

Business Journal

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APRIL 2009

The Business
of Beauty



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What recession? Beauty businesses are adjusting and adapting to the economy

By **Carlie Kollath**
BUSINESS JOURNAL

Not every industry is feeling the economic downturn.

"Our business is pretty much recession-proof," said Betsy Christian, a sales rep at State Beauty Supply in Tupelo. "It's the one thing that women are not going to give up."

State Beauty Supply sells professional haircare lines such as Redken and Matrix to salons and licensed cosmetologists within an 80-mile radius. Christian said she hasn't seen any change in sales volume or the types of products that are purchased.

And salon traffic is trucking along as well.

"Our business is still good," said Alice Bethay, owner of the upscale Alice & Co. salon in Oxford. "I have been wondering every day when it might begin tapering off a bit. But so far, I haven't seen it."

She added that hair coloring remains the most popular service. It also is the salon's most expensive service, ranging from \$85 to \$200.

In addition, she hasn't seen a slow-

down in manicures, pedicures, facials or waxing at her 19-year-old business.

"I can't complain," she said. "I'm going to think positive until I'm proven wrong. I think salons will be OK."

Stretching appointments

One trend in area salons is that some clients are trying to stretch their appointment times a little further.

Some of the usual clients that come in every four weeks are now "six weekers," said Shelly Harsin, co-owner of Head Over Heels Salon in Tupelo.

Bethay has noticed some of Alice & Co.'s clients are getting a haircut in between two hair coloring services. Usually, Bethay said the clients would get a cut and color at each appointment. But, she said the number of clients cutting back is small enough that her salon hasn't been impacted.

Sarah McDonald, owner of Creative Touch Day Spa and Salon, said the salon this year hasn't posted the record growth seen in previous years, but "we're holding steady from last

year, which we feel is a success."

She said the salon also picked up a lot of business during spring break. Clients, she said, did staycations and opted for spa services instead of an out-of-town trip with a higher price tag.

"They felt they were saving money and we were the recipients of that," McDonald said.

This month kicks off her busiest quarter of the year, when clients come in for pedicures and maintenance services. She has been encouraging her employees to do "anything you can do to make the service extra nice."

An example would be a makeup touchup for regular clients after a haircut. It's not a new practice for the salon, McDonald said, but with the economy, she wants her employees "to be more conscious that it is a choice and people have chosen to spend their money with us."

"We want it to be as relaxing as it is functional," she said. "Sometimes people choose this to be their one outing."

Harsin also is focusing on appreciating regular customers. Head Over

Heels in February launched a customer rewards card that gives clients \$15 toward a hair service for every \$150 spent.

She's also making sure the products and lines in the salon match up with price points the customers will pay. The salon recently added a more moderately priced line that offers a \$10 shampoo in addition to the higher end \$15.50 bottle.

"You have to maybe change some of your lines and professional products," she said. "You may like them, but if you're not selling them you have to change."

But overall, Harsin, like the area salon owners, sees a bright future for the industry in spite of the recession as long as the businesses stay competitive and in touch with their customers' wants and needs.

McDonald added, "I just feel we're really blessed to be in this area because I don't think this area has been hit as hard as some of the other areas."

Contact Carlie Kollath at (662) 678-1598 or carlie.kollath@journal.com.

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Beauty boutique owners offer up sales advice

■ **Scott and Sherry Reese rely on free samples and gifts with purchase to keep business thriving.**

By **Carlie Kollath**
BUSINESS JOURNAL

TUPELO – You have to spend money to make money, at least according to two beauty store owners.

Scott and Sherry Reese own Beauty Motif in downtown Tupelo. The store sells professional cosmetics and skin care products. Popular lines include bareMinerals, Murad, Kiss My Face, Mario Badescu, Go Smile and md formulations.

The couple also owns a beauty store and skin care spa in Tallahassee that sells similar products.

The professional lines come with higher prices than products sold at mass, so the husband and wife team say they have to work a little harder during a recession to convince consumers to part with more money for their beauty regiments.

Their secret weapon: samples.

"Samples lead to sales," said Scott Reese.

Sherry Reese said most of the lines

the beauty store carries are "pretty generous" with providing cosmetic and skin care samples. Yet, the Reeses said they find it's a good investment to buy extra samples.

