



# JUMBLE SCHOOLHOUSE CAFE

BY RICH BELMONT

City of Asbury residents used to say their City Hall and Police Department was located in Iowa's oldest one room schoolhouse. That school was established in 1845 and continuously operated as a teaching institution until its closing in 1968.

Now the Asbury citizens can say they have the only coffee shop in a one room schoolhouse in Iowa or maybe even in the whole country!



When co-owners George Nauman and Cheri Kalb were riding through Asbury two years ago they discovered the City of Asbury had listed the schoolhouse for sale. They immediately knew it would be a great location

for the second Jumble Coffee Company Drive-Through. They also had some fabulous ideas on how they could maintain the historical significance of the building.

George is the original owner of the Jumble Coffee Drive-Through on Wacker Drive in Dubuque. He established that business in 2010. Both George and Cheri are from Dubuque. Cheri has owned and operated several businesses around the area since 1988. She was also George's very first coffee customer when he opened Jumble Coffee Co.

After the new owners purchased the building they took about eight months to do extensive renovations. They added kitchen equipment and a coffee air roaster you can watch doing its thing if you want to go inside the building early in the morning. George and Cheri hand made the service counters, tables, booths and even the interior barn doors themselves.

In an effort to preserve the school's history many artifacts are on display:

- Original floor boards used for the frames in the menu board and bulletin board.
- Rope from the original bell cord
- Louvers taken from the bell tower during the 2016 renovation
- A shelf using original wooden pullies from the bell tower

The bell tower was restored to the way it looked in 1845. The school bell is original and has been oiled and weatherproofed. If you make a one dollar donation you get to ring the bell. All the money collected is donated to the Asbury Community Volunteer Fire Department.



When you are checking out the interesting décor you will observe a crazy double "F" in several places. No, your eyes are not playing tricks on you. This is the Jumble logo and simply depicts the two f's in coffee (even though one of them is backwards).

First and foremost Jumble Coffee Company is a drive-through coffee specialty company. That's why the drive-through lane can easily hold up to 18 cars.

Coffee is professionally brewed by experts. Only Fair Trade Organic coffee beans are used. They are supplied in 150 pound burlap bags. Every morning small 5 pound batches of coffee beans are roasted to a medium to dark roast. The beans are a blend from 3 distinct coffee growing origins.



The coffee is roasted in a fluid bed air roaster. The beans move consistently in a chamber of hot air at a strictly controlled temperature so every bean is roasted uniformly. The bean hulls are extracted from the chamber resulting in a cleaner, smoother, mellower, never bitter tasting coffee.



George Nauman, Cheri Kalb, and Jarod Schroeder



The water for brewing is charcoal filtered and only Americano pours are used. Americano brewing means extracting coffee using espresso machines instead of drip brewers. This insures each individual cup of coffee is made from fresh grounds and is precisely brewed just before serving. Whole bean coffee can be purchased in ½ pound and 1 pound bags.



Of course Jumble offers a whole assortment of Specialty Drinks. Some of my favorites are:

Turtle Mocha – chocolate, white chocolate, caramel and walnuts

White Razz Mocha – white chocolate and raspberry

Black Forest – chocolate, black cherry and almond

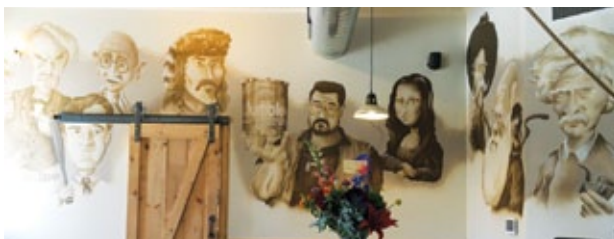
German Chocolate – chocolate, coconut and caramel

Yes, all these drinks have a lot of chocolate in them but that's just me. There are other drinks like the Caramel Macchiato with vanilla and caramel drizzled for you non-chocolate type people.



You can order pastries, breakfast and lunch items through the drive-through window. But you will find these are so good you might want to enjoy them inside. That's why there are about 12 parking spaces. These are also needed for all the kids

(and adults) who want to explore the tree house wrapped around a giant Birch tree next to the schoolhouse.



