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CONSTRUCTION, HOUSING MARKET LOOK AHEAD

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Commercial construction looks for rebound

By DENNIS SEID
BUSINESS JOURNAL

Since the recession started 20 months ago, much attention has been paid to the battered housing market.

And the construction industry is feeling the pain.

According to the Associated General Contractors of America, construction dropped in all but 19 communities nationwide in June compared to a year earlier.

The AGC used information gathered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for 352 metropolitan areas.

"Construction workers remain, unfortunately, on the leading edge of job losses during this recession," said Ken Simonson, chief economist for the group. "While other areas of the economy have been hit hard, construction employment has been devastated."

Simonson said 333 metro areas have dropped in construction employment since June 2008. Among the worst hit was Pascagoula, which lost one

out of every three construction jobs.

And according to the BLS, the nationwide construction unemployment rate rose from 5.9 percent in 2007 to 8.2 percent last year. Currently, it's tracking at a 17.4 percent rate.

Some Northeast Mississippi construction companies say they're hurting, too.

"There's not enough work to go around for everyone, to be honest," said Jerry Maxcy, the senior vice president of Jesco Inc., who leads the company's general contractors division. "We've been fortunate that we've been able to keep the vast majority of our workers employed."

James Hunter, president of Hunter Group, said business is soft, but "we're hanging in there. We've got work and we've got work that we're working on getting."

Housing and credit woes have hit the construction industry, as financial institutions have scaled back their lending and tightened their standards.

However, there might be

Commercial permits, January-June

	Oxford	Starkville	Tupelo
2008	25	107	12
2009	6	138	11

some light at the end of the dark tunnel.

On Monday, the Commerce Department said construction spending rose for the second time in three months in June, thanks in part to an increase in residential building and government-funded infrastructure projects.

But June's \$965.7 billion in spending was still 10.2 percent lower than a year earlier.

The data followed earlier reports that new and existing home sales each rose in June, and new home construction also increased.

State and local construction rose 1 percent as spending on education and highway construction also grew. However,

the rise in government construction helped offset a decline in new malls, office buildings and other commercial nonresidential building, which fell 0.5 percent.

In Northeast Mississippi, three cities had mixed results over the past year.

In Tupelo, the number of commercial permits in the first half of 2009 nearly matched the same period a year earlier. But in Oxford, there were 19 fewer commercial permits issued. In Starkville, permits rose by 31.

For the first six months of 2009 compared to the year-ago period, residential construction permits rose slightly, from 32 to 35 in Tupelo. In Starkville, 19 fewer were issued this year. In Oxford, 128 fewer permits were issued.

While material costs have dropped or leveled off, the shortage of projects has put a strain on some companies who are doing what they can to keep workers occupied.

Said Hunter: "I'm waiting on the economy to turn around."

"There's not enough work to go around for everyone, to be honest. We've been fortunate that we've been able to keep the vast majority of our workers employed."

Jerry Maxcy

senior vice president of Jesco Inc.

The banks are there to loan the money. They are waiting for people to step up and do it. That's what it takes ... it's a good time for building."

Mike Williams of H.M. Williams Construction said his company has been more involved with private work rather than going after public bidding projects, which has helped in keeping crews busy.

He also sees business slowly picking up.

"I think the first quarter of next year we're going to see it improve," he said. "The construction industry in general has been starved for 1½ years, but we're still going to have a very competitive market."

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Housing market feels squeeze

■ But the outlook looks better as the recession appears to be waning.

By DENNIS SEID
BUSINESS JOURNAL

Real estate agents, mortgage brokers and others with ties to the housing industry in Northeast Mississippi have long said that the region didn't have the big boom in the housing market found elsewhere across the country.

Likewise, the region also didn't experience the big bust that ensued.

But after holding its own last year, the market in Northeast Mississippi has slowed down – at least in the first half of 2009.

According to the Northeast Mississippi Board of Realtors, which gathers information from agents in Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe, Pontotoc, Prentiss and Union Counties, home sales from January to June of this year dropped by

28 percent – from 727 to 520.

"It's beginning to flatten out a little," said Louis Riles, vice president of the board. "You have to consider that we are still in a recession, and the market here has been relatively stable compared to other markets. But until we get more jobs, it's going to be a little slower than it's been."

Unemployment in the region has been at 11 percent or higher five months this year. Fewer jobs mean fewer opportunities to buy homes.

Nationwide, the housing boom was from 2005-2006. According to the Associated Press, from that point up to the recession's trough earlier this year, home resales fell 38 percent and new home sales dropped 76 percent. Construction of homes and apartments declined 79 percent. More than \$4 trillion in home equity was lost, and millions faced foreclosure.

But the worst is over, most

Residential permits, January-June

	Oxford	Starkville	Tupelo
2008	165	51	32
2009	37	32	35

experts believe.

Existing home sales nationwide in June rose 9 percent from January and new home sales climbed 17 percent. Home prices, down a third from their peak, edged up in May, the first monthly increase since June 2006.

"The free fall is over," said Dean Baker of the Center for Economic Policy and Research. Still, he expects the housing market will "be bouncing around the bottom" for the second half of the year.

But, said Riles, "I think we can clearly see better days ahead."

In fact, on Tuesday, the National Association of Realtors

said pending home sales rose for the fifth straight month in June. The last time there were five straight gains was July 2003.

The report tracks signed contracts to buy previously owned homes and is considered a barometer for future home sales.

Holding steady

Home sales last year in the area covered by the Northeast board totaled 1,379. That was a 10 percent drop – or 157 homes – from 2007. Last year's figure is 78 homes – or 5 percent fewer – than what was sold in 2006.

What is holding fairly steady is the number of homes on the market. About 1,300 homes are on the market, which is about normal. In previous years, as many as 1,500 homes have been on the market.

"That tells us a few things, among them being that there's not as much construction of

new homes as there has been in the past," Riles said. "A lot of builders simply can't afford to let a property sit there and wait to be sold. That's a lot of money tied up, so they're not going to go overboard in building."

The number of new housing permits in area cities back up Riles.

The number of single-family, residential housing permits in Tupelo during the first half of 2009 increased to 35 from 32 for the same period a year earlier, but other cities saw big drops.

In the first half of 2008, Oxford issued 165 residential permits; through June of this year, it had issued only 37. Last year, Starkville issued 51 permits for the first half of the year; for the first half of 2009, it issued 32.

The average selling price in Northeast Mississippi peaked in 2007 at \$122,428. A year earlier it was \$116,000. Last year, the average selling price was \$122,049.

In the first half of 2009, the average selling price fell to just over \$109,000 compared to about \$123,000 for the first half of last year.

That means that what is selling well are homes deemed "affordable," or homes priced from roughly \$100,000 to \$200,000.

Joey Guyton, of J.H. Guyton Group Realty, said demand for homes up to \$200,000 has been strong and he sees the pace of home sales picking up toward the end of the year or early next year.