"I like for everybody to walk out with something," Sherry Reese said. "If they come back and buy, that's good. If they don't, they left with a good impression and they know that if they need something they can come back."

She said no one ever asks for samples.

"So many people are actually surprised and thankful when they get them," Sherry Reese said.

Her preference is that people try the products before they buy them. It helps them pinpoint what they need and cuts down on returns, Scott Reese said.

Customers like gifts

Along with samples, the Beauty Motif owners rely on promotions to drive sales.

The most effective promotion, Sherry Reese said, is a gift with purchase.

Sometimes the gift is a mystery and other times the consumer knows what it will be in advance.

Sherry Reese said the trick is to offer

Driving beauty sales

- Give free samples to everyone who walks in your door.
- Give free gifts with purchases.
- Have in-store educational events.
- Offer free shipping on orders over a certain dollar amount.
- Have meaningful sales.
- Make each customer feel special.

a beauty-related gift that is a good value. For example, a recent promotion gave customers a free anti-aging Murad sample kit if they spent \$70 on Murad products.

The Reeses said another good promotion in the beauty industry is in-store events where educators from top lines such as Bare Escentuals will fly in and teach customers about the products and how to use them.

Scott Reese said it's also important to have meaningful sales.

"We try not to have the sale that never ends," he said.

He said they have three or four big sales each year to get a large volume of sales traffic. The rest of the year, they count on refills to keep the business going.

And so far, the two-year-old business is making it. Sales last month were higher than March 2008 sales. Yet, there are slow times.

Sherry Reese said she hasn't seen any of her customers do without foundation and lipstick, but she has noticed that they are doing without extra purchases. Scott Reese said part of the battle in the beauty industry is finding the right products that resonate with customers, and he thinks the store has done that with the popular mineral makeup line bareMinerals.

Sherry Reese said, "People get more emotional about how their skin looks than which laundry detergent to use. It's very personal ... Ten women can walk in the door and there will be 10 different solutions."

She said compared to other industries, the beauty sector has extremely high expectations from customers and they want results. They want to solve their skin and makeup problems and they want to enjoy the process, she said.

Added Scott Reese: "Our job, as far as I'm concerned, is when somebody walks through that door, we want them to feel special. We want our people to feel good about their visit as a whole."



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'FULL TO CAPACITY'

Beauty schools say they are busy because hair cuts and coloring services are now considered 'necessities' by consumers

Carlie Kollath

BUSINESS JOURNAL

BOONEVILLE – Owners of area cosmetology schools say they are “busier than ever” preparing students to make the world a more beautiful place, one person at a time.

They say they aren't seeing the economy hit their industry as much as it has hurt others.

“Our school is full to capacity and we have a waiting list,” said Sherry Prather, owner of the Booneville Academy of Cosmetology.

Mississippi requires licenses for cosmetology professionals such as hair stylists and manicurists. The cosmetology license requires 1,500 hours of training through an approved program before a person can work in the field.

Prather currently has 28 students who range in age from 17 to early 50s. Some went to college for a year and found it didn't work for them. Others were laid off and are looking for a new career.

And, Prather said the beauty industry is a viable option during a recession.

“It's a good time because people might not be able to buy a new car or a new house, but they can go get a haircut,” Prather said. “I've done this since 1989 and it doesn't feel like I'm ever going to work. It's rewarding not just in the monetary way, but in making people feel good about themselves.”

The “feel good” mentality is primarily responsible for the continued health of the industry, said Heather Black, director of KC's School of Hair Design in Pontotoc.

“Women are not going to let themselves do down,” Black said. “They'll find a way to pay for it.”

Haircuts and hair coloring are now necessities, she said.

“Hair color is the biggest money maker in the industry because once you start you can't stop,” Black said.

However, she has seen a slowdown in the enrollment for specialty training programs for skin and nails because, she said, facials and manicures are seen more as luxury items. Students are enrolling in the overall cosmetology pro-

gram at the 20-year-old school, instead of the specialty programs for nail technicians and estheticians that are cheaper and shorter than the 11-month cosmetology program.

It's a smart move in this economy, Black said. While the cosmetology program is longer, it teaches the specialty programs along with hair techniques.

“You don't want to limit yourself and when you go into a specialty, you limit yourself,” she said.

