyle. "I'd like to see people get \$4 for a cup of coffee and then they could use the money for themselves for coffee, reading, or a gift card to you name it. The line wasn't just at the bottom of a mountain, it was at the top."

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ans, if you will.

The idea started two years ago and "continued to brew until we came to the decision that we really should stop talking about it and act on what we felt called to do," Teena said.

The Stewarts made a radical decision "after much prayer and soul searching," Teena said.

### Leap of faith

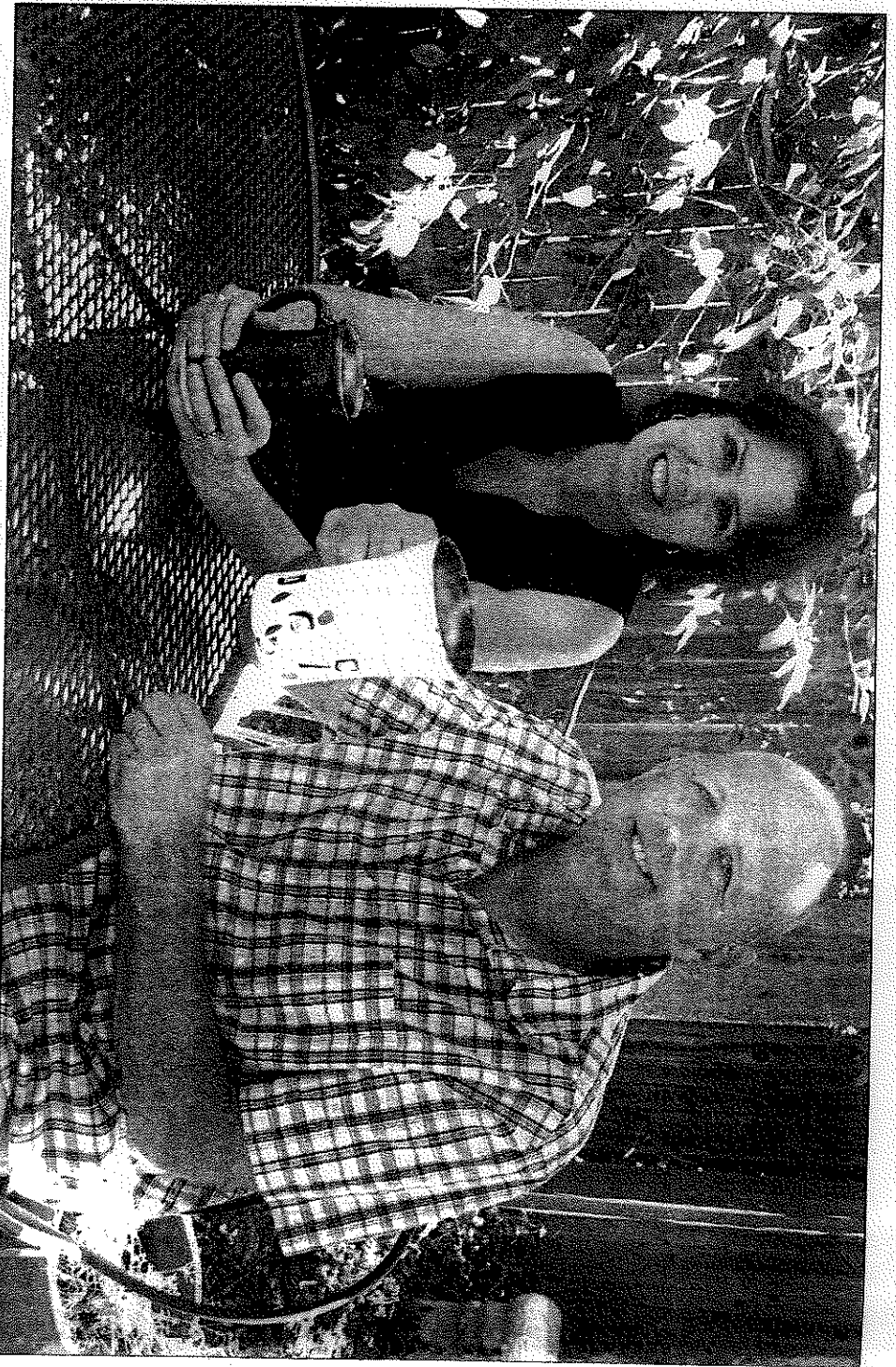
They're selling their Benicia home and using the money to start a coffee shop ministry in North Carolina.

With the drop in housing, they expect to have enough money for the business start-up and are raising funds for living expenses, insurance, cost of moving and more to survive on until the shop gets on its feet.

November is the target date for departure.

Though Teen actually prefers tea and caramel apple cider, Jeff is an avid coffee consumer.

"We envision a shop where delicious coffee and a warm inviting environment are the main draw and where people



TEENA AND JEFF STEWART will leave everything behind in Benicia to start a Christian coffeehouse in Hickory, N.C. Courtesy photo

can linger, learn, and latch on to Christian principles," said Teena, the church's administrative assistant.

The Stewarts will be on hand to provide customers with prayer support, and small group options, including recovery groups.

They also plan to offer guest musicians and "spiritual formation" classes to help people face life's

challenges.

Teena, a recent author ("Successful Small Groups: From Concept to Practice") and accomplished magazine writer,

said she and her husband are toying with "Java Journey" as the name of their shop.

"But it could change," she said, noting that "a lot of people think we are buying a shop but the

actual shop doesn't exist yet. We are planning to start from scratch."

Calling Benicia "a wonderful little town," Teena said the cost of living is taking its toll. So they're willing to uproot, leaving one adult child in Benicia and another in Fremont, and start anew.

And if it doesn't work? "We're not even going to think about that right

now," Teena said. "We believe it will succeed with good planning and preparation and we strongly feel God leading us in this."

The Stewarts' pending new home isn't much bigger than Benicia — Hickory, N.C., with a 40,000 population.

"It's known best for all its furniture factories," Teena said.