In addition, the first-time homebuyer's credit also is providing a boost in many markets.

"We're starting to see a bump-up from the credit, and there have been several buyers who have taken advantage of it," Riles said. "Northeast Mississippi is still a buyer's market. Our business in June was as good as last year ... because of that, we're feeling pretty confident about the second half of the year."

"The housing market is healing and the patient is getting healthier at an accelerating pace," said economist Joel L. Naroff, president of Naroff Economic Advisors Inc.



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'A little age and a little youth'

The Tupelo-based Hunter Group has been in business since 1983 and is run by a father-son team.

By **Carlie Kollath**
BUSINESS JOURNAL

TUPELO - Drive around Northeast Mississippi and chances are you'll see several buildings constructed by the Hunter Group.

The Tupelo-based company has been in business for 26 years and has built manufacturing facilities, restaurants, medical offices and churches. Riley Hunter, vice president of Hunter Group, joked that he thinks they've built more dental offices than anything else over the years.

"We made a living here just working within a 60-mile radius of Tupelo," Hunter said.

The Hunter Group is owned by the Hunter family and has 15 employees. The company is split into four divisions.

Hunter Construction is the biggest part of the business, followed by Hunter Realty and Hunter Investment Group. The divisions do most of their business in Northeast Mississippi, with a heavy concentration in Lee, Lafayette and Oktibbeha counties.

The fourth division, Hunter Hunting Ranch Realty Group, is based in southwest Texas and sells hunting ranches. The properties vary in size and price, said Hunter Group President James Hunter. One is an exotic, high-fence ranch with antelope and other non-native animals.

In Mississippi, the Hunters focus on building. James Hunter spent close to 20 years doing residential building and then transitioned to commercial buildings.

The company has many recognizable projects under its belt. Right now, it is converting the former Ruby Tuesday location in The Mall at Barnes Crossing to a Varsity Grille and adding a sky bar to Old Venice Pizza Co. in Starkville. It's also converting Pearl Street Pasta in Oxford to a Varsity Grille.

Hunter Construction also built Kirk's Grill in Pontotoc, Downtown Stables Bar & Grill in

Tupelo and Seafood Junction in Byhalia.

In addition, Hunter takes on manufacturing and commercial construction jobs.

Last year, the company was busy rebuilding 530,000 square feet of American Furniture after a fire tore through the Ecrú facility in February. Hunter finished the job in six months.

Hunter also built a 250,000-square-foot facility for Lane in Saltillo, the former Prudential offices on West Main St. in Tupelo and Carlock Toyota's new showroom by PetSmart in Tupelo.

Construction is a far cry from the family's former line of business - running restaurants.

James Hunter's parents owned Hunter's Restaurant in Tupelo for 25 years, along with several

others. The restaurant was on North Gloster, next to the current Howard Johnson.

Riley Hunter said with a laugh, "Where we went from cooking to construction, I don't know."

James Hunter said the change just happened.

He graduated from Ole Miss and started working as a contractor at a lumber store in Tupelo. He said he drove a lot of nails and got a taste for the business.

That was 30 years ago.

Now, he works alongside his son, Riley, who has been with the company full time for 20 years.

"We know what each other's doing, but he runs his jobs and I



DESTIE LEE

James Hunter, right, and his son, Riley, run Hunter Construction. Some of their current projects involve converting Ruby Tuesday in Tupelo to Varsity Grill and adding a rooftop bar to Old Venice Pizza Co. in Starkville.

run mine," James Hunter said. "He's young and in his prime and he take a lot off me. But I've

been around longer and have more contacts so it works well. A little age and a little youth."

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

LEE COUNTY

Delta looks at subsidy to continue air service

■ TUPELO - Last month, Delta Air Lines notified Tupelo Regional Airport officials, as well as seven other communities, that it was terminating air service unless it could get federal help.

Delta is seeking funds through the Essential Air Service program.

After getting the notice, the U.S. Department of Transportation issued a "hold-stop" order that prevents the airline from stopping service.

For 90 days - or by Oct. 12 - the federal agency will request bids for airlines to serve those markets with a subsidy through its Essential Air Service program.

That means Delta/Mesaba and any other carrier interested in providing air service can bid on it. The amount of the subsidy, which must be reviewed every two years, depends on the service provided.

Delta said it would like to continue providing service as long as it can obtain the subsidy.

Cooper Tire nears start of expansion

■ TUPELO - By March, the Cooper Tire and Rubber plant will have a 32,000-square-foot addition with more equipment and potentially more jobs.

Last week contractors interested in the \$5.75 million project met in City Hall to talk about the work in

a "pre-bid" conference.

The mixing building expansion in Tupelo will add 32,000 square feet to a sprawling complex that already has expanded several times and now covers more than 900,000 square feet.

Bids will be rejected if they're more than 10 percent over the estimated \$5.75 million cost.

In addition, two other bids will be accepted. One is for a project valued at about \$450,000 that would add an electrical room, while the other is for \$140,000 for site alterations.

The bids will be opened on Aug. 11, and work must be completed on the expansion within 210 days.

When fully operational, the additional mixing line could add as many as 16 new jobs.

Renasant posts \$4.2M second-quarter earnings

■ TUPELO - Renasant Corp. reported second-quarter net income of nearly \$4.3 million, compared to nearly \$8 million a year earlier.

The results represent earnings of 20 cents per share, versus 38 cents per share a year ago.

Non-interest income increased 11.9 percent to \$15.4 million generated primarily through the company's mortgage operations and gains from the sale of investment securities coupled with what the company said was "continued stability of other sources of non-interest income."

Mortgage loan production increased \$56.7 million to \$260.6 million.

Net interest income was nearly \$24.2 million,

compared to \$27.5 million a year ago.

Net interest margin was 3.04 percent, compared to 3.43 percent a year earlier and 3.19 percent for the first quarter of this year.

Total assets at the end of the second quarter were about \$3.70 billion. Total loans were about \$2.47 billion, while total deposits were \$2.6 billion.

BancorpSouth reports \$34M in 2Q earnings

■ TUPELO - BancorpSouth Inc. said its second-quarter net income was \$33.9 million, compared to \$40.1 million for the same period a year earlier.

The results represent earnings of 41 cents per share, versus 49 cents a year ago.

Net income for the first six months of the year was \$63.3 million or 76 cents per share.

BancorpSouth saw its mortgage lending revenue rise to \$11 million, compared to \$4.6 million in 2008. Because of favorable mortgage rates that were at or near record lows, BancorpSouth saw a significant increase in mortgage loan origination. It reported having originated loans of \$932 million in the first half of the year, versus \$963 million for all of 2008.

Net interest revenue rose slightly from \$109.8 million to \$110.9 million for the quarter. The net interest margin was 3.75 percent, compared to 3.79 percent a year ago and 3.74 percent in the first quarter.

Total assets as of June 30 were \$13.3 billion, with total deposits of \$10.2 billion. Loans and leases, net of unearned income, was \$9.8 billion.