And many doors open for people with cosmetology licenses, she said. Along with a career as a hair stylist or a manicurist, they can work with chemists developing beauty products or they can be a makeup artist or a sales rep.

Prather said it also offers people flexibility.

“You can take your license and go work at a salon on a cruise ship,” she said. “You never have to do the same thing every day.”

Contact Carlie Kollath at (662) 678-1598 or carlie.kollath@tjournal.com.

BARTERING BUSINESSES

■ Hard economic times are nothing new for Sherry Prather, owner of the Booneville Academy of Cosmetology.

“I opened my business in the middle of a recession in the 80s and I didn't even know it,” she said.

Business was steady at her hair salon, she said, but she had more clients barter for payment.

For example, she said she had an optometrist as a client who got regular haircuts and pedicures. As payment, he filled her contact prescription for free and did free eye exams her family.

It's not a new concept for the industry. Prather said she talked with a woman whose family operated a beauty shop during the Great Depression. The woman, who has since died, told Prather that it was normal for clients to pay for haircuts with food.

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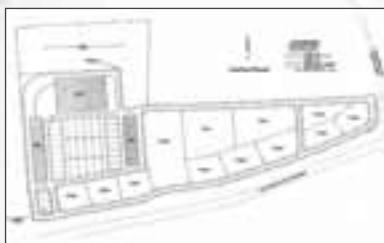
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BEAUTY AND BRAINS

Test your knowledge about the average skin care consumer

■ The NPD Group, a market research company, gathers research for more than 1,600 manufacturers, retailers and service companies. The following quiz was printed in its Beauty Book 2008, which published in January 2009.

1. More women consumers say they use which type of skin care product?

- A. hand creams
- B. facial cleansers
- C. body moisturizers

ANSWER: C. Seventy-five percent say they use body moisturizers, 69 percent use hand creams and 68 percent use facial cleansers.

2. What percentage of women skin care users ages 18+ use SPF products?

- A. 85 percent
- B. 65 percent
- C. 45 percent

ANSWER: B. Forty-seven percent use suntan lotions/sunblocks/sunscreens. Forty-two percent use skin care products with SPF for daily protection. A net total of 65 percent use some type of SPF product.

3. For women skin care users ages 55+, anti-aging benefits are most important for what two areas of the body?

- A. hands and chest
- B. hands and arms
- C. chest and stomach

ANSWER: A. Women say their hands and chest look the oldest. Thirty percent think anti-aging is an important benefit for their hands. Sixteen percent believe this benefit matters for the chest.

4. Women in which age group are most likely to say they have favorite body skin care brands?

- A. Women 18-34
- B. Women 35-44
- C. Women 45-64
- D. Women 65+

ANSWER: C. Women ages 45 to 64 are the most brand loyal when it comes to body skincare - 76 percent of women in this age group report they have favorite body skin care brands, while 68 percent of women ages 18 to 34 say they have favorites.

5. Which ethnic/racial group is the most likely to plan body skincare purchases?

- A. white women
- B. black women
- C. Hispanic women

ANSWER: B. Seventy-four percent of black women say they planned some aspect of their last body skin care purchase. Of those, 18 percent report they knew the type of product they were shopping for, while 56 percent knew which brand they were going to buy. By comparison, 43 percent of white and Hispanic women say they planned the brand they were going to buy.

SOURCE: THE NPD GROUP'S BEAUTY BOOK 2008



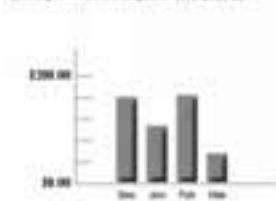
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■ The Euros generated by fragrances sold in Italy in one year are enough to buy every person in Florence a Gucci bag.

■ Almost three times more skin care items are sold in China than makeup and fragrances items combined.

■ The cost of a single ounce of La Mer Creme De la Mer would be enough to fill the empty tank of a standard-size SUV with regular gas.

■ The revenue from total prestige beauty (any brands not sold at mass or drug stores) in Mexico could buy every resident of Cancun a bottle of Jose Cuervo tequila every month for two years.

■ If you stacked end-to-end all the eye liners sold in France in one month, they would be as tall as 13 Eiffel Towers.

■ Every player in the NBA could buy a new personal Cessna with the dollars generated in one month by men's fragrance products in the U.S.

