

THE NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI

BusinessJournal

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF JOURNAL PUBLISHING AND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

July 2008



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■ **INSIDE**

Just what it promises ...

■ **Mississippi HandMade is a shopful of furniture, art, fabrics and other works from Magnolia State artisans.**

By Errol Castens

BUSINESS JOURNAL

OXFORD – Want an oak cutting board made in Mississippi's distinctive shape? It's at Mississippi HandMade. From the pure practicality of an all-natural bug repellent named "SWAT" to purely whimsical wooden bowls – each with its own story – everything at Mississippi HandMade is, well, handmade, and its creator either lives in Mississippi or is a former resident.

The store, which opened in October 2007, is partly the brainchild of Cain Foster, a lifelong Oxonian who started his cabinetmaking business years ago with "a table saw, a nail gun and just a few hand tools," he said. "Had about \$350 to my name, and not a clue."

Foster's cabinetry has been well received at upscale North Mississippi homes for a decade, though, and it was when he met fellow woodworker

Kevin Waddell that they hatched the idea of a retail store.

"We'd rented a little space behind this one," Foster said of the former "As Seen on TV" location. "It started out that we were going to sell custom furniture, and when we came up with the name, 'Mississippi HandMade,' people said, 'Well, you've got to sell other handmade things from Mississippi, too.'"

Quality emphasis

Waddell said people who are attracted to their works emphasize quality of life.

"These people appreciate finer things than you can find at Haverty's, and they like having something that's the only one of its kind."

Turn to **PROMISES** on Page 27F

Mississippi HandMade

■ **Location:** 1004 Van Buren Ave., Oxford
 ■ **Phone:** (662)281-1175
 ■ **Products:** pottery, photography, paintings, furniture and much more.

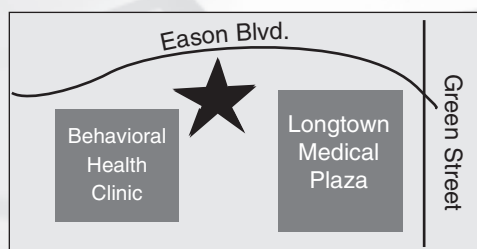


Kelly and Cain Foster, owners of Mississippi Hand Made, show off one of the Mississippi-shaped cutting boards that are constructed from strips of various woods indigenous to the state. The dot at the top represents Oxford where the store is based just off the square in downtown.

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'Made in Northeast Mississippi' runs the gamut

When we started talking about profiling some companies for this issue of the Northeast Mississippi Business Journal, we cast a wide net.

The theme was "Made in Northeast Mississippi," and it didn't take long for us to find businesses that would qualify.

And the qualifications weren't too complicated or involved – if you made anything in the 16-county region of Northeast Mississippi, we were open to talking to you.

Profiling, much less listing, all the companies that match the criteria would be nearly impossible. And space limitations meant we could only write about a handful. Perhaps next year, we'll do this again and get another round of businesses about which to write. There's certainly no shortage of them.

Just within a short distance of our of-

ices we can find a designer and manufacturer of advanced software (Circa-dence); a company that provides industrial lighting across the globe (Day-Brite/Capri/Omega); a major furniture parts supplier (Super Sagless); a major pet food supplier (Sunshine Mills), a major tire company (Cooper Tire & Rubber) and a bedding company that supplies some of the country's top retailers (Henson Sleep Relief).

Then there's Reed's department store, with its famous Reed's T-shirts, which have been around for nearly 20 years. In the last few years, Reed's also has started custom-designing shirts for



**Dennis
SEID**

schools and organizations, with thousands of dollars raised.

The shirts are designed in-house and printed in West Point. Can't get much more "Made in Northeast Mississippi" than that.

And across the region, we also have the likes of Kingsford, Franklin Corp., NauticStar, True Temper, Lane Home Furnishings, Kimberly-Clark, Winchester, Whirlpool, Mossy Oak, Ashley Furniture, American Eurocopter and General Atomics ... well, you get the picture. We could go on and on and still not get everybody.

The point is, people we know – our family, our friends, our neighbors – help make products in the region that go across the state and nation. The rest of the world for that matter.

And we're happy to introduce some of them to you, if you didn't know about them or didn't realize they were "local" folks.

When you read some of the profiles, you'll meet some entrepreneurs who made good on their dreams. You'll read about a world-class company that decided that this region was a good place to be (as others have discovered). And you'll read about a store in Oxford that specializes in selling Mississippi-made goods.

Just think – in about two years, we'll be producing Toyota's best selling sports utility vehicle, the Highlander. And wouldn't it be nice if that rumored "Phase 2" of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Mississippi become a reality? But as Toyota folks have repeatedly said, let's get the first plant up an running first.

Yes, "Made in Mississippi," along with "Made in Northeast Mississippi," sounds as good as ever.

Dennis Seid is editor of the Northeast Mississippi Business Journal. Contact him at (662) 678-1578 or dennis.seid@djournal.com

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Kim Lovorn, center, owner of Southern Belle T-shirt company, shows off some of her original designs with staff members at their factory in Slate Springs.

A few of Southern Belle's favorite T-shirt sayings:

■ "When life gives you lemons, put them in your sweet tea and thank God you're a Southern Belle."

■ "Skool rings, holey jeans, a baseball cap, worn out boots. Southern boys are too cute."

■ "All a girl really needs is a lil bit of confidence and a lot of pink lipstick."

■ "Primpin' ain't easy."

Apparel company targets Southern women

■ Southern Belle makes shirts that capitalize on life south of the Mason-Dixon line.

BY CARLIE KOLLATH

BUSINESS JOURNAL

SLATE SPRINGS – Color rules in the Southern Belle T-shirt factory. From the more than 25 different shades of shirts to the hot pink toenail polish on owner Kim Lovorn's feet to the electric blue logo on the front of the company's dirt track race car, brighter is better.

The company, started by Lovorn in 1999, sells merchandise and attire for Southern women, with a heavy emphasis on T-shirts it screenprints. The shirts designs range from witty Southernisms to Bible verses to school spirited phrases.

The most popular shirts are:

- "Put your big girl panties on and deal with it."
- "Diamonds are nice and so are pearls, but there ain't nothing like a Mississippi girl."

Southern Belle

- Location: 816 S. Main Street, Calhoun City
- Phone: (662) 628-1642
- Web site: www.southernbellestore.com

• "The best part about living in a small town is when I don't know what I'm doing, someone else does."

Lovorn, raised in Calhoun City and a former cheer-leader and hair

dresser, defines a Southern Belle as a "lady born in the South, raised with a respect for manners and a respect for God and elders."

The company started with four people and has grown to 34.

"We have worked our tails off to get our business going," Lovorn said,



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Turn to **APPAREL** on Page 26

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Building a dream

What began as a sideline job has become full time for Barry Pierce

By Dennis Seid

BUSINESS JOURNAL

TUPELO – Barry Pierce has always had a knack working with wood. Even at an early age, he was already building things and dreaming about the future.

“I’ve been doing wood-work since I was eight to 10 years old. It always fascinated me, and I wanted to build houses,” he said.

He got the chance after graduating from Ole Miss, working for a contractor. Pierce also built cabinets at night and would trade for jobs on the side. He soon discovered that people liked his work – a lot.

“I had so much sideline work that in 1992 I started my own business in my garage,” he said.

Nearly 16 years later, that business, Pierce Cabinets, has grown from one employee to 56.