Hancock Fabrics chairman steps down from post

■ BALDWIN - Carl Berg, chairman of Hancock Fabric's board of directors, resigned from the company's board Tuesday.

In a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Hancock said Berg was stepping down to devote additional time to his other business ventures. Hancock added that Berg "has no disagreements with the company on any matter."

Berg was listed by Forbes as one of the world's richest people in 2004 and worth an estimated \$1.3 billion. The day after Hancock filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in March 2007, Berg, through Berg & Berg Enterprises, bought about 2.7 million shares or about 14 percent of the common stock.

Neil Subin was elected to fill Berg's spot on the board until the next annual shareholder meeting. He is president and managing director of Trendex Capital Management, an investment firm focusing primarily on distressed and troubled companies, and he was on Hancock's equity committee.

Current Director Steve Scheiwe was appointed chairman of the board.

Also in the filing, Hancock said Linda Gail Moore, its senior vice president and chief merchant, was reassigned to an interim position of strategic merchandising special projects.

Her job will include "reviewing and analyzing merchandising opportunities," the filing said.

CLAY COUNTY

Navistar lays off 275 employees

■ WEST POINT - Last month Navistar International laid off 275 of its workers at its West Point facility, days after losing a Pentagon bid to build more mine-resistant, ambush-protected, or MRAP, vehicles.

On June 30, Navistar Defense, a subsidiary of Warrenville, Ill.-based Navistar International, announced that it would "continue to grow its business" even though it was not selected to produce the U.S. Army's MRAP All-Terrain Vehicle, or M-ATV.

Instead, Oshkosh Corp., of Wisconsin, won the bid to build 2,244 of the vehicles for \$1.05 billion.

Because the West Point plant runs on a contract basis in which employment depends on the projects it receives, Navistar had to let go the employees, company officials said.

The layoffs were immediate, said company spokeswoman Elissa Koc.

Severance packages were given to the employees, who could be rehired if future contracts are obtained, Koc said.

About 200 employees will remain to finish ongoing work at the plant.

Navistar is building 262 Husky tactical support vehicles for the British in West Point, in addition to other work for the U.S. military.

Navistar won more than \$3 billion in contracts to build 5,222 MaxxPro MRAPs and it won a \$752 million contract to build 822 of the MaxxPro Dash, a lighter version of the MaxxPro.

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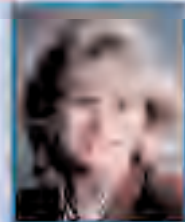
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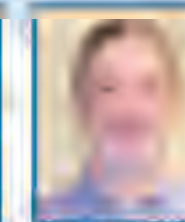
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Chamber Connection

A publication of Journal Publishing and the CDF Chamber Division – August 2009

BancorpSouth and General Atomics Honored at Governor's Cup Awards; Lee County wins CEDA Award

BancorpSouth and General Atomics were recognized as the district winners of the 2009 Governor's Cup Awards at the Mississippi Economic Development Council's (MEDC) Awards Banquet at the Beau Rivage in Biloxi, Mississippi, July 23. Each year MEDC and the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) recognize outstanding businesses across the state. From the district winners, one large business and one small business are selected as statewide winners. Winners are selected based on three measures: community involvement, economic impact, and human resources.

"I am pleased to recognize the hard work and dedication of the 2008 statewide Governor's Cup Award recipients," Governor Haley Barbour said.

In 2008, BancorpSouth hired 622 new Mississippi team members to staff its 111 banking locations in 58 communities around the state. New branches were built in Pontotoc, New Albany, Colony Park/Ridgeland, and Houston Levee and Snowden Grove, both in Southaven. BancorpSouth's capital investment in the state of Mississippi for 2008 was \$24.6 million. The company employs 4,513 employees, with 2,653 Mississippians. The company's overall payroll is \$271,555,518, with payroll in Mississippi at approximately \$101,593,753.

Headquartered in Tupelo, Mississippi, BancorpSouth deepens its roots in each community where it operates, making service to the myriad communities in which the company resides a top priority. Countless sponsorship dollars and service hours are given to education, athletics, community and economic development, arts, conservation, and more; all with one simple goal of improving communities and the lives of its citizens, right where they are.

General Atomics is bringing

cutting edge defense technology to Tupelo/Lee County. At its Tupelo Lee Industrial Park South location, General Atomics builds the new Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) for future Navy aircraft carriers. The Shannon facility also tests significant portions of the EMALS and the Advanced Arresting Gear system (AAG).

General Atomics employs 34 people with an annual payroll of \$1,221,110. Following the completion of a \$1.2 million high cycle test facility to test generators and power distribution systems for the Navy adjacent to the initial plant site in August 2008, site work began on a 37,000 square foot addition to their manufacturing and testing facility. The over \$3.4 million investment enables General Atomics to expand its existing workforce of 34 people to over 60 employees. The Phase II addition provides capacity to support the EMALS and AAG system production. General Atomics is also in the planning stages for additional commercial sector applications to include power conversion equipment for wind turbines.

Lee County was the winner of a Community Economic Development Award (CEDA) in recognition of its Lee County/Marchbanks Helping Hand Tuition Guarantee Program at the recent Mississippi Economic Development Council 2009 Summer Conference in Biloxi. The CEDA honors communities throughout Mississippi for their efforts to advance their economic viability through economic and community development programs during the 2008 calendar year.

"The efforts of all the community leaders involved in the planning and implementation of this project exemplify their commitment to excellence in moving Lee County and the City of Tupelo forward," said Carol Hardwick, Executive Director of MEDC. "We are pleased to honor them with this award."



Pictured are Mike Clayborne, CREATE Foundation, Supervisor Tommie Lee Ivy, Supervisor Joe McKinney, Supervisor Phil Morgan, and David Rumbarger, CDF.



Pictured are David Rumbarger, CDF; Dave Bush, BancorpSouth; Gordon Lewis, BancorpSouth; Aubrey Patterson, BancorpSouth; Jim Ray, BancorpSouth; Randy Burchfield, BancorpSouth; Albert White, BancorpSouth; Brian Aehnlich, BancorpSouth and Michael Lindsey, BancorpSouth.



Pictured are: Shane Homan, CDF; Greg Giachelli, CDF; David Rumbarger, CDF; Peter Rinaldi, General Atomics; Percy Maness, General Atomics; Debra Beadles, General Atomics; Jacque Stanford, General Atomics; Dewayne Stanford, General Atomics; Shane Whitfield, General Atomics; and Donnie Isbell, General Atomics.

Chamber focus

Dear Friends:

Congratulations to BancorpSouth and General Atomics on receiving district awards last week at the Mississippi Economic Development Council summer conference, and also to the Lee County Board of Supervisors for winning the Community Economic Development Award. The Town of Plantersville received an Excellence award at the summer conference of the Mississippi Municipal League held this month. Congratulations to all of these winners.