■ One day's revenue from men's skin care in China could buy enough gasoline to drive a BMW Mini Cooper around the earth five times.

■ The amount spent in one year on nail products in France could buy a French manicure for every woman in Paris.

SOURCE: THE NPD BEAUTY BOOK 2008,
www.npdgroup.com

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Chamber Connection

A publication of Journal Publishing and the CDF Chamber Division – April 3, 2009



Pictured is the 2008-2009 CDF Board of Directors: First Row: Mary Pace, Mary Werner, Shane Hooper, Chris Rogers, Ormella Cummings, Mitch Waycaster, Jane Spain, David Rumbarger, Mabel Murphree
 Second Row: Chauncey Godwin, Lisa Hawkins, Chris Berryman, Terry Judy, Ed Neely, Lloyd Gray
 Third Row: Rubye Del Harden, David Brevard, Scott Reed, Robin McGraw, Jack Reed, Jr., David Copenhaver, Tom Robinson
 Fourth Row: Berdell Jones, Eddie Richey, Patty Tucker, Cathy Robertson, Markel Whittington, Randy McCoy
 Fifth Row: Tommie Lee Ivy, Scott Cochran, Mark Bureson, Greg Pirkle, Richard Babb, Hughes Milam, Jeff Snyder, David Irwin, Zell Long, Buzzy Mize
 Not pictured: Mike Armour, Tillmon Calvert, Gary Carnathan, Mike Clayborne, V.M. Cleveland, David Cole, Billy Crews, Byron Fellows, Tom Foy, John Heer, David Henson, John Lovorn, Guy Mitchell III, Chuck Moffatt, Alan Nunnelee, Larry Otis, Aubrey Patterson, Mike Scott, Terry Smith, Lee Tucker

CDF Celebrates “60 Years of Success” at Annual Membership Meeting

As a close to its 60th year of service to Tupelo and Lee County, CDF will celebrate “60 Years of Success” at its birthday party-themed Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 30. The dinner meeting will be held at the Tupelo Furniture Market Complex in building five.

The meeting will feature a time of reminiscence on the myriad successes of the Community Development Foundation and those volunteers who made them happen. It will also include a look towards the future of CDF and its goals for the upcoming year. A special part of the program will include a recognition and tribute to the past chairmen of CDF from 1948-2008, and other leaders who have shaped CDF's history. Jack Reed, Jr., Annual Meeting program committee chairman, and his committee have planned a very special event for the 1,400 members of the Community Development Foundation.

“The Annual Meeting Program Committee has planned an extraordinary event, worthy of a 60th anniversary celebration,” said Reed. “We hope every CDF member will plan to attend

this special night for CDF.”

Other highlights of the meeting will include the announcement of the newly elected CDF Board of Directors, the recognition of the Jim Ingram Community Leadership Institute's graduating class of 2009, and acknowledgement of the 2008-2009 Ambassador of the Year.

Mitch Waycaster, 2008-2009 CDF Chairman, will provide a summary of the 60th anniversary year, and Chris Rogers, Chairman-Elect, will present a charge for the 2009-2010 year. All CDF members have been mailed an invitation to this special event and are encouraged to RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information or to request tickets for the 2009 Annual Meeting, please contact the CDF office at 662.842.4521.



Chamber focus

Dear Friends:

THANK YOU to our new members for their investment during the membership campaign which continues through this month. These companies and individuals are joining almost 1,400 members who are supporting community and economic development and the promotion of stronger businesses in Tupelo/Lee County and Northeast Mississippi. At CDF, we leverage the force of our individual members and businesses into a coalition which works for you when times are good, and works even harder when they are not. We appreciate and thank all of our members for their support.

"60 Years of Success" is the theme of the CDF Annual Meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 30. A special tribute and recognition will be given to our past chairmen and leadership, since CDF's charter in 1948. The Annual Meeting Program Committee, chaired by Jack Reed, Jr., has planned an informative and entertaining program that you do not want to miss. Please be reminded that the meeting will not be in the same location as the past two years. The meeting will be held in the Tupelo Furniture Market, Building 5.



SMITH

The Jim Ingram Community Leadership Institute Class of 2010 completed their one year of institute training last week. They will now volunteer their time and talents to a non-profit organization for one year, and graduate next spring. The Class of 2009 will receive recognition as a part of the April 30 Annual Meeting. Nominations and application forms for the new class will be accepted in June.