And the name is synonymous with quality and craftsmanship. Read a home listing in real estate guides

and you’ll see Pierce Cabinets often listed as a key feature. Builders from across the Mid-South – and beyond – order directly from Pierce for their homes, offices and businesses.

But Pierce Cabinets builds more than its name suggests. The company builds cabinets, shelves, entertainment cen-

Pierce Cabinets

- Location: 2259 Graham Drive, Tupelo
- Phone: (662) 840-6795
- Web site: www.piercecabinets.com

ters, toy boxes – anything that can be made of wood, it can custom make. It’s also a supplier to the furniture industry.

“I guess you could call us a diversified manufacturer,” Pierce said with a smile.

And because of that, Pierce Cabinets stays busy, even through slower times.

The housing industry, for example, is hemorrhaging in many areas across the country. Northeast Mississippi has held up well, but Pierce said he’s seen a slight decline in



More photos on Biz Buzz at tupelobizbuzz.wordpress.com



THOMAS WELLS

Turn to **DREAM** on **Page 27F**

Johnathan Parham of Tupelo applies finishing touches on a cabinet at Pierce Cabinets.

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Kids inspire couple to invent can cap

■ The Flavor Savor helps prevent spills and keeps the fizz in sodas.

By Dennis Seid
BUSINESS JOURNAL

TUPELO – With five children, Donna and Russell Reed have had their fair share of spilled drinks in the living room and elsewhere in their house.

So why not put a lid on canned drinks, which were the chief cause of the spills, they thought.

And in less than a year, the Reeds are rolling out their invention, called the “Flavor Savor.”

It’s a plastic cap that fits over 12-ounce aluminum drink cans. Pull the metal tab off the can, then snap the Flavor Savor over the lid, lining up the drink hole. On the Flavor Savor is a flap that you can open and close.

While the Flavor Savor doesn’t necessarily make a can spill-proof, it does make it spill-resistant.

“You also don’t have to worry about bugs getting into your



DENNIS SEID

drink if your outside,” Russell said, “or sand in it if you’re on the beach.”

Another plus – the Flavor Savor keeps the “fizz” in soft drinks.

“We’ve got a patent on it for 20 years,” Russell said.

The couple also point out that the design and manufacturing of their invention is in Mississippi.

And to push that “Made in America” theme, the Reeds officially rolled out the Flavor Savor

The Flavor Savor fits over 12-ounce beverage cans and comes in several colors. For more information, visit www.flavorsavoronline.com

at the All-America City Family Picnic in the Park on July 4 in Ballard Park. There, they showed off their invention and sold it for \$2 each.

The Reeds started their venture with an initial lot of 10,000 Flavor Savors.

“We’d like to get on QVC to sell it,” Donna said. “And we’re also hoping to get in retail stores like Dollar General.”

The Flavor Savor is the first invention for the couple, and much is on the line. For Russell, who spent several years in the furniture industry, it’s all or nothing.

“I made good money what I was doing, but I also feel very strongly about this, and I really think that it will be a hit,” he said.

But getting a project off the ground isn’t cheap, and the Reeds had to dig deep. They also found an angel investor in Dr. Joel L. Rigby and his wife, Vicki, who were convinced that the invention could be a success.

“Russell has been very busy and he’s really done all the work,” Joel Rigby said. “It’s amazing that he went from this idea in his head to selling it in less than a year. It seemed to be a really good idea to us, and we invested a little money to help get things started.”

And the Reeds are dreaming big. They have six marketing representatives – who also work for Capital Bedding in Verona, where Russell worked – helping to push the Flavor Savor.

“We’d like to see it sold by every Coca-Cola product and soft drink in the country,” he said.

And what about Pepsi? “Them, too,” he said with a laugh. “We’ll take anybody.”

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BRIEFING

LEE COUNTY

Center City Market to get Piggly Wiggly

■ **SALTILLO** - A Piggly Wiggly grocery store is expected to open this fall in the Center City Market development in west Saltillo.

The 20,000-square-foot store will anchor the nearly 7-acre site being developed by Jay Shannon.

The development is off Highway 145 across from the Town Creek District. A new McDonald's recently opened on the site.

Shannon said the Piggly Wiggly it will be a "Fresh Market-style" store. Despite the description, shoppers shouldn't expect a wide range of organic products. But it won't be your typical Piggly Wiggly, either, he insisted.

"It will have a similar atmosphere. If you've been to a Fresh Market or Whole Foods or Wild Oats, they're very open, a lot of light ... that's what we're planning here," he said. "And it will have a really nice meat department. It won't be your typical grocery store."

Proposed retail sites for Tupelo shelved

■ **TUPELO** - Developers for two proposed shopping centers in Tupelo have pulled site plans off their Web sites, apparently scratching their plans - at least for now - to enter the \$1.7 billion retail market.

GBT Realty of Brentwood, Tenn., and Abernathy & Timberlake Investment Group LLC of Duluth, Ga., in the past year had been marketing their projects to retailers and restaurants.

But with an uneasy economy, retailers have eased back on expansions, and it's likely the companies were hearing much of the same thing.

GBT had posted signs for what it had called Tupelo Crossings on Tom Watson Drive, just east of U.S. Highway 45, but those signs are gone.

The company had proposed a 231,000-square-foot "power center" that would have been anchored by a 127,000-square-foot store and a smaller 65,000-square-foot store. Three additional outparcels were proposed for the site, which would have bordered the Big Oaks Golf Course.

Abernathy & Timberlake's proposed Tupelo Exchange was a 450,000-square-foot shopping center to be anchored by a 133,000-square-foot store.

Tupelo Exchange would have sat on the west side of North Gloster, just north of U.S. Highway 78. The area is directly across from the Tupelo Commons retail development and south of Wesson & Mothershed Eye Center.

Hancock looks to emerge from Chapter 11

■ **BALDWIN** - Craft and fabric retailer Hancock Fabrics is a step closer to emerging from Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

The Baldwin-based company on June 11 filed its 50-page plan of reorganization with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Hancock filed for bankruptcy in March 2007 after defaulting on its credit facility and falling behind in filing its financial reports with the SEC.

The company has since secured additional funding and has caught up on its filings.

In its reorganization plan, Hancock said the company will continue to exist after it emerges from bankruptcy. As of May 3, the company had 270 stores in 37 states and an Internet store. The month before the retailer filed for bankruptcy, it operated 403 stores in 40 states, in addition to its e-commerce site.

Under the plan, Hancock - which posted sales of \$276 million last year - will emerge from bankruptcy in August, according to Cooley Godward Kronish.

Hancock said it intends to continue its existing employee and retiree benefit policies, plans and agreements.

Also, the plan provides for full payment of all allowed claims, regardless of category, which means general unsecured claimants are entitled to their money along with secured claimants.

PONTOTOC COUNTY

Lane Furniture to close 32-year-old plant

■ **PONTOTOC** - The Lane Furniture plant in Pontotoc is closing after more than 30 years in business.

The company said that the plant, which opened in 1976, will close during a "transition period" from July 7 through early September.

Lane said the continuing weakness in retail furniture sales affected its decision on the Pontotoc plant.

Most of the facility's employees have been offered positions at the company's plant in Belden. Lane, a division of Furniture Brands International, also has manufacturing facilities in Verona and Saltillo.

The company said about 200 employees would be affected by the move.

Company President Skipper Holliman said the consolidation of production will help the company "reduce operating costs, increase efficiencies and maximize the capacity in our remaining plants."