New and informative programs are being introduced in our program of work for the Chamber Division. A new lunch series called Business Boxed Lunch and Learn kicked off this month to meet the needs of the business members and their request for specific and targeted seminars. Thanks to John Lindsey of Lindsey & Associates, Phoenix, Arizona, for sharing with our members "How to Treat Customers as Guests to Generate More Sales." The October 7 luncheon will feature Dick Brodbeck with the Better Business Bureau speaking on "Schemes Against Businesses." According to a survey conducted by the Better Business Bureau, 9 out of 10 employees responsible for paying company bills have other major responsibilities in addition to handling accounts payable. Therefore, it's understandable how busy employees can be easy prey for business schemes if they aren't careful. Registration to attend the Business Boxed Lunch and Learn Series is \$15.00 for CDF members and \$25.00 for non-



SMITH

members. Session times are 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. in the CDF boardroom. You may register on line at www.cdfms.org or call the CDF office at 662-842-4521.

CDF is partnering with the Renasant Center for IDEAs and the Mississippi Small Business Development Center to present a "Secrets of Advertising" seminar. The free seminar is scheduled for August 26 in the CDF boardroom from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. Katie Drewery with the Mississippi Small Business Development Center and Josh Mabus, owner of the Mabus Agency, will be facilitating the session. Registration information is included in this publication.

THANK YOU to all of our members. Be sure to check the Upcoming Events page at www.cdfms.org for more upcoming events at CDF. We appreciate your investment and ask for your continued support as we seek new programs and activities that will add value to your membership.



Vice President of Chamber Services

Community Development Foundation's Board of Directors for 2009-2010

CDF is governed by a 59-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.

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(662) 891-1974
INTERIOR DESIGN

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TUPELO, MS 38801
(662) 871-7821
LAWN & GARDEN

Dates to remember

Ambassadors First Quarterly Meeting
Thursday, August 13
CDF boardroom
4:00 p.m.

First Friday
Friday, September 11
Mall at Barnes Crossing Food Court
7:00 a.m.

Hughes Creative Concepts: Taking Signage From Imagination to Fabrication

According to the United States Small Business Administration, signs are the most effective, yet least expensive form of advertising for small businesses. Signage will develop the consumer's memory for a location and the products or services that it offers, it reinforces that memory and extends recall of other advertising efforts, and it attracts new customers by prompting impulse and first-time visits. Harold Hughes, owner of Hughes Creative Concepts in Tupelo, can attest to this and is on a mission to educate his customers on not just the significance of signage, but the importance of choosing the right signage for your business.

"Your sign can bring in 15-20% more business," said Hughes. "We use our location on Gloster Street to educate the public on the importance of signage. A good sign gives you 24-hour advertising."

A 21-year veteran of the sign business, Hughes opened his new location at 410 South Gloster Street in March 2009. The company offers a vast array of services that can be performed in-house as a result of the 8,000 square foot facility,



enabling Hughes Creative Concepts to offer their customers not just a superior product but an affordable one as well. They participate in every aspect of the sign process from design, engineering, estimating, permitting, and project management, to manufacturing, service, and installation. Hughes owns the largest sign truck in town at 65 feet, enabling them to deliver large signs to its customers.

Hughes specializes in lighted signs, vehicle wraps, fleet graphics for tractor-trailers and trucks, LED message centers, and corporate signage. Just a few of their corporate clients include Barnes & Noble, Chili's, Jos. A Bank, Buckle, and the University of Mississippi Athletic Department. They work with contractors and construction companies, real estate agencies, and more. An onsite certified welder and graphic designer make anything possible for customers of Hughes Creative Concepts. Technology is



another aspect that sets Hughes Creative Concepts apart. They can create a rendering of a client's signage to depict exactly what the sign will look like on their building, rather than just showing the customer a print-out of their sign. While Hughes and his staff offer many of the products and services that other sign companies advertise, perhaps it is their customer service that sets them apart.

"We thrive on customer relations. We try to keep an ongoing relationship with every customer and strive to be personable," said Hughes. "We try to educate our clients on the importance of proper signage by giving them information

from the Small Business Administration and directing them to their website."

Hughes Creative Concepts takes it one step further than the competition by offering a special guarantee for clients that engage in their full marketing program. For companies who have been in business for a minimum of three years in a retail setting, Hughes offers a full image consultation where they evaluate their client's marketing plan, assess their needs, and then offer a guaranteed increase in business if the company fully implements the business marketing program offered by Hughes. They tout greater sales, more visibility, and bet-

ter advertising which will ultimately grow the business.

Since the move from their previous location, Hughes Creative Concepts has gone from a 1,200 traffic count to over 21,000. They pride themselves on doing the best work available, as 60% of their business is repeat business. Hughes and his staff believe in going the extra mile for the customers and taking more time than the typical sign company to ensure satisfaction from their clients, and they continually strive to educate business owners on the importance of getting the right sign for their business. It is those little extra touches that make Hughes Creative Concepts such an exceptional business in the Tupelo/Lee County community.

"We want our customers to know that this sign is the absolute best thing for their business," said Hughes.

Hughes Creative Concepts is located at 410 South Gloster Street in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.844.1905. For more information, please visit their website at www.hughessigns.net.

MOSSY OAK PROPERTIES

As part of the ribbon cutting ceremony, Lannie Wallace, executive vice president of Mossy Oak Properties, presented an oak tree to Wesley Webb, owner/broker of Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo. Since its beginning in 1986 by founder and CEO, Toxey Haas, Mossy Oak has grown to embody an outdoor lifestyle and has utilized the Oak Tree in its mark to represent the importance of land to our economy, our country, our world, and our lives. Wallace's presentation to Webb of the Oak Tree symbolizes the love of the land, the commitment to conservation, and the dedication to stewardship of the land that the growing ranks of Mossy Oak Properties brokers share.



To celebrate the new location of Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo, a ribbon cutting was held. Pictured are: Brandi Sheffield; Korbin Sheffield; Cheryl King; Casey Webb, Lawhon & Webb Insurance; Wesley Webb, Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo; Emily Addison, CDF; Jason Sheffield, Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo; and Mike Stroup, Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo. Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo is located at 2990 McCullough Boulevard in Belden, and can be reached at 662.844.1681.

