

# Seniors' taste buds pick favorite brew of coffee

## O'Henry's crafts blend for Sommerby

By **BOB CARLTON**  
*News staff writer*

**A**t his retirement community in Alpharetta, Ga., Neil Propst has a couple of cups of coffee with breakfast and another at lunch.

As a judge in a taste-testing Thursday at O'Henry's Coffees roasting plant in Homewood, Propst got to help pick the coffee he and other residents of Sommerby Senior Living facilities around the South soon will be sipping.

"It's a different idea that they've come up with to let residents have some say in their coffee," Propst said. "That's a novel idea."

Sommerby, which has retirement communities in Birmingham, Mobile, Alpharetta and Mount Pleasant, S.C., has partnered with O'Henry's to come up with a special

Sommerby Blend that will be available exclusively at the Sommerby facilities, both by the cup and by the bag.

The idea is the inspiration of Al Worthington, a coffee drinker, O'Henry's fan and, oh by the way, the CEO of Dominion Partners, the parent company of Sommerby Senior Living.

"Coffee is a drink for talking and sharing things," Worthington said. "In the senior living world, we have a lot of time to sit and talk and enjoy each other."

"Daughters come to visit their mothers, and I was just thinking that would be such a neat opportunity to have a special blend of coffee."

Worthington went to O'Henry's owner Randy Adamy with his idea, and Adamy liked it, too.

O'Henry's already roasts a special Bulldog Blend for Samford University and a Daily Grind for Red Mountain Bank, Adamy said, but creating a coffee for a senior-living facility is a first for his company.

The new Sommerby at St. Vincent's One Nineteen fa-

cility in Hoover, which opened in August, also includes an O'Henry's coffee bar, complete with signs and O'Henry's signature gooseneck lamps.

So on Thursday, a panel of five Sommerby residents and two soon-to-be residents sampled five coffees, scoring them on a scale of zero to five — zero being "imperceptible" and five being "highly pronounced."

Adamy was surprised by their unanimous selection — a darker roast that didn't fit what he earlier called "the senior taste profile."

"It is the most complex of the five coffees," Adamy told the judges. "What surprised me the most is it is also the darkest roast of the five coffees you tasted."

Birmingham's Bob Dillman, who judged with his wife, Jacque, said Adamy shouldn't be so surprised that seniors like their coffee strong, too.

"When I make coffee at home," Dillman said, "I usually make it stronger than anybody likes it."

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E-MAIL: [bcarlton@bhamnews.com](mailto:bcarlton@bhamnews.com)



A scorecard and sample sit on a table. Sommerby, which has retirement communities around the South, partnered with O'Henry's to come up with a Sommerby Blend.

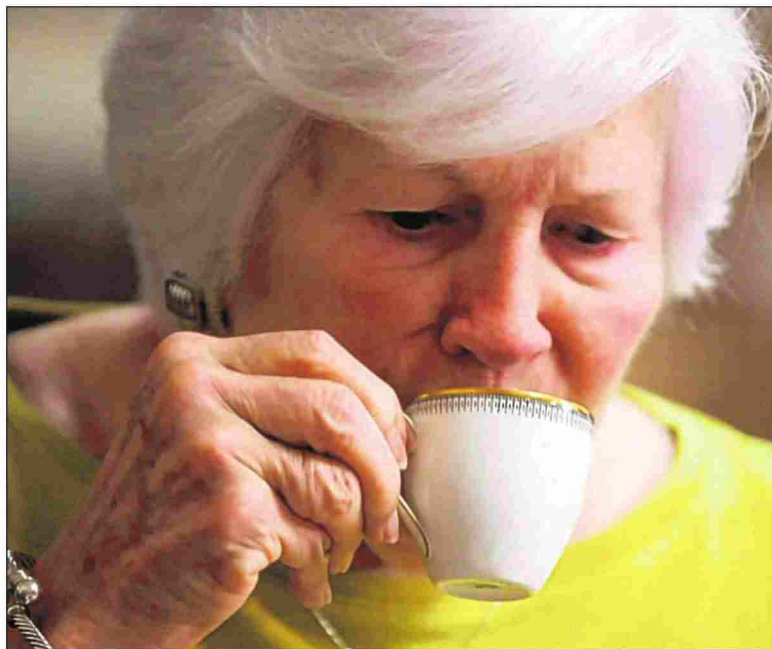




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Marilyn Hart of Mobile tests a cup of O'Henry's with her nose before she tests with her taste buds. Residents of Somerby Senior Living facilities tried five coffees Thursday at the company's roasting plant in Homewood.

Stella Bryant of Birmingham samples one of the O'Henry's coffees Thursday.



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