HINDS COUNTY

Toyota confident in its Mississippi plan

JACKSON - Misao Fukuda, president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Mississippi, chuckled at a meeting last month when a reporter asked if the current economy might force Toyota to revamp plans to build SUVs at Blue Springs.

The question was posed at a news conference Gov. Haley Barbour and others held in Jackson to detail plans for a Center for Manufacturing Excellence at the University of Mississippi.

Fukuda was only an attendee at the news conference and didn't take questions. That was left to Dennis Cuneo, a consultant for Toyota who played a key role in locating the plant at Blue Springs.

Cuneo assured the questioner that Toyota intended to open in May 2010 and build the Highlander sport utility vehicles as planned.

"The auto industry is a cyclical industry," Cuneo said. "Toyota believes in the long run this (Mississippi) is going to be a good place to manufacture and build vehicles."

Daily Journal, wire reports

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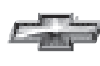
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Meet 'the Mercedes-Benz of blinds'

■ Hunter Douglas this year celebrated its 23rd year of making window covering components in Lee County.

BY CARLIE KOLLATH

BUSINESS JOURNAL

SHANNON—For a manufacturing plant, Hunter Douglas' metals and distribution center in the Tupelo Lee Industrial Park South sure is pretty.

The lawns are manicured and visitors must cross a stream via a bridge to get into the building. The 170 employees on site also enjoy a park, complete with a walking

track, pond and gazebo.

Inside the building, the lobby's ceiling is covered with

metal slats, the same product Hunter Douglas manufactures for airports. The plant and distribution floor are marked off with columns and railings painted in a variety of colors.

There's even a garden outside one of the employee entrances of the 23-year-old fa-

cility.

Eventually, manufacturing director Mike

Robinson said the company would like to add a natural habitat area on the grounds.

"We take a lot of pride in our grounds and make it nice," he said.

Bill Hughes, the facility's human resource director, said when he has potential employees in for interview, the first thing they normally comment on is the landscaping. If a company cares that much about landscaping, one interviewee said, then it must care even more for its employees.

Hughes said he thinks the numbers speak for themselves.

"Most of our employees have been here for 12 years or more," he said. "Our turnover is traditionally the lowest in Hunter Douglas North America."

The low turnover also means the facility doesn't have many job openings. In fact,

Hunter Douglas Window Fashions

■ Location: 222 Laney Road, Shannon

■ Phone: (662) 690-8190

■ Web site: www.hunterdouglas.com



C. TODD SHERMAN

Hunter Douglas director Mike Robinson, left, quality assurance employee Jackie Mabry, center, and employee Georgia Rogers look over a set of window components.

Turn to **BLINDS** on Page 20F



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Coffee company strives to be the cream of the crop

■ **Roasting and blending coffees from 18 nations, Oxford-based High Point Coffee distributes its goods from coast to coast.**

By Errol Castens
BUSINESS JOURNAL

OXFORD – In its vigorous youth, coffee – strong, hot and pure – fueled the minds and pens of Voltaire, de Balzac and Pope.

In the 20th century, the black brew devolved into a weak and watery mockery of itself – an impotent imitation whose chief benefit was providing a convenient place to douse a cigarette.

Thomas Blanche of Oxford-based High Point Coffee credits Starbucks for changing coffee from a commodity to a specialty, and he aspires to make his roasting and distribution company a leading competitor for the leading java chain.

"I grew up on Folger's, but thanks to Starbucks, they've spoiled us on quality coffee," he said.

Growing slowly

High Point is helping grow the industry even more, roasting 2,100 pounds of coffee every week at its Oxford facility and distributing the resulting 35 coffee types nationwide through its own coffee

shops in Mississippi and Tennessee and through licenses, grocery stores, churches, offices and high-end restaurants from New York to Los Angeles.

"Our goal is 100 stores in five years," he said. As the 52-year-old father of two young children, however, he's careful to balance risk and reward: "Inch by inch, growth is a cinch. Yard by yard, it's hard."

The raw coffees come in 50-pound bags from such far-flung spots on the globe as Hawaii, Sumatra and Ethiopia – mountainous locales in or near the tropics.

"The best coffees come from the highest elevations," Blanche said, noting the connection to his company's name.

One recent morning, master roaster Marci Carter manned the roaster, watching the beans turn gradually from olive to gray to tan to a rich, dark brown. At just the chosen moment of doneness, she dumped the batch from the roaster onto a broad tray. Picking up a now cooled Ethiopian bean and chewing it, she mused, "That's as fresh as coffee can get.

High Point Coffee

■ **Location:** Highway 7 South, Oxford
■ **Phone:**
■ **Web site:** www.brewhighpoint.com



C. TODD SHERMAN

High Point Coffee master roasters Marci Carter, left, and Kyle Walker, center, along with owner Thomas Blanche, oversee the roasting of 2,100 pounds of coffee each week.

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Pictured are the members of the 2008-2009 CDF Ambassador's Club. Front Row: Waurene Heflin, Beverly Bedford, Latesha McElhaney, Sue Golmon, Jan Pannell, Julianne Goodwin. Second Row: Ann Brazil, Jean Mooneyhan, Jane Myers, Lauren Rhodes, Bea Luckett. Third Row: Barbara Smith, Talmadge Ray, Michael Addison, Carolyn Moss, Amanda Phillips, Lauren Barber. Fourth Row: Paul Mize, Ben Hill, Richard Carleton, Tina Powell, Carey Snyder, Michelle Crowe, Bill McNutt. Fifth Row: Les Perry, Jim Leeper, Rusty Curbow, Toby Hedges, John Oxford. Not pictured are: Patty Abernathy, Scarlett Fyke, Mark Hinton, Brandon Holloway, Mike Maynard, Connie Snell, Amber Westmoreland, and Marsha Williams.

2008-2009 CDF Ambassadors Club

The 2008-2009 CDF Ambassador's Club Orientation Luncheon was held June 5, initiating 38 new official representatives of the Community Development Foundation. The CDF Ambassador's Club is a prestigious group of individuals, chosen from the CDF member investors, to promote the interests of business and the Community Development Foundation by initiating contact with members and non-members at CDF events, business site visits, and other community events. This year's diverse Ambassador's Club represents banking, real estate, hotels, non-profits, industry, retail and other diverse business sectors.

"The Ambassador's Club is a vital link in helping us communicate with our membership and understand the needs of the business community that we serve," said Barbara Smith, vice president of chamber services for the Community Development Foundation. "We are excited to work with this professional group of goodwill emissaries for CDF."

CDF Ambassadors are required to serve

a two-year term during which they attend all CDF member ribbon cuttings, ground breakings, and grand openings. They serve in a myriad of different volunteer positions and help actively recruit new members to the organization. The Ambassadors play an essential part in strengthening communication between the Community Development Foundation and its membership.

Ambassadors receive points for each event that they attend or volunteer to work. An Ambassador of the Quarter is awarded each quarter, with an Ambassador of the Year recognized at the CDF Annual Meeting each spring.

For more information about the CDF Ambassadors Club or to place your name on a waiting list for the 2009-2010 Ambassador's Club, please contact Jennie Bradford Curlee at 662.842.4521 or jcurlee@cdfms.org. To learn more about the 2008-2009 Ambassador's Club, please visit the Ambassador page at www.cdfms.org.