The April First Friday will conclude our First Friday programs for this CDF year. First Fridays will recess for the summer and reconvene on Friday, September 11, which, because of the holiday, is actually the second Friday. Please go ahead and mark this date on your calendars.

Vice President of Chamber Services

Community Development Foundation's Board of Directors for 2008-2009

CDF is governed by a 58-member Board of Directors. The Executive Committee is composed of the CDF Officers and ten additional members of the Board. CDF's goals and objectives are accomplished through the efforts of members appointed to committees operating under one of CDF's three divisions: Chamber Division, Economic Development Division, and Planning and Property Management Division.

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13 14
Dates to remember

Industry-Education Day
Thursday, April 9
Tupelo Civic Auditorium

New Member Orientation
Tuesday, April 21
4:00 p.m.
CDF Boardroom

Ambassadors Quarterly Meeting
Thursday, April 23
4:00 p.m.
CDF Boardroom

CDF Annual Meeting
Thursday, April 30
6:30 p.m.
Tupelo Furniture Market Complex, Building 5
For more information on any of the above events
please contact the CDF office at 662.842.4521.

MTA to host Business Plan Competition

The Mississippi Technology Alliance will present a Mississippi Business Plan Competition on Tuesday, June 2 at the Jackson Marriott.

The Business Plan Competition is open to Mississippi innovation and technology entrepreneurs, student-led companies, and university affiliated companies. Companies can be start-ups or existing companies with a new venture opportunity, but the new venture must be innovation-based. Innovation-based ventures derive their primary business from proprietary products, processes, or business systems – whether protected by intellectual property or not. For existing companies, judging will be based solely on the new venture opportunity. Monetary prizes will be presented in each category.

Participants will be screened for the competition based on an executive summary created from an online questionnaire. Judging at the June 2 event will be based on the executive summary and the team's live PowerPoint presentation. Judges for the competition will include angel investors and select entrepreneurs.

"This competition is a great opportunity for entrepreneurs and existing business owners in Northeast Mississippi to get their business plans in front of angel

investors and compete for a cash prize for all the hard work they've invested in planning their business," said Wayne Averett, vice president of entrepreneurship and small business development, CDF. "The staff of the Renasant Center for IDEAS would love to help you prepare your submission and work with you to present your innovation-based venture in the best possible way."

To enter the competition, visit www.technologyalliance.ms/business-plan-competition/index.php to complete the online questionnaire and review the judging criteria. The deadline for applications is May 15. For more information, contact LaTasha Bibb at 601-960-3610 or tbibb@mta.ms.

The Mississippi Technology Alliance is a non-profit organization with the mission to drive innovation-based economic development for the State of Mississippi. To learn more, visit www.mta.ms.

Entrepreneurs and small business owners who are interested in participating may call the Renasant Center for IDEAS, Tupelo/Lee County's Regional Business Incubator, at (662) 823-4335, for free assistance with preparing business plan submissions.

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CDF and ICC present at League for Innovation Conference

Representatives from the Community Development Foundation, Itawamba Community College, and Northeast Mississippi Community College presented at the League for Innovation in the Community College Conference on March 17 in Reno, Nevada. Todd Beadles, Director of Workforce Development, CDF; James Williams, Vice President, Economic and Community Services, ICC; and Nadara Cole, Vice President, Workforce, NEMCC presented at the Innovations Conference.

"The breadth and depth of this conference was terrific, especially the wide offering of diverse break-out sessions," said Beadles. "It was a great experience to present our program with my community college partners. The presentation was geared towards developing partners for workforce training that brings economic success."

The Innovations 2009 conference is a premier event for professionals dedicated to discovering new approaches for enhancing workforce and the community college experience. The conference provides opportunities for colleagues to showcase their model programs that can then be replicated in other areas. The presentation was geared around the role of workforce development in relation to economic development, and the critical nature of partnerships and collaboration that have spawned local innovation.



Pictured at the Innovations Conference are James Williams, ICC; Nadara Cole, NEMCC; and Todd Beadles, CDF.