When you visit the schoolhouse see if you can guess the names of all the faces on the wall. George and Cheri commissioned Dubuque Artist Adam L. Eikamp to paint the mural. Here are some clues to the faces going from left to right:

1. The electric light bulb next to his head should tell you who this is
  2. An actor born in Cedar Rapids, IA appearing in *Office Space* and *Band of Brothers*
  3. He employed nonviolent civil disobedience in India
  4. French Canadian who mined lead in the area
  5. A Vietnam Veteran bowler in the movie *The Big Lebowski*
  6. This woman is in a famous painting by Leonardo de Vinci
  7. An American scout and bison hunter born in Le Claire, IA
  8. English naturalist and geologist and author of *On the Origin of Species*
  9. Author of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. His pen name means mark two signifying two fathoms or 12 feet water depth safe for navigation
- (Answers are listed at the end of this article).

Most of the food specialties are baked in house. Baking begins at 5:30 am and pastries and breakfast items are available from 6:30am until all gone. Jumble serves lunch items starting at 11:00 am.



The Scones and Muffins are delicious and the Soufflés, Breakfast Burritos and Bagel Bombs are just awesome. I have had both the Sausage and the Black bean made-from-scratch burritos and they are excellent!

There are currently two soufflés: Bacon, Egg & Swiss or Spinach & Artichoke. They are perfect breakfast dishes.



Courtney Thill, Jinty Montocchio, and Elena Fox



The Bagel Bomb is outstanding! This sounds like a bagel sandwich but it is way more wonderful than that. Cheri's own recipe for a type of bagel dough is handmade and baked into a roll. Then it is stuffed with bacon, cream cheese, brown sugar and cheddar cheese or it's stuffed with sun dried tomato, red bell peppers and green onions. I recommend either of these to everybody I know.



There are two soups available for lunch. They change daily so here are only a few examples: White Poblano Cream, Broccoli Cheese, Chicken Tortilla, Creamy Potato and Sausage, and Cream of Chicken and Rice.

Every soup I have tried has been splendid and has been especially satisfying with a half of Panini sandwich.



Ah yes, the Panini! There are currently two of them on the menu and they are both tremendous. The Walter is made with delicious pulled fire roasted chicken, Muenster cheese, bacon, diced apples and raspberry. The Mona Lisa is made with

tomato, basil, fresh mozzarella and balsamic. These Panini can be customized to your liking!

There is also an unusual Mac N' Cheese made with white cheddar and asiago cheese. What a great cheese combination!

Now I know Cheri must read my column because she even has dessert! You can order a great Root Beer Float made with Amana Millstream Root Beer on tap. Better yet, try my new favorite dessert, the Crownie! This is Cheri's specialty and she calls it the best of both worlds: a combination brownie and cookie.

Jumble Schoolhouse Café has also assembled an exceptional staff of helpful, friendly and thoroughly trained baristas and bakers. I have not met everybody but I have known some of them for a long time including Jarod Schroeder and Courtney Thill. A couple I have just met include Elena Fox, who is a family member and Jinty Montocchio who recently came here from South Africa.



Once you visit Jumble you will be back again and again. So remember to use your Jumble Coffee Punch Card which is good at both the Wacker Drive and Asbury Road locations. You will also want your friends to know you are a big fan so check out the T-shirts and Hats for sale, too.

George and Cheri say there is enough chaos in the world so they invite you to visit their simple coffeehouse: Simple in a Jumbled World.

The people on the mural from left to right are: 1. Thomas Edison, 2. Ronald Livingston, 3. Mahatma Gandhi, 4. Julien Dubuque, 5. Walter Sobchak—character played by John Goodman, 6. Mona Lisa, 7. Buffalo Bill Cody, 8. Charles Darwin, 9. Samuel Langhorne Clemens aka Mark Twain.

## JUMBLE SCHOOLHOUSE CAFE

4945 ASBURY ROAD, ASBURY, IA 52002  
563-284-3870

**Hours:** Mon–Fri: 6:30 AM–4 PM;  
Sat: 7 AM–4 PM; Sun: 8 AM–2 PM

**Dining Style:** Come as you are. Drive-Through or eat-in

**Recommendations:** Coffees, Specialty Drinks, Smoothies, Breakfast Burritos, Scones, Muffins, Soufflés, Bagel Bombs, Panini, Soups, Crownie

**Liquor Service:** None

**Price:** \$2–\$8.50

**Pay Options:** Cash, Debit, All Credit Cards, No Checks

**Accessibility:** Front Door and Restroom

**Kids Policy:** No Menu, Highchair available

**Reservations:** No • **Catering:** No

**Take Out:** Yes • **Delivery:** No • **Parking:** Private Lot