2008-2009 CDF AMBASSADORS

Patti Abernathy - J. Guyton Group Realty
 Michael Addison - GoBox
 Lauren Barber - Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal
 Beverly Bedford - City of Saitillo
 Ann Brazil - Snelling Staffing Services
 Richard Carleton - Mall at Barnes Crossing
 Michelle Crowe - Regions Bank
 Rusty Curbow - Rite-Kem, Inc.
 Scarlett Fyke - Watchful Eye Care Services
 Sue Golmon - Coldwell Banker Tommy Morgan Realtors
 Julianne Goodwin - Express Employment Professionals
 Toby Hedges - Shelter Insurance
 Waurene Heflin - Crye-Leike Realtors
 Benjamin Hill - Rensant Bank
 Mark Hinton - Community Bank
 Brandon J. Holloway - M&F Bank
 Jim Leeper - Southern Diversified Industries, Inc.
 Bea Luckett - J. Guyton Group Realty
 Mike Maynard - Weatherall's, Inc.

Latesha McElhaney - Kelly Services, Inc.
 Bill McNutt - WLM Insurance, LLC
 Paul Mize - BancorpSouth
 Carolyn Moss - Comfort Inn
 Jean Mooneyhan - Mississippi Radio Group
 Jane Myers - Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting
 John Oxford - Rensant Bank
 Jan Pannell - Sprint Print
 Les Perry - NMMC
 Amanda Phillips - Key Staff Source
 Tina Powell - BancorpSouth
 Talmadge Ray - J.T. Ray Company
 Lauren Rhodes - March of Dimes
 Barbara Smith - Tupelo Airport Authority
 Connie Snell - My Elegant Clutter
 Carey Ann Snyder - WTVA/WLOV/WKDH
 Bert Sparks - WTVA/WLOV/WKDH
 Amber Westmoreland - Comcast Spotlight
 Marsha Williams - Williams Transfer & Storage

Chamber focus

Dear Friends:

What a great looking group on the front page! These new CDF Ambassadors are already at work and have attended seven ribbon cuttings and one groundbreaking since May 1. The CDF Ambassadors continue to be vital links in helping CDF understand the needs of its membership. They provide a great service to CDF and we congratulate them!

Chartered on September 21, 1948, CDF is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. Special emphasis and activities are being planned for the week of September 22-26. Watch for announcements of special events in future publications.

Nominations for the new class of Jim Ingram Community Leadership Institute are still being received in the CDF office. If you would like to nominate someone, please call the CDF office.

Two networking events are on



SMITH

schedule. The First Friday Networking Committee, chaired by Ellen Short, is busy finalizing the First Friday Programs, which will reconvene on September 5.

The Business Roundtable, chaired by Richard Crenshaw, will meet on Wednesday, July 23.

As always, we appreciate our members. Please stay involved and participate in the activities and networking events we offer. If you have any questions about your membership or would like to be a member of the Business Roundtable, please contact Emily Addison, Membership Director.

Vice President of Chamber Services

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

CDF is governed by a 61-member Board of Directors. The Executive Committee is composed of the CDF Officers and eleven 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.

2008-2009 Executive Committee

Mitch Waycaster, Chairman
Jim Fitzgerald, First Vice Chairman
Chris Rogers, Second Vice Chairman
David Rumbarger, President/Secretary
Jack Reed, Jr., Past Chairman

Tillmon Calvert
Billy Crews
Chauncey Godwin
Lisa Hawkins
Shane Hooper

David Irwin
Guy Mitchell, III
Mary Pace
Tom Robinson
Jeff Snyder

2008-2009 Board of Directors

Mike Armour
David Brevard
Mark Burselon
Gary Carnathan
Mike Clayborne
V.M. Cleveland
Scott Cochran
David Cole
David Copenhaver
Billy Crews
Ormella Cummings
Byron Fellows
Tom Foy
Lloyd Gray
Rubye Del Harden

John Heer
David Henson
Dick Hill
Tommie Lee Ivy
Terry Judy
Zell Long
John Lovorn
Randy McCoy
Robin McGraw
Hughes Milam
Buzzy Mize
Chuck Moffatt
Mabel Murphree
Ed Neelly
Alan Nunnelee

Larry Otis
Greg Pirkle
Scott Reed
Eddie Richey
Cathy Robertson
Mike Scott
Bobby Smith
Terry Smith
Jane Spain
Kyle Steward
Lee Tucker
Patty Tucker
Mary Werner
Tim Weston
Markel Whittington

New CDF MEMBERS

ATLANTA BREAD CO.

Mr. Kip Tigrett
P.O. Box 1532
Tupelo, MS 38802
(662) 844-8353
Restaurants and Catering

AVIS RENT A CAR

Ms. Risa Spears
1001 Barnes Crossing Rd., Box 400
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 690-6733
Automotive

MS. KATHY BAILEY/CRYE-LEIKE

REALTORS
P.O. Box 3241
Tupelo, MS 38803
(662) 322-9355
Real Estate/Appraisers/Property Development

THE BAXTER COMPANY OF NORTH MS, LLC

Mr. James Baxter
P.O. Box 3535
Tupelo, MS 38803
(662) 842-0057
Equipment

CORINTH COCA-COLA BOTTLING WORKS, INC.

Mr. Kenneth Williams
P.O. Box 239
Corinth, MS 38835
(662) 284-4847
Beverages

CORINTH COCA-COLA BOTTLING WORKS, INC.

Mr. H. L. "Sandy" Williams
P.O. Box 239
Corinth, MS 38835
(662) 284-4815
Beverages

HOTTUBS, POOLS & MORE

Mr. Marty Keith
1715 McCullough Blvd.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 840-5004
Swimming Pools

KYOTO JAPANESE STEAKHOUSE & SUSHI BAR #3

Mr. Kid Pham
1044 Commonwealth Blvd.
Tupelo, MS 38804
(662) 620-8157
Restaurants and Catering

MS. BEA LUCKETT - J. GUYTON GROUP REALTY

P.O. Box 7325
Tupelo, MS 38802
(662) 823-7653
Real Estate/Appraisers/Property Development

NATIONAL ELECTRONICS WARRANTY

CUSTOMER CARE COMPANIES
Mr. Terry Sartin
589 N Coley Rd.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 680-4101
Customer Service

PIZZA HUT/NPC

Ms. Tanya Swindle
2222 W Main St.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 610-7734
Restaurants and Catering

POLAR CLIMATE CONTROL STORAGE

Mr. Jeff Michael
106 Celebrity Dr.
Tupelo, MS 38804
(662) 680-2669
Moving and Storage

SGK WHOLESALE PET DESIGNS, INC.

Ms. Peggy King
168 Westwood Cir.
Saltillo, MS 38866
(662) 869-7104
Retail and Specialty Shops

SNAP FITNESS 24-7-SALTILLO

Ms. Kelly Anderson
111-A Willowbrook Dr.
Saltillo, MS 38866
(662) 869-3181
Fitness

SNAP FITNESS 24-7-TUPELO

Ms. Kelly Anderson
549 Coley Rd.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 844-7627
Fitness

STORM SAFE ROOMS OF MS, LLC

Mr. Bill Waycaster
244 CR 600
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 767-2839
Contractors/Construction/Building Materials

TUPELO COCA-COLA BOTTLING WORKS

Mr. Ken Williams
P.O. Box 1068
Tupelo, MS 38802
(662) 284-4859
Beverages

FAYETTE & MARY ELIZABETH WILLIAMS

2513 Savery Dr.
Tupelo, MS 38804
(662) 842-7679
Individuals

DATES TO REMEMBER

FIRST STEPS WORKSHOP

Tuesday, July 15
6:30 p.m.
Renasant Center for IDEAs

BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

Wednesday, July 23
4:00 p.m.
CDF Boardroom

FIRST STEPS WORKSHOP

Tuesday, July 29
1:00 p.m.
Renasant Center for IDEAs

AMBASSADORS QUARTERLY MEETING

Thursday, August 7
4:00 p.m.
CDF Boardroom



Pictured along with Dr. Paul Y. Tashiro are the officers of the coordinating committee of the Japan-America Society of Mississippi. Seated, left to right: Mitch Waycaster, Chairman; Dr. Tashiro. Standing, left to right: David Rumbarger, Secretary; and Tim Weston, Co-Chairman.