TAN EXPO



A ribbon cutting was held at Tan Expo in Tupelo. Pictured on the front row at the event are: Michael Addison, Go Box/Southern Home Solutions; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; Bea Lockett, J. Guyton Group Realtors; Beverly Bedford, City of Sallito; Amanda Phillips, Key Staff Source; Councilman Mike Bryan; Glen Long, Tan Expo; Debra Long, Tan Expo; Carolyn Moss, Comfort Inn; Emily Addison, CDF; and Paul Mize, BancorpSouth. Pictured on the back row are: Michelle Crowe, Regions Bank; Richard Carleton, Mall at Barnes Crossing; Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Tina Powell, BancorpSouth; and Ben Hill, Renasant Bank. Tan Expo is located at 968 Barnes Crossing Road in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.842.0700.

TYP



The Tupelo Young Professionals held a Mayoral Candidates Forum at its March meeting. Pictured are candidates Kentrel Boyd, Councilwoman Doyce Deas, James Presley, and Jack Reed, Jr. and Anna Freeman with WTVA, who served as moderator for the event. Also pictured are members of the Tupelo Young Professionals networking with the candidates following the meeting.





Pictured with the seventh grade Career Discovery class are Tab Cherry, MTD; and Jim Karrant, Central Segway of Mississippi.

CDF members assist with 7th grade Career Discovery project

During the fall of 2008, seventh grade Career Discovery students at Mooreville Middle School participated in a business communication project that brought them face-to-face with business leaders throughout Tupelo and Lee County. Instructor Peggy Ann Gray chose a myriad of area businesses from the CDF Membership & Manufacturing Directory to receive handwritten notes from her class, to gain a broader understanding of how these companies function and what types of employment are available through them. The students were elated at the response they received from the businesses that participated, including samples of their goods, pamphlets on their companies, and letters in response to their inquiries.

"During the months of November and December, my students received 53 responses," said Gray. "Each time

a student received a letter, I would let them read the letter to their class. I was ecstatic because the students got really into the project and wanted to be a part of reading a letter from their business."

The project continued in February 2009 when many of the same businesses were invited to participate in a two-day Career Day event. The speakers talked about their respective businesses and gave the seventh graders greater insight into how their companies operate and what they expect of an employee. Students were able to ask questions and delve deeper into the workings of the business community of Tupelo/Lee County. More importantly, the students were thrilled at the prospect of meeting those business leaders who answered their letters earlier in the year.

COMFORT SUITES



To celebrate the grand opening of Comfort Suites in Tupelo, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held. Pictured on the front row are: Emily Addison, CDF; Waurene Heflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; Beverly Bedford, City of Sallito; Kebebe Dancy, Comfort Suites; Kenny Stovall, Integral Hospitality; Danielle Del Grande, Comfort Suites; Bruce Patel, Comfort Suites; Mayor Ed Neelly; Councilman Nettie Davis; Councilman Smith Heavner; Councilman Bill Martin; Bea Lockett, J. Guyton Group Realtors; and Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting. Pictured on the back row are: Michael Addison, Go Box/Southern Home Solutions; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Ben Hill, Renasant Bank; Richard Nasce, Sysco; Thomas Mize, M&F Bank; Ron Vaughan, M&F Bank; Jeff Snyder, Mall at Barnes Crossing; Councilman Dick Hill; V.M. Cleveland, Tupelo Furniture Market; Tina Powell, BancorpSouth; Bill Cleveland, Tupelo Furniture Market; Mike Davis, Lauderdale Mechanical; Doug Stewart; Vanelli's; Carey Snyder, WVA/WLOV/WKDH; Mike Maynard, Weatherall's, Inc.; Sue Golmon, Coldwell Banker Tommy Morgan, Inc.; and Richard Carleton, Mall at Barnes Crossing. Comfort Suites is located at 1665 North Gloster Street and can be reached at 662.847.0025.

Tupelo region named one of Top Micropolitans

The Tupelo region has been named to *Site Selection* magazine's list of the most active micropolitan areas for new and existing industries in the country, for the fourth consecutive year. Tupelo ranked second in the nation out of nearly 700 micropolitan areas designated by the United States Census Bureau.

"This is the fourth consecutive year our community has received this honor, and it is only possible because of the partnerships that have been formed between the nine county wide municipalities, the Mississippi Development Authority, and Tennessee Valley Authority economic development officials in this area," said Tommie Lee Ivy, President, Lee County Board of Supervisors. "We are truly appreciative of everyone who worked on our behalf to achieve this success for Tupelo, Lee County, and our region as a whole."