HONEY BAKED HAM



A ribbon cutting was held at Honey Baked Ham in Tupelo. Pictured on the front row at the event are: Michael Blankenship, Old Venice Pizza Company; Beverly Bedford, Honda of Tupelo; Tina Wood, Power 101; Carmen Tedford, Cellular South; Sonya Ballard, Honey Baked Ham; Mayor Jack Reed, Jr.; Chauncey Godwin, Honey Baked Ham; Ann Godwin, Honey Baked Ham; Fran Clardy, Honey Baked Ham; Heather Bolton, Honey Baked Ham; David Rumbarger, CDF; Emily Addison, CDF; Waurene Heflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; Bea Luckett, J. Guyton Group Realty; Josh Mabus, Mabus Agency; and Scott Medlock, The McCarty Company. Pictured on the back row are: Veleka Ball, CB&S Bank; Louis Conley, Renasant Bank; Michelle Guyton, MG Landscape Group; Abbie Moreno, ABasket Kase; Cindy Bryant, LSI Human Resource Solutions; Kathy Bailey, Crye-Leike Realtors; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Carey Snyder, Snyder and Company; Renee Kelton, Lyons HR; Cindy Black, Prudential 1st Real Estate; Tim Long, Cellular South; Ben Hill, Renasant Bank; Blair Hill, Master Hospitality; Carolyn Moss, Comfort Inn; Moe Bristow, Culligan Water Depot; Brian Steger, Yocona Area Council Boy Scouts of America; Johnna Moore, WIVA/WLOV/WKDH; Bert Sparks, WIVA/WLOV/WKDH; Kyle Finley, Home Décor Innovations; and Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance. Honey Baked Ham is located at 499 Gloster Creek Village, Suite B-8 in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.844.4888.

COUNTRY FLOORING



A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at Country Flooring in Saltillo. Pictured on the front row are: Tim Long, Cellular South; Emily Addison, CDF; Stan Wood, Custom Concrete Creations; Alderman Brad Woodcock; Harley Ray; Tommy Holcomb, Country Flooring; Mayor Bill Williams; Kelsey Pearce; Kristi Pearce; Payton Pearce; Brett Pearce, Country Flooring; Thresa McCallum, Country Flooring; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; Bea Luckett, J. Guyton Group Realty; Waurene Heflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; and Sandy Turner, Crye-Leike Realtors. Pictured on the back row are: Abbie Moreno, ABasket Kase; Mike Maynard, Weatherall's, Inc.; Bert Sparks, WIVA/WLOV/WKDH; Renee Kelton, Lyons HR; Barbara Smith, Tupelo Airport Authority; Moe Bristow, Culligan Water Depot; Blair Hill, Master Hospitality; Cindy Hale, Tupelo Automobile Museum; Brian Porter, Renasant Bank; Richard Carleton, Mall at Barnes Crossing; Cindy Bryant, LSI Human Resource Solutions; Bill McNutt, WLM Insurance, LLC; and Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance. Country Flooring is located at 2686 Suite D, Highway 145 South in Saltillo and can be reached at 662.869.3545.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FIRST FRIDAY

Friday, September 11, 2009

Mr. Butch Brown
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of
Transportation

The Mall at Barnes Crossing
Food Court
7:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast Will Be Served.

For more information, call:
662.842.4521

3RD ANNUAL CDF MEMBERSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2009
BIG OAKS GOLF CLUB
1ST ROUND 8:00 A.M./2ND ROUND 1:00 P.M.

COMPANY NAME _____
CONTACT _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE _____ EMAIL _____
I WOULD LIKE TO _____ MORNING SESSION _____ AFTERNOON SESSION
TEAM MEMBERS _____

ENTRY FEE: \$20 INDIVIDUAL OR \$300 TEAM
\$500 HOLE SPONSOR OR \$6000 TEAM & HOLE SPONSOR
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PLEASE BILL MY _____ VIA _____ MASTERCARD _____ AMERICAN EXPRESS _____
CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION _____



ENTRY DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 10



3RD ANNUAL CDF MEMBERSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

1. First round play begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. A buffet lunch will be served at 12:00 noon and second round play will commence at 1:00 p.m.
2. An awards reception and business after hours will be held at 5:00 p.m. to award winners in each flight and all other prizes.
3. Social prizes will be awarded on designated holes for: longest drive, and most accurate drive.
4. Sponsorship levels include: hole sponsor, \$300; putting green sponsor, \$500; driving range sponsor, \$500; luncheon sponsor, \$1,000.
5. Tournament sponsors may set up a tent on their hole and give away any promotional items or information pertaining to their company. Putting green and driving range sponsors may set up tents and give away items in the registration area.



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
JENNIE BRADFORD CURLEE
AT 662.842.4521 OR JCURLBE@CDFMS.ORG





WORKFORCE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT - FALL SEMESTER 2009

Statistical Process Control
3 hours
Tuesdays, Aug. 4 & 11
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$55

Essentials of Leadership
4 hours
Wednesday, Aug. 12
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$55

Essentials of Communicating
4 hours
Wednesday, Aug. 12
12:30-4:30 p.m., \$55

Beginning Computers I
18 hours
Tuesdays, Aug. 18-Sept. 22
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$75

Human Resource Certification Exam Preparation
30 hours
Tuesdays, Aug. 18-Oct. 20
6:00-9:00 p.m.
\$800 for SHRM members
\$850 for non-members

Technical Problem Solving Skills
12 hours
Wednesdays, Aug. 19-Sept. 2
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$65

Microsoft Access Level I
15 hours
Thursdays, Aug. 20-Sept. 17
8:00-11:30 a.m., \$75

Basics of Residential Wiring
30 hours
Thursdays, Aug. 20-Oct. 22
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$275

Math Refresher
6 hours
Tuesday & Wednesday, Aug. 25 & 26
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$55

Beginning Computer Keyboarding/Typing
18 hours
Tuesdays, Aug. 25-Sept. 29
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$79

Customer Service
6 hours
Wednesdays, Aug. 26 & Sept. 2
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$50

Hazvoper 8 Hour Refresher
8 hours
Thursdays, Aug. 27
8:00-4:30 p.m., \$150

QuickBooks Level I
12 hours
Tuesdays, Sept. 1-22
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$65

Microsoft Word Level I
18 hours
Mondays
Sept. 7-Oct. 5
8:30-11:30 p.m., \$75
OR
18 hours
Mondays
Sept. 7-Oct. 5
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$75

Introduction to AutoCAD 2009
18 hours
Mondays & Wednesdays, Sept. 7-Oct. 5
3:30-5:30 p.m., \$95

Introduction to Blue Print Reading
6 hours
Tuesdays & Wednesday, Sept. 8 & 9
8:00 a.m.-12 p.m., \$50

Resolving Conflicts
4 hours
Wednesday, Sept. 9
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$55

Coaching Job Skills
4 hours
Wednesday, Sept. 9
12:30-4:30 p.m., \$55

Corey Focus: Achieving Your Highest Priorities
7 hours
Friday, Sept. 11
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., \$125

Microsoft Excel Level I
15 hours
Wednesdays, Sept. 16-Oct. 14
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$75
OR
15 hours
Thursdays, Sept. 17-Oct. 15
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$75

Understanding and Implementing 5S
2 hours
Thursday, Sept. 17
8:30-10:30 a.m., \$50

Web Page Design
18 hours
Mondays, Sept. 21-Oct. 26
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$75

Lean Office
12 hours
Tuesdays, Sept. 22-Oct. 6
12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., \$75