Japan-America Society Welcomes Members in North Mississippi

Two cultures, an ocean apart, will join forces later this month when the Japan-America Society of Mississippi welcomes new members to the North Mississippi chapter. This dynamic organization of both individual and corporate members is designed to bring together those who share an interest in improving relations between the United States and Japan and experience each other's culture.

An opportunity to learn about and join the society is slated for Monday, July 21 at the BancorpSouth Conference Center in Tupelo. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m., and the featured speaker will be Mr. Samuel M. Shepherd, president of the National Association of Japan-America Societies, from Washington, D.C.

Applications for membership are welcome from both individuals and businesses in North Mississippi with an interest in the Society. Privileges of membership include: a forum to exchange information and ideas that can result in additional commercial growth for both Japanese and Mississippi businesses; exposure to a wealth of individuals with multi-cultural talents, information, and skills; volunteer opportunities promoting goodwill between Japan and the United States; and much more. Membership applications will be available at the event on July 21, and are currently available online at www.jasmis-us.com.

"The formation of the North Mississippi Coordination Committee for the Japan-America Society of Mississippi is

an opportunity to broaden our global vision while building relationships between Japanese and American cultures and our shared business community," said Mitch Waycaster, Co-Chairman of the North Mississippi Coordination Committee for Japan-American Society of Mississippi, and 2008-2009 Chairman of the Community Development Foundation.

Tim Weston, Committee Co-Chairman and Manager of Field Operations for TVA Economic Development offered, "It is important to develop relationships both socially and professionally. We work hard at TVA to understand the multinational nature of economic development. This committee recognizes the investment by area companies in the past few years."

The Japan-America Society of Mississippi is a private, non-profit organization serving all Mississippi residents and Japanese nationals interested in business and cultural issues in each nation. The Society, formed in 2002, strives to serve the dual constituency by sponsoring business-related and cultural programs on a wide variety of subjects to benefit both American and Japanese members. The mission of the Japan-America Society of Mississippi is to promote greater understanding and cooperation between the people of Japan and Mississippi and to provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas and information between the people of Japan and Mississippi businesses, government, schools, and communities.

MABUS BIRCH AGENCY



To celebrate the grand opening of the mabus birch agency in the Renasant Center for IDEAs, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held. Pictured on the front row are: Kirk Nunnelee, mabus birch agency; Jim Leeper, Southern Diversified Industries; Josh Mabus, mabus birch agency; Mayor Ed Neely; Duane Birch, mabus birch agency; David Rumbarger, CDF; Marsha Williams, Williams Transfer & Storage; Bobbie Sue Howell, mabus birch agency; Jan Pannell, Sprint Print; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; Julianne Goodwin, Express Employment Services. Pictured on the back row are: Martha Swindle, CDF; Craig Hel-muth, Staggs Interiors; Joe Moffatt, Joe Joe's Espresso; Mike Maynard, Weatherall's, Inc.; Paul Mize, BancorpSouth; Wayne Averett, CDF; Lauren Barber, Daily Journal; Carolyn Moss, Comfort Inn; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Ann Brazil, Snelling Staffing; Richard Carleton, Mall at Barnes Crossing; Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance; Bert Sparks, WTVA/WLOV/WKDH; Bill Burge, Northeast Mississippi Contract Procurement Center. The mabus birch agency is located at 398 East Main Street in the Renasant Center for IDEAs, in downtown Tupelo's Fairpark District. They can be reached at 662.844.1733.

CDF 60th Anniversary DID YOU KNOW?

■ The Community Development Foundation was chartered in 1948, by eight businessmen at the Hotel Tupelo, with M.C. "Pat" Dougherty as its first Chairman. Prior to this, several critical events occurred that enabled the birth of CDF. In 1946, George McLean, editor and publisher of the Tupelo Daily Journal, used \$40,000 raised by local merchants during World War II to build a strategy to promote Tupelo. McLean contracted with True D. Morse of Doane Agricultural Services in St. Louis, MO, to develop "The Tupelo Plan." In that same year, Daybrite Lighting located to Tupelo. The first CDF office was located at 315 West Main Street in Tupelo.



Tupelo Tint Brings Mobile Billboard to Tupelo/Lee County

Steve Braun and his staff are bringing the latest trend in advertising to North Mississippi and the surrounding area with their automotive business. Tupelo Tint is now offering custom wraps for vehicles, giving business owners in Tupelo and Lee County a new alternative to traditional billboard advertising.

"A wrap is like a huge sticker made of a laminated vinyl that is applied to a vehicle by our professionally trained staff. The number of looks a vehicle wrap gets is phenomenal," said Braun. "Statistics have shown that a wrapped vehicle will generate at least eight million impressions in a 12-month period of time. There is no better way to advertise."

Braun often gets the question, "Why wrap?" His answer is that custom vehicle wraps are cheaper than most traditional advertising. Per his research, conventional billboards range from \$600 to \$2,400 a month. The cost of a "fully wrapped" vehicle is priced at \$3,500 to \$4,000 and can last up to five years with a

warranty. That averages out to about \$64 per month over a 60-month period.

"No matter where you go, somebody is going to see your vehicle and know what you do," Braun stated. "You are advertising absolutely everywhere you go."

Although Braun truly sees this as an opportunity for the business community of Tupelo and Lee county, business owners are not the only ones that benefit from wraps. Tupelo Tint also wraps boats, ATV's, golf carts, box trucks, and semi-trailers. Camouflage wraps are very popular with hunters. Full or partial wraps can enhance a vehicle's look. Whether it is promoting your business, dressing it out with camouflage accents, or just making a statement with a high resolution picture, it can be printed and wrapped on your vehicle.

To learn more about custom wraps for vehicles, contact Steve Braun and the staff at Tupelo Tint at 662.844.8771 or visit their website at www.tupelotint.com.



Pictured, local businesses, Premier Countertops and Mississippi Radio Group, utilize Tupelo Tint's mobile billboard.



SECRETARY OF STATE



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the grand opening of Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann's new office in Tupelo. Pictured participating in the ceremony are: Representative Brian Aldridge; Councilman Mike Bryan; Bill Canty, representing Senator Thad Cochran; Kyle Steward, representing Senator Roger Wicker; Jeremy Martin; Mayor Ed Neely; Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann; Senator Alan Nunnelle; and Mike Armour, Appalachian Regional Commission Director. The Secretary of State's office is located at 330 West Jefferson Street in Tupelo.

TUPELO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



The June TYP event was held at MLM Clothiers in downtown Tupelo. Pictured, TYP's network during the event. Also pictured are TYP members, Kory Rogers and Amanda Wallace. To join the TYP's, simply send an e-mail to TYP@cdfms.org with your name, business name, e-mail address, and mailing address.