Tupelo attained this ranking by recording 12 industry expansion projects in 2008, with companies such as NEW Corporation, General Atomics, Hunter Douglas, and Cooper Tire & Rubber Company. Each project had to meet certain criteria in order to be counted, including a minimum of 50 jobs created or \$1 million in capital investment. The total capital investment for the year

was \$151,017,000, with 512 new jobs created.

"Community Development Foundation's program of work provides a long term development strategy and organization to produce more and better jobs for the area," said David Rumbarger, President and CEO of the Community Development Foundation. "This recognition is confirmation that commitment and continuity by private and public sector leaders is working. This momentum will only pick up speed as the regional and national economies rebound."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a micropolitan area is a largely rural economy that includes a city of at least 10,000 people, but less than 50,000, and covers at least one county. Of the 3,141 counties in the United States, 694 are classified as micropolitans and account for about 10 percent of America's population.

Site Selection is published by Conway Data, Inc., and delivers expansion planning information to over 44,000 site selection executives. It is the official publication of the Industrial Asset Management Council and is a highly-recognized publication that allows this recognition to receive world-wide exposure, thereby enhancing economic development marketing efforts in the area.

Old Venice Pizza Company offers something for everyone

Anna Quindlen, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and bestselling author, once said that "ideas are like pizza dough, made to be tossed around." At Old Venice Pizza Company in Tupelo, creative ideas abound in not only their award winning pizzas, but in the extensive menu, special events, and exceptional customer service that make this restaurant a true experience for each customer that walks through their doors.

"If you look at the proliferation of pizza, pizza is everywhere," said Michael Blankenship, Director of Operations for Old Venice Pizza Company. "Every mainstream menu has at least one pizza on it, so the challenge for the traditional pizzeria is to offer a differentiator, not only on the menu, but the place itself."

The Old Venice Pizza Company franchise is owned locally by Tupelo-businessmen Mike Greer and Clyde Whitaker, as well as Dave Buescher, executive vice president of the company. Their hard work and dedication to creating a truly unique dining experience has molded Old Venice Pizza Company into the distinctive restaurant that it is. With their top-notch staff including Blankenship and General Manager, Randy Davis, Greer, Whitaker, and Buescher have created an innovative dining experience with a menu that offers an eclectic mix of Italian, Mediterranean, Greek, and French Creole fare.

Apart from its expansive dining room, Old Venice Pizza Company houses an upscale bar area with flat

screen televisions and an extensive bar menu. One of the highlights of this area is the enomatic wine machine. Crafted in Italy, the machine enables customers to sample a variety of wines from places throughout the world. Patrons can sample a glass of wine from an expensive bottle that would normally not be sold by the glass. Through this machine, argon is pumped into the bottles, from the floor, keeping the wine fresh for wine enthusiasts to sample and enjoy.

A myriad of events are being planned at Old Venice Pizza Company in the coming months. The restaurant

hosts bands every Monday and Friday night until midnight and a Sunday Brunch is served from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. each Sunday. Monday nights are "bike night," from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., with drink specials for those participating. Old Venice Pizza Company has its own recession plan, with "5-Star Saturdays." Customers can purchase a bottle of their house wine for \$5.55 with the purchase of dinner.

The jewel in Old Venice Pizza Company's special event crown is the monthly wine dinner. A delectable feast for the senses, these dinners feature multiple courses, with wine pairings, and are a true culinary journey. The next wine dinner will be held April 7 and those interested should contact the restaurant for reservations. The staff is also preparing for a crawfish boil on April 4 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Through the leadership of Greer, Whitaker, and Buescher, Old Venice Pizza Company is committed to



Pictured are Michael Blankenship, Director of Operations; Mike Greer, Partner; and Randy Davis, General Manager.

being a consistent corporate citizen in Tupelo/Lee County. They are involved in a plethora of community service activities, including the Salvation Army's Empty Bowls Luncheon and the sponsorship of a child at the Tupelo Children's Mansion, and are

committed to serving the citizens of this area.