OSHA 10 Hour Certification for General Industry
10 hours
Thursdays, Sept. 24 & 25
9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$50

Beginning Computers II
18 hours
Thursdays, Oct. 1-Nov. 5
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$75

Business Writing 101
6 hours
M-W, October 5-7
9:00-11:00 a.m., \$60

Value Stream Mapping
6 hours
Tuesdays, Oct. 6 & 13
8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$65

Computer Maintenance and Upgrade
12 hours
Tuesdays, Oct. 6-27
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$55

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
20 hours
Tuesdays and Thursdays, Oct. 6-22
8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$175

Improving Work Habits
4 hours
Wednesday, Oct. 14
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$55

Supporting Change
4 hours
Wednesday, Oct. 14
12:30-4:30 p.m., \$55

Microsoft Excel II
12 hours
Mondays, Oct. 19-Nov. 9
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$65
OR
12 hours
Mondays, Oct. 19-Nov. 9
6:00-9:00 p.m., \$65

E-Mail Etiquette Class
3 hours
Wednesday, Oct. 21
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$35

Team Building
6 hours
Wednesdays, Oct. 21 & 28
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$50

General Industry Ergonomics
4 hours
Tuesday, Oct. 27
8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$50

Microsoft Word Level II
9 hours
Thursdays, Nov. 5-19
8:30-11:30 a.m., \$55
OR
9 hours
Tuesdays
6-9 p.m.
Nov. 17-Dec. 1, \$55

Developing Performance Standards & Goals
4 hours
Wednesday, Nov. 18
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$55

Providing Performance Feedback
4 hours
Wednesday, Nov. 18
12:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m., \$55

Delegating
4 hours
Wednesday, Dec. 9
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$55

Effective Discipline
4 hours
Wednesday, Dec. 9
12:30-4:30 p.m., \$55

The Oren Dunn City Museum Celebrates 25 Years of Preserving the Past

What do Dudie Burgers, a Scarecrow exhibit, and the History Hounds have in common? They are among the many fun festivities offered at the Oren Dunn City Museum, which has served as Tupelo's hub for local artifacts and history for 25 years.

With its mission to "collect and preserve the history and heritage of Tupelo, Lee County, and Northeast Mississippi, and to engage and to educate in an enriching and entertaining manner," the Oren Dunn City Museum averages 300 visitors a month, most of whom are school age children.

"Elementary students in third and fourth grades study local history in school. We want to help educate students for successful testing," comments Rae Mathis, Operations Manager for the Oren Dunn City Museum. "We recently hired Janice Anthony as Museum Educator to streamline tours and educational activities with the Mississippi Department of Education's curriculum."

For the first time this year, students were able to participate in one of two educational day camps: History Hounds and Junior Curator Museum Madness. As a History Hound, students created their own exhibits by playing "artifact detective." Each student learned prop-

er handling of artifacts, participated in an archeological dig, chose one artifact to research, and created a relevant story about the artifact. Junior Curators learned how to use museum software to locate specific artifacts from the museum's collection room, and created their exhibit from start to finish, including writing their own public service announcements. At the camp's end, students from both groups held an open house for their families to view the exhibits.

"The students who participated in the day camps were able to have a real life experience for what is involved with doing an exhibit," said Mathis.

Other annual events hosted at the Oren Dunn City Museum include the Dudie Burger Festival and the Scarecrow exhibit. In its seventh year, the Dudie Burger Festival is held the first weekend in May in conjunction with Tupelo's Blue Suede Cruise. Each year, the festival draws nearly 1000 people, and festival goers eat over 1500 Dudie Burgers. Non-profit and service organizations participate in the museum's annual Scarecrow exhibit. Representatives from each organization design and build their own scarecrow for display at the museum, and provide literature about their organization to

Fall Festival attendees.

According to Mathis, the main focus of the museum is to "help people understand that history is vital to this community, and there's no way we could do the programs we do without the support of the Friends organization."

In its tenth year, the Friends of the Oren Dunn City Museum, chaired by Dr. Harold Hudson, continues to serve the museum through fundraising efforts and volunteer services, which benefit the museum's programming, facilities, and activities. Hudson hopes to create a buzz about the Friends organization by hosting a 25th Silver Anniversary Gala at the museum on Saturday, August 22, from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. For just \$20, guests can enjoy dancing and hors d'oeuvres, as well as a silent auction featuring historically significant artifacts donated by members of the community. According to Hudson and Mathis, the purpose of the event is to increase awareness and membership in the Friends organization and to celebrate the museum.

"We would like to expand Friends & develop a larger organization," said Hudson.

"We are celebrating the first 25 years of the muse-

um and are looking forward to the next 25 years," adds Mathis.

Museum Curator Kenneth McGehee, whose current focus at the museum is to feature Tupelo as a thriving, all-American community, also has plans on how to use funds raised from the gala. According to Mathis, McGehee's hope is to start an endowment through CREATE using funds from the event for future programs and education at the museum.

When asked to elaborate on her experiences as a member of the Community Development Foundation, Mathis shares, "The networking has been very beneficial, and the Membership & Manufacturing Directory is worth its weight in gold." "I really enjoy the seminars at the Renasant Center for IDEAs, and frequently reference a marketing book I received at a recent seminar," adds Mathis.

For ticket requests for the 25th Silver Anniversary Gala, or for more information on membership with the Friends of the Oren Dunn City Museum and other programs and events at the museum, contact Rae Mathis at 662.841.6438 or museum@ci.tupelo.ms.us, or visit their website at www.orendunnmuseum.org.

Renasant Center for IDEAs Business Client Profile

PediaStaff

Keith and Brenda Adams, Owners

What is PediaStaff and what type of services do you offer?

Founded in 2004, PediaStaff is a nationwide, niche-oriented staffing company focusing on the placement and staffing of pediatric therapists. PediaStaff's specialty is the placement of pediatric speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and related assistants within school system settings, hospitals, and clinics across the country. We are one of the few pediatric therapy firms that specialize in all settings and employment durations—full time, part time, contract, direct hire, temp to direct, hourly PRN, and per visit.

What opportunities are available through your office in the Renasant Center for IDEAs?

PediaStaff has grown rapidly since its beginning in 2004 and currently has a corporate office based in the Renasant Center for IDEAs in Tupelo, MS. The Tupelo location is the home of the PediaStaff Career Center which is the entry point for all of the therapy professionals that are placed across the country. The other segment of our company is made up of the PediaStaff team of recruiters who work remotely from their home offices located in Alabama and Florida. The PediaStaff recruiters are primarily responsible for connecting with our clients and are literally the voice of the company for all of our clients which are scattered across the country.

How can therapists and other business owners learn more about PediaStaff?

For more information about PediaStaff check out our website at www.pediastaff.com for the latest jobs and dozens of therapist resources, including articles and videos. For the latest from the world of pediatric therapy, choose the



"About Us" tab and click on the links to Facebook, Twitter, and more!