The Bistro on Main:

A True Culinary Experience

Cradled in a charming alley at 210 West Main Street in downtown Tupelo. The Bistro on Main has provided the citizens of Tupelo and Lee County with traditional French fare for the past several years. In early fall of 2008, the Bistro on Main will become the Bistro on Park, occupying the old Park Heights space on the corner of Park and Jefferson streets. While the move means more space, owner Giovanna Azevedo promises that the restaurant will keep its charm and that Bistro-goers will continue to receive a culinary experience like no other.

"We are about experiences," said Azevedo. "We want you to sit for two hours, have a glass of wine, and enjoy the experience and the company."

While the new location will not have an open kitchen as the current location, a "community table" will enable patrons to dine inside the kitchen and experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the meal preparation. The "community table" will seat up to ten diners and Azevedo hopes that it will promote community and togetherness, bringing together strangers with the common bond of food.

"People still want good food," Azevedo said. "We want to expand people's palates and enable them to try new things, but don't require them to put on a suit or a cocktail dress to enjoy a meal with us."

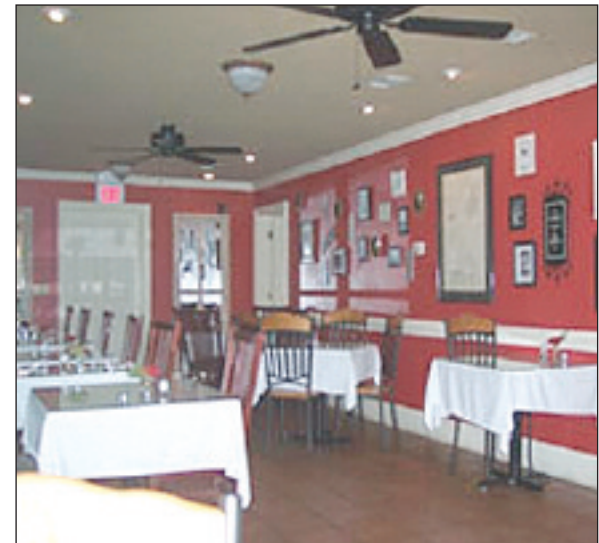
The Bistro on Park will continue to offer unique culinary creations and superior service to its patrons. Azevedo approaches food preparation with

a minimalist approach, using all organic meats, local produce, and wild-caught seafood. Her "continental cuisine" features traditional French cuisine with both Italian and American flares. Trained at the Cordon Bleu in France, Azevedo has worked in kitchens throughout the world, including France, England, and all over the United States. She has now been in Tupelo longer than any other place in which she has lived and she attributes this to the sense of community that makes Tupelo a wonderful place to raise children and own a business.

The Bistro is open for lunch from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and dinner from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. They offer daily specials and change the menu monthly. Catering for private events is available and Azevedo also offers events such as themed birthday parties for children, gingerbread making classes in December, and private cooking classes by reservation. Whether dining downtown before a production at the Tupelo Community Theater, celebrating the birthday of a child, or enjoying a homemade Panini at lunchtime, the Bistro on Main is truly a unique and special culinary experience.

Location

The Bistro on Main is located at 210 West Main Street, Suite 103 in downtown Tupelo and can be reached at 662.840.5550.



Outdoor dining is available at the Bistro on Main in downtown Tupelo. Patrons may also enjoy the quaint atmosphere inside the restaurant.

MANNING GARDENS



A ribbon cutting was held on the grounds of Manning Gardens in Guntown. Pictured at the event are Jason Beasley, Renasant Bank; Emily Addison, CDF; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Beverly Bedford, City of Saltillo; Mike Maynard, Weather-all's, Inc.; Marty Stacks, Manning Gardens; Mayor Jimmy Anderson; Ann Brazil, Snelling Staffing; Amber Westmoreland, Comcast Spotlight; Connie Snell, My Elegant Clutter; and Marsha Williams, Williams Transfer & Storage. Manning Gardens is located at 296 CR 2446 in Guntown and can be reached at 662.348.3152.

LAND BANK



The Land Bank of North Mississippi held a ground breaking for their new location on Tom Watson Drive. Pictured participating in the ground breaking event are: Craig Shideler, LBNMS; Matthew Kimbrough, LBNMS Tupelo; Joe Mallard, LBNMS Tupelo; Terry Bentley, Scruggs & Bentley Construction; Mitchell Scruggs, Scruggs & Bentley Construction; Councilman Dick Hill; Gary Gaines, LBNMS; Abbott Myers, LBNMS; Reba Bailey, LBNMS Tupelo; Ben Beavers, LBNMS Tupelo; and Greg Giachelli, CDF. LBNMS is currently located at 618 Spicer Drive, Suite B in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.842.1202.

Comcast Spotlight Brings Travel On Demand to Southern States

Comcast Spotlight is touting Tupelo, Mississippi, as a great vacation spot for southern travelers this summer. They are launching a new program called Travel On Demand that will feature short, informative videos on travel destinations throughout the southern states, including Tupelo. Comcast Cable subscribers can access Comcast Spotlight's Video On Demand Showcase, through their digital cable box, where multiple videos from markets throughout the South will be available, twenty-four hours a day.

"The timing on this program couldn't be better," said Chris Beachum, senior account executive with Comcast Spotlight. "People are thinking about driving close to home, rather than flying off somewhere for vacations this summer. The Travel On Demand will showcase Tupelo to people who may not have been here before."

The objective of the Travel on Demand program is to engage the southern soul with Tupelo sights and sounds, evoking a desire to become informed, ultimately converting the desire into a Tupelo experience

benefitting a southern traveler. Over 650,000 households in 18 markets across the South will get to experience the Tupelo video, and that number is growing exponentially. The travel and leisure section that will house the Travel On Demand videos can be found on digital cable channel 891, and the program will be promoted on all network channels including CNN, USA, Lifetime, The Weather Channel, and others.

The Tupelo video is currently in production, and Comcast Spotlight wants your help. They are looking for unique, creative ideas to showcase Tupelo as a prime vacation spot for southern travelers. Businesses may also utilize advertising space On Demand. Commercial messages will be inserted into the destination videos, reaching the wide viewership of Comcast cable subscribers.

For more information on the Travel On Demand program or to inquire about advertising opportunities On Demand, please contact Steve Mays, sales manager for North Mississippi with Comcast Spotlight.

JOE JOE'S ESPRESSO



A ribbon cutting was held at Joe Joe's Espresso located inside the Renasant Center for IDEA's, in downtown Tupelo's Fairpark District. Pictured on the front row are: Hollie Moffatt and Ivy Lauren Moffatt, Joe Joe's Espresso; Joe Moffatt and Natalie Grace Moffatt, Joe Joe's Espresso; Mayor Ed Neely; Chuck Moffatt, Select Connect; Wayne Averett, CDF; Beverly Bedford, City of Saitillo; Amanda Phillips, Key Staff Source; and David Rumbarger, CDF. Pictured on the back row are: Jim Leeper, Southern Diversified Industries; Michelle Crowe, Regions Bank; Laura Moffatt; Bobbie Sue Howell, Mabus Birch Agency; Josh Mabus, Mabus Birch Agency; Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance; Darla Webb, Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal; Deborah Tierce, Tierce Motivational Training; Lauren Barber, Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal; Duane Birch, Mabus Birch Agency; and Tina Powell, BancorpSouth. Joe Joe's Espresso is located at 398 East Main Street, Suite 128 in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.823.5637.