While the pizza is the centerpiece at Old Venice Pizza Company, with such pies as the John Wayne, Mighty Meaty, Daddy Crawdaddy, and Four Cheese, the customer service will bring back patrons time and time again. As creative ideas are continually "tossed around" at the restaurant, customers can be assured that each visit to Old Venice Pizza Company will truly be an innovative, unique dining experience.

Old Venice Pizza Company is located at 3117 McCullough Boulevard in Belden and can be reached at 662.840.6872. They are open from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. throughout the week.



PAIN MANAGEMENT

A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the grand opening of Pain Management Center of North Mississippi. Pictured on the front row are: Emily Addison, CDF; Beth Christian, Pain Management; Tommy Adams, Pain Management; Gayle Hammitt, Pain Management; Dr. George Hammitt, Pain Management; Councilman Mike Bryan; Dr. Kirk Kinard, Pain Management; Paula DeCanter, Pain Management; Kelly Crowe, Pain Management; Amy Justice, Pain Management; Jackie Estes, Pain Management; Kristi Wagster, Pain Management; Waurene Heflin, Cry-Leike Realtors; Beverly Bedford, City of Siltillo; and Michael Addison, Go Box/Southern Home Solutions. Pictured on the back row are: Rodney Bogan, Pain Management; Carolyn Moss, Comfort Inn; Casey Cook, Pain Management; Kerri Collier, Pain Management; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Tina Powell, BancorpSouth; Amanda Phillips, Key Staff Source; Paul Mize, BancorpSouth; Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance; Barbara Dole, Regions Bank; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; and Talmadge Ray, J.T. Ray Company. Pain Management Center of North Mississippi is located at 2089 Southridge Drive in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.407.0801.



cordially invites all new CDF members to a
NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Tuesday, April 21, 2009
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

CDF Boardroom
300 West Main Street
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Please RSVP to Emily Addison at 662.842.4521
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www.typs.biz or
contact the CDF Office at 662.842.4521

FIRST FRIDAY



The March First Friday networking breakfast featured guest speaker, Mr. Rick Martinez, Retail Development Manager, Gulf States Toyota, and was sponsored by Toyota. Pictured, Mitch Waycaster, CDF Chairman, presents Martinez with a token of appreciation. First Friday programs will resume in September.

BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE



The Business Roundtable was held March 25 in the CDF boardroom. Over 40 CDF members listened to reports from businesses throughout Tupelo and Lee County. Marty Cooper, Catering Manager, Newk's Express Café, is pictured addressing the crowd at the Business Roundtable. For more information or to join the Business Roundtable, please contact the CDF office at 662.842.4521.



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Aberdeen makeup artist grows celebrity clientele

BY BARBARA HARRINGTON
SPECIAL TO THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

In a career filled with unforgettable moments, celebrity makeup artist and Aberdeen native Billy Brasfield recently realized a dream come true.

"People always say 'You've worked with everybody. Who is your fantasy?'" said Brasfield, who professionally goes by billy b. "Dolly would be among the top three ... I have been obsessed with Dolly Parton since I was a kid."

Brasfield, who lives in New York and has a beauty shop in Aberdeen, said Parton does her own makeup, so he thought he wouldn't get to work with her. Yet when she was getting ready for a music video, the director mentioned Brasfield's desire to work with Parton.

Parton agreed and his agent called to tell him the news.

"I was doing makeup on Cindy Crawford and he told me to step outside," Brasfield said.

Parton's video is for "Backwoods Barbie," a song she wrote for her Broadway production, "9 to 5," which opens this month. Brasfield said the song is about a woman who wants to grow up to be beautiful.

The video was shot at a log cabin outside Los Angeles and on Hollywood Boulevard in front of Frederick's.

"Meeting her is exactly like you would want it to be times a hundred," Brasfield said. "She's sweet, humble, normal and amazingly beautiful, with gorgeous skin. She really let her guard down, trusted me to do what I wanted."

She did have one stipulation, though, that once she looked at it, if there was anything she wanted to change he would be alright with that.

"When I finished, I handed her the mirror and she said it was perfect," Brasfield said. "This was a dream come true."

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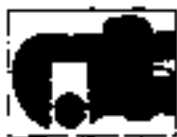
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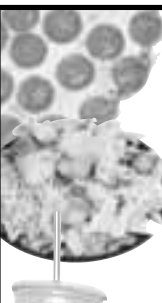
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