How has your time at the Renasant Center for IDEAs helped your business?

During our stay at the incubator, the staff at the Renasant Center for IDEAs facilitated a mentorship project to help us optimize Google searches to drive more traffic to our website.

Search engine optimization was a new and necessary expense, and the technical expertise required to get our website to the top of the Google search didn't come cheap. But with outside assistance we were able to leverage our resources to make that change and continue to grow our business.

PediaStaff

Keith and Brenda Adams, owners

Phone: 662-844-1471

keith@pediastaff.com

brenda@pediastaff.com

398 East Main Street - Suite 134

Tupelo, MS 38804

www.pediastaff.com

Town of Plantersville Honored at MML Excellence Awards



Pictured are Mayor Gloria Holland, the Plantersville Board of Aldermen, and other representatives of the Town of Plantersville at the MML Excellence Awards luncheon.

The Town of Plantersville was honored with an Excellence Award at the Mississippi Municipal League (MML) Annual Conference in Biloxi, MS, on July 15. The MML Excellence Awards program recognizes cities and towns for meeting the challenges of municipal government through innovative problem solving, excellence in management, citizen participation, and striving to provide a higher level of service. Each year, awards are given in the areas of public safety, planning and economic development, and city spirit. Winners are chosen by a committee of judges outside of the MML and are recognized at the MML Annual Conference.

Plantersville received the award for Planning & Economic Development for its development strategy. On July 19, 2008, a partnership began between the Town of Plantersville and the John C. Stennis Institute of Government at Missis-

issippi State University. What followed was a plan of action for this small town that brought together citizens young and old, black and white, and male and female, to improve the quality of life for each and every one who calls Plantersville home. As a result of this plan, a community workday was held to renovate an old store that sits atop the concrete foundation of an old schoolhouse. Through the forward thinking of community leaders like Mayor Gloria Holland, the Board of Aldermen, and others, this building has become a community center for all inhabitants of the town to enjoy. During this work day, over 1,000 hours of sweat equity were clocked as area citizens helped restore and renovate the building designated as their community center and the adjacent playground and park. Other parts of the plan that were acted upon included the creation of a Plantersville Youth Council.

HEART TO HEART HOSPICE



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the new location of Heart to Heart Hospice in Tupelo. Pictured on the front row are: Barbara Hall; Waurene Hefflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; James Griffin, Heart to Heart Hospice; Debra Griffin, Heart to Heart Hospice; Pholecia Whitehead, Heart to Heart Hospice; Lil Henry, Heart to Heart Hospice; Jessica Dillard, Heart to Heart Hospice; Rhonda Fancher, Heart to Heart Hospice; Phyllis Goddard, Heart to Heart Hospice; Roseanne Hicks, Heart to Heart Hospice; John Hicks, Heart to Heart Hospice; Mayor Jack Reed, Jr.; Tawanna Martin, Heart to Heart Hospice; Caroline Gross, Heart to Heart Hospice; Tonya Rogers, Heart to Heart Hospice; Tiwana O'Rear, Heart to Heart Hospice; Heather Palmer, Heart to Heart Hospice; Emily Addison, CDF. Pictured on the back row are: Sheila Davis, PPI; Virginia Smith, Access Family Health Services; Kristie Dickey, Heart to Heart Hospice; Joann Young, Heart to Heart Hospice; Stephanie West, Heart to Heart Hospice; Michael Blankenship, Old Venice Pizza Company; Pat Henson, Traceway Manor; Louis Conley, Renasant Bank; Cheryl Land, Sanctuary Hospice House; Johnna Moore, WTVA/WLOV/WKDH; Libby Bell, Sanctuary Hospice House; Cindy Bryant, LSI Human Resource Solutions; Connie Snell, My Elegant Clutter; Bill McNutt, WLM Insurance, LLC; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; Randy Harris, M&F Bank; Barbara Smith, Tupelo Airport Authority; Renee Kelton, Lyons HR; Blair Hill, Master Hospitality; Bea Luckett, J. Guyton Group Realty; Cindy Black, Prudential 1st Real Estate; Carolyn Moss, Comfort Inn; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Danielle Del Grande, Comfort Suites; and Kyle Finley, Home Décor Innovations. Heart to Heart Hospice is located at 1140 West Main Street and can be reached at 662.454.3632.

DESIGNER WICKS



A ribbon cutting was held at Designer Wicks in Mooreville. Pictured on the front row are: Emily Addison, CDF; Waurene Hefflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; Beverly Bedford, Honda of Tupelo; Carolyn Kelly, Designer Wicks; Beckey Neal, Designer Wicks; Logan Neal; Kim Neal, Designer Wicks; Supervisor Phil Morgan; Melanie Rayburn, Designer Wicks; Ann Estes, Designer Wicks; Tracey Powers, Designer Wicks; Jeff Warren, Designer Wicks; Bea Luckett; J. Guyton Group Realty; Kyle Finley, Home Décor Innovations; Kayla Wigginton; and Kaycee Barnes. Pictured on the back row are: Jennifer Noel, American General Life & Accident Insurance Co.; Michael Blankenship, Old Venice Pizza Company; Carmen Tedford, Cellular South; Cindy Bryant, LSI Human Resource Solutions; Johnna Moore, WTVA/WLOV/WKDH; Mike Maynard, Weatherall's, Inc.; Tim Long, Cellular South; Barbara Smith, Tupelo Airport Authority; Butch Palmer, AIG-American General; Carolyn Moss, Comfort Inn; Jane Myers, Wiggles & Wags Pet Sitting; Cindy Hale, Tupelo Automobile Museum; Randy Harris, M&F Bank; Kathy Bailey, Crye-Leike Realtors; Josh Neal, Designer Wicks; Cindy Black, Prudential 1st Real Estate; Benjamin Hill, Renasant Bank; Blair Hill, Master Hospitality; Burris Hankins, Wise Staffing; and Josh Mabus, Mabus Agency. Designer Wicks is located at 558 Hwy 371 in Mooreville, and can be reached at 662.205.4025.

SIGN UP NOW!