SLEEPCARE AT FAIRPARK



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the grand opening of SleepCare at Fairpark in downtown Tupelo's Fairpark District. Pictured on the front row are: Whitney Crane, SleepCare at Fairpark; Megan McIntire, SleepCare at Fairpark; Bea Lockett, J. Guyton Group Realty; Betty Williams, SleepCare at Fairpark; Rose Beaty, SleepCare at Fairpark; Dr. Mark Fletcher, SleepCare at Fairpark; Dr. Justin Graff, SleepCare at Fairpark; Councilman Mike Bryan; Dr. Sam Newell, SleepCare at Fairpark; Dr. Tom Oakes, SleepCare at Fairpark; Dr. Donna Harrington, SleepCare at Fairpark; Bette McKellar, SleepCare at Fairpark; Anita Thomas, SleepCare at Fairpark; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; Waurene Hefflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; and Emily Addison, CDF. SleepCare at Fairpark is located at 111 East Troy Street, Suite D in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.844.7021.

Northeast Mississippi Summer Small Business Lunch and Learn Workshops

The following workshops will be offered.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Brewster County | Thursday, June 12, from Noon to 1 p.m. led by Dr. Frank Wamba
"How to Create Repeat Customers with Outstanding Customer Service"
ICDC at 107 Wiggall Street, Fulton
Lunch will be provided. Deadline to register is Wed., June 11, at Noon. |
| Union County | Thursday, July 10, from Noon to 1 p.m. led by Don Fischer
"Disaster Planning for Small Business"
New Albany Civic Center, 127 E. Bankhead Street
A box lunch will be provided for \$7. Deadline to register is Wed., July 9, at Noon. |
| Pontotoc County | Thursday, July 24, from Noon to 1 p.m. led by James Harper
"From Small Business to Global Business: Basics of Exporting/Importing"
Pontotoc Chamber of Commerce, 100 North Main Street
A box lunch will be provided for \$6 from Subway.
Deadline to register is Wed., July 23, at Noon. |
| Lee County | Thursday, August 14, from Noon to 1 p.m. led by James Hendrick
"Inventor Assistance and Technology"
CDF Boardroom, 300 West Main Street, Tupelo
Lunch will be provided. Deadline to register is Wed., August 13, at Noon. |

Participation in the workshops is free, but you must pre-register.
Please call (800) 726-7222.
Registration is limited to the first 40 people."

RENASANT CENTER for IDEAs
Tupelo/Lee County Regional Business Incubator

Additional sponsors are Union County Development Association, Pontotoc Chamber of Commerce, Itawamba County Development Council, and Community Development Foundation.



MSBDC @ UTM is a member of the Mississippi Small Business Development Centers (MSBDC) network. MSBDCs are national, state-level business development centers. MSBDCs provide assistance for persons with disabilities and the needs of the general public. For more information, contact the MSBDC at (800) 726-7222. U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the national leader in providing assistance to small business owners. Visit us at <http://www.sba.gov>.

Member of your state's SBA Development Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

SBA
Your Small Business Resource

Area Partners Honored by Business Retention & Expansion International

The Community Development Foundation and its partners, Itawamba Community College and Mississippi State University, have been honored with the Multi-Community/Regional (population under 200,000) Award from Business Retention and Expansion International, for its workforce training and development program, targeting the furniture industry of North Mississippi.

"This honor is a direct result of the special partnership that exists between CDF, Itawamba Community College, and Mississippi State University," said Mitch Waycaster, CDF Chairman. "This unique program has brought much needed training to over 1,000 employees in North Mississippi and continues to fill a great need in our area."

The program, funded by a Department of Labor Grant, was designed to help the furniture industry stay competitive in an increasingly intense global marketplace. As more and more furniture related jobs are moving overseas to countries like China, CDF's objective in helping create this program was to further train and develop employees in North Mississippi, making them as much of a commodity as the high-quality products they produce.

Rather than just offering workforce training to employees based in Lee County, CDF and its partners made these courses readily available to employees from companies based in

the Northeast Mississippi counties of Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Clay, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Lowndes, Marshall, Monroe, Oktibbeha, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union. The multi-service training focuses on production and supply industries throughout the region, an area that encompasses approximately 95 percent of the furniture produced in the state of Mississippi.

"Opportunities such as this help us further train and prepare the workforce to meet our current and future needs," said Al Wiygul, president of Bauhaus USA. "It is actions such as this that will help keep furniture jobs in North Mississippi."

Business Retention and Expansion International (BREI) is a non-profit association of economic development professionals who work to advance business retention and expansion as an economic development strategy. BREI facilitates scientific research, instruction, publications, meetings, and other activities designed to advance and disseminate knowledge in retaining and expanding existing businesses in a given region. BREI members represent various private and public organizations, universities, private consulting businesses, utilities, and economic development practitioners from local and state government, representing North America, Europe, and Australia.



Pictured at the award press conference are Supervisor Darrell Rankin, Jamey Ready, Hickory Springs Manufacturing; Supervisor Joe McKinney; Supervisor Tommie Lee Ivy; Supervisor Bobby Smith; Dr. Liam Leightley; Denise Gillespie, ICC; Amy Garrard, Franklin Furniture Institute; James Williams, ICC; David Rumbarger, CDF; and Mitch Waycaster, CDF Chairman, is pictured at the podium. Also pictured accepting the BREI award at the conference in Wichita, Kansas are Greg Giachelli, CDF; Amy Garrard, Franklin Furniture Institute; Amy Bunton, BREI President; Todd Beadles, CDF; and Denise Gillespie, ICC.

BancorpSouth Welcomes Richardson

Kumiko Inden Richardson has been named Premier Banking Specialist for BancorpSouth. In this role, she will serve in the Premier Banking division and will act as Japanese liaison for the bank. She will also work with the Community Development Foundation, and the community as a whole.

Richardson graduated from Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan, and came to the United States to pursue a Masters of East Asian language and literature at Ohio State University. Upon completion of her Masters Degree, Richardson taught Japanese language, culture, and literature at Connecticut College in New London, CT, as well as the University of Alaska-

Fairbanks. Richardson brought her expertise to the South, teaching the same at both Rhodes College and the University of Memphis, in Memphis, TN.

Richardson also has experience in the business world, having worked at Noritake, a trading company in Japan. She previously served as an interpreter and language consultant.

The mother of one, Richardson is excited about this new experience in Tupelo, representing Bancorp-South.



RICHARDSON

TUPELO
YOUNG
PROFESSIONALS
www.typs.biz

Please join us for the next meeting of the

TUPELO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
Thursday, July 17, 2008
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Joe Joe's Espresso

Located inside the Renasant Center for IDEAs
398 East Main Street, Suite 128
Tupelo, MS 38804

Come participate in a special "get-to-know the TYPs" activity. Sign-up for a TYP workday with Habitat for Humanity. This is a come and go business-after-hours event. Refreshments will be served and door prizes will be awarded. Come network with your peers in the business community and bring a friend. Please RSVP to typ@cdfms.org.

The 2008 CDF Membership & Manufacturing Directory will be available soon.

CDF members will receive a copy by mail.





Community Development Foundation

CDF Application for Membership

Please tell us about your organization

Organization Name

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip Code

Physical Address (if different)

City, State, Zip Code

Website

Number of Employees

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blinds

Continued from Page 8F

the first employee the company hired, Roger F. Moore, still is on the job.

Expansion in the works

And even though spots are usually full, Robinson said there might be some new jobs associated with the company's recently announced expansion. Hunter Douglas is adding 54,000 square feet to its 300,000 square feet spread throughout its buildings.