To volunteer during the
 2009-2010 CDF Membership Campaign
 Tuesday, October 20-Thursaday, October 22, 2009

All volunteers are invited to attend a
 Campaign Kick-off Workshop
 Wednesday, September 9, 2009
 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
 or
 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

CDF Boardroom
 300 West Main Street
 Tupelo, Mississippi

*For more information or to sign up to volunteer, please contact
 Emily Addison at 662.842.4521 or eaddison@cdfms.org.*

A TO Z HEALTH & WELLNESS



To celebrate the grand opening of A to Z Health & Wellness in Tupelo, a ribbon cutting was held. Pictured are: Emily Addison, CDF; Connie Snell, My Elegant Clutter; Waurene Hefflin, Crye-Leike Realtors; Mike Maynard, Weatherall's, Inc.; Tina Powell, BancorpSouth; Beverly Bedford, Honda of Tupelo; Toby Hedges, Shelter Insurance; Leslie Baker, Premier Bride of Mississippi/Mother and Child; Marti Pulido, A to Z Health & Wellness; Blair Hill, Master Hospitality; Danielle Del Grande, Comfort Suites; Rosendo Pulido, A to Z Health & Wellness; Tim Long, Cellular South; Veleka Ball, CB&S Bank; Councilman Markel Whittington; Bill McNutt, WLM Insurance, LLC; Cindy Bryant, LSI Human Resource Solutions; Louis Conley, Renasant Bank; Mary Hansen, A to Z Health & Wellness; Chris Grubbs, Home Décor Innovations; Kathy Bailey, Crye-Leike Realtors; Les Perry, North Mississippi Medical Center; Scott Jackson, A to Z Health & Wellness; Cindy Black, Prudential 1st Real Estate; and Kyle Finley, Home Décor Innovations. A to Z Health & Wellness is located at 3859 North Gloster Street in Tupelo and can be reached at 662.316.3861.

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Wednesday, August 26, 2009

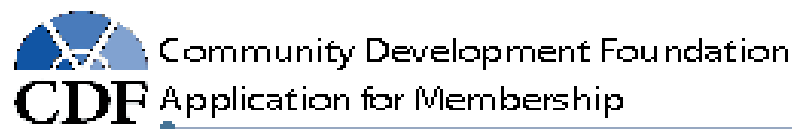
11:00 a.m. to 12 noon
 CDF Boardroom
 300 West Main Street
 Tupelo, MS 38801

Facilitated by
 Ms. Katie Dreverly, Advertising Specialist
 Mississippi Small Business Development Center
 and
 Mr. Josh Adams, Owner, Adams Agency

Participants will learn about opportunity identification, market research, market segmentation, and the positioning, packaging, advertising, and sales



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BUSINESS BRIEFS

LEE COUNTY

Lane to show on-site at furniture market

■ TUPELO – Lane Home Furnishings, which has its roots in Tupelo, has always had a presence during the twice-yearly Tupelo Furniture Market.

But until now, Lane has shown its motion furniture and recliner at locations away from the Furniture Market complex.

Last month, the company announced that, for the first time, it would open a showroom on site at the furniture market's fall show, to be held Aug. 14-16.

"Being located in the middle of the market versus an off-site location makes it more convenient for our dealers," said Lane President Greg Roy. "The market building authority has provided us a terrific space and we look forward to supporting our hometown and local market this year."

TFM Chairman and CEO V.M. Cleveland was obviously pleased with the move by Lane, which is the world's largest manufacturer of reclining furniture.

"Lane has always been supportive of our market, but they weren't on campus, so to speak," he said. "So we're happy to have them and look forward to joining forces. They are an outstanding addition to the Tupelo Furniture Market."

Lane will share a showroom in Building VI with sister company Broyhill. Both companies are divisions of Furniture Brands International.

Lane and Broyhill each will have separate 9,000-square-foot spaces. Even though they'll share common

areas such as the reception area and the kitchen, the companies will have "distinct and separate showrooms to showcase their products," Lane said.

CALHOUN COUNTY

Grant approval clears way for renovation, new plant

■ CALHOUN CITY – A \$95,000 grant has been approved for the town, bringing a new furniture manufacturer closer to reality.

The funds, from the Mississippi Development Authority's Rural Impact Fund, will be used to renovate the metal building that was part of the Kellwood complex on Madison Street.

The renovation of that former shipping location to manufacturing will allow for the start-up of Kidz World LLC, a children's furniture company proposed by Med-Lift owners A.D. and Linda Blount and Justin and Alison Nichols.

The company's specialty is expected to be children's recliners.

The idea for the company came at a furniture market, where the Blounts were trying to sell lift chairs and came home with orders for children's furniture, Mayor J.R. Denton told the Board of Aldermen in May when the board granted the new company a lease on the Kellwood building.

Plans called for the company to begin production with 30 employees and possibly double that number in 12 to 16 months.

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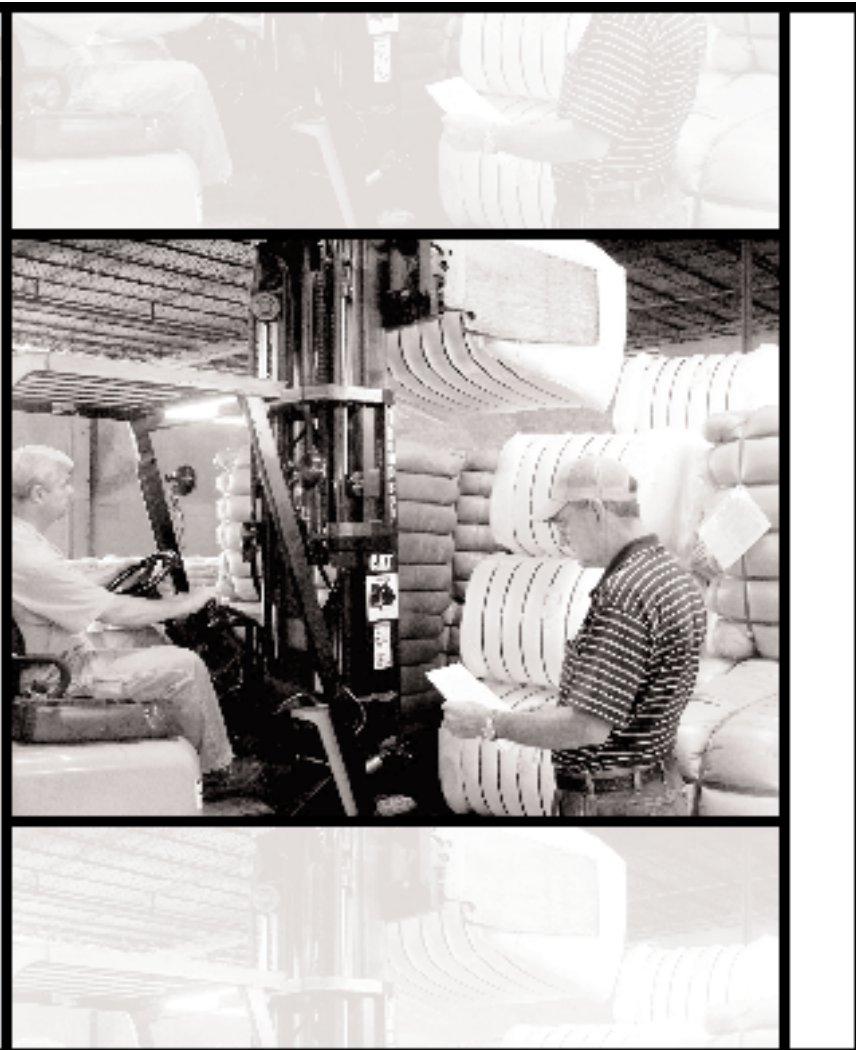
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