The new space will be used for a "new business opportunity," but Robinson declined to elaborate.

The facility currently serves several purposes. The metals center manufactures and paints the top and bottom rails that are used in window blinds and shades. The plant can make 130 different shapes and has more than 400 custom paint colors.

On the other side of the metals center is the Tupelo Distribution Center, which serves as Hunter Douglas' main distribution point for North America. More than 8,000 component and hardware SKUs are stocked in the space and 35 to

40 full semi-trucks are filled each week. Shipments go to Hunter Douglas' fabricators – facilities that assemble the window fashion components – in Utah, California, New York, Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Canada and Texas.

The 40-acre site also houses the horizontal blinds division. The section includes about 25 employees in administration, sales and technical support for the Hunter Douglas brand.

The division also does product testing via an octagonal test cabin built on an open field next to the facility. The cabin gets full sun and shades are being tested to see if they fade.

Robinson said the vast majority of the factory's sales are from interior decorators and specialty stores. Most orders are custom, but he added there is a limited display of Hunter Douglas' products in the Lowe's in Tupelo. But in general, customers won't find the company's product line in big box stores.

"We're like the Mercedes-Benz of blinds," he said, noting that he doesn't mean to be cocky. "Our stuff is not cheap. When someone pays several hundred dollars for blinds to go up on the windows, they want to be treated special."

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'McDonald's of the future'

■ The restaurant offers the company's "high-impact" look.

By Dennis Seid

DAILY JOURNAL

SALTILLO – Rob Hudson is lovin' it.

The franchise owner of six McDonald's restaurants in Northeast Mississippi, Hudson has been eager to show off his seventh location in Saltillo.

And what a place it is, featuring the best of the past, present and future of the storied chain.

The Saltillo McDonald's, which opened last month, is the company's new "high-impact" design, featuring contemporary styling both on the exterior and interior of the restaurant.

Outside, the mansard roof is nowhere to be seen. Neither is a smiling Ronald McDonald statue. But there's no mistaking the yellow and red of a McDonald's sign. And there are dual drive-thrus, a first for any McDonald's in the area.

Inside, stone and tile cover the floors and walls. The lighting and seating would fit into any fast-casual restaurant.

"It's McDonald's of the past and future. The design theme is called 'forever young,'" Hudson said. "McDonald's has placed and

emphasis on remaining relevant to its customers, and this is the perfect example of that thought."

And what better way to illustrate that than the McCafe coffee station that's been set up – another first for McDonald's in NeMiss – where the restaurant will offer several premium and specialty coffee products including cappuccinos and lattes.

Casual sitting zone

Seating includes a few booths and contemporary stools, along with a casual sitting zone. There's a flatscreen TV, too, along with two interactive sitting spaces that allow customers to play family-friendly games on a video screen.

"We've had to keep some of the workers away from it," Hudson said with a laugh.

Decorating the interior is artwork by Elizabeth Owen, a local artist.

The 3,900-square foot restaurant will have about 100 employees to start, and the drive thru (both of them) will be open 24 hours.

The restaurant, located off Highway 145, is in the new Center City Market development that will be anchored by a Piggly Wiggly store opening in the fall.

Said Hudson, "it's all about location, location, location. We think we can do well here."



The new McDonald's in Saltillo is located in the Center City retail development, which will be getting a Piggly Wiggly store this fall.

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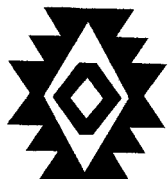
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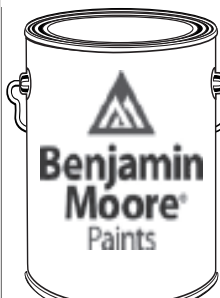


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Apparel

Continued from Page 4F

adding that her husband, Kelly Lovorn, thought she was "crazy" when she pitched the Southern Belle idea to him.

Southern Belle now has four printing facilities in Eupora, Magee, Slate Springs and Vardaman. And, it has its own retail store in Calhoun City, yet the bulk of the business is wholesaling and mail orders from SouthernBelleStore.com.

The company capitalizes on its Southern roots. Southern Belle's more than 100 retailers in eight states are greeted in letters with a "Hey, Y'all."

"They love our accents," said Rhonda Williams, Southern Belle's office manager.

The 5,000-square-foot facility in Slate Springs has 13 em-

ployees who can churn out shirts in more than 150 designs. Kim Lovorn comes up with many of the sayings – "I thought of one in the tanning bed last week" – and inspiration comes from everywhere.

The designs are done in-house and are sketched at a picnic table on the work floor.

A different look

However, Southern Belle's operations look different from the majority of other manufacturing facilities in NeMiss.

Most notably, the vast majority of the employees are female. They go to work dressed in Southern Belle shirts and Southern Belle flip flops are a popular footwear choice during the summer.

And true to form, you won't see any unpainted toenails in the factory. Pedicures aren't mandatory, but Kim Lovorn

said she has joked with her employees about "doing something with them feet."

"It's all women and you can tell," said a laughing Kelly Lovorn, who also is vice president of the company.

Volume has been growing so rapidly that he said Southern Belle has had to find additional shirt suppliers.

Kim Lovorn has plans for growth in the future, too. She talks of adding a line geared toward men and working on expanding her national sales base.

"I want to do things for northern people," she said.

Southern Belle has sponsored one concert and there are plans for more. The company also sponsors two dirt racing teams and Kim Lovorn is dreaming bigger.

"It's my goal to be a sponsor of a NASCAR car," she said. "I love it."

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Promises

Continued from Page 2F

A little bit of everything

Other crafts represented are as diverse as hammered copper bracelets, bistro tables and stools, and old-fashioned wooden toys.

"What we wanted to do was provide crafts pretty much from natural materials, like Ray Morton's bowls," said Foster's wife, Kellie, who manages the store. "He takes flawed wood and ...

creates something of art."

Millie West brings her experience and connections as former owner of Southside Gallery to the store.

"We have everything from soap makers to toymakers to potters," West said. "I'd say we probably have 40 artists." At least weekly, new artists and craftsmen bring their portfolios and samples in hopes of winning a place in Mississippi HandMade.

The store has also become absorbed into the Lafayette-Oxford-University arts com-

munity. Recently, for instance, it hosted a cast party for the Oxford Shakespeare Festival.

"It's a lot of work to make something like this happen," said West, herself a theater major. "But it's a lot of fun."

There is just one import in Mississippi HandMade.

"The hand in our logo is by a Cuban artist named Joel Jover," West said, noting that the resulting T-shirts are one of the store's most popular items. "We're giving him artist's rights."

Dream

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home building, which naturally impacts his business.

"The good thing is that a lot of people are remodeling, and we've seen it pick up there quite a bit," he said.

To help remodelers and new home builders alike, Pierce Cabinets also has a showroom attached to its 46,000-square-foot facility on Graham

Drive. The showroom features the company's cabinets, of course, along with countertops and a full range of Viking appliances.

"When you come in, we're your one-stop shop," Pierce said.

Growing quickly

In the early years of the company, Pierce admits that the business was almost too much to handle. For some, it would seem to be a good problem to have, especially if you're building a base of customers.

"There were times when there was just too much going on," he said. "We just grew so quickly. We rented a building the first seven years and we simply outgrew it and we bought our own facility."

With the new building came more business – and more employees. But the mission of the company hasn't changed.

"It's about quality, design and attention to detail," Pierce said. "We always try to be on the cutting edge of what's new and to give our customers what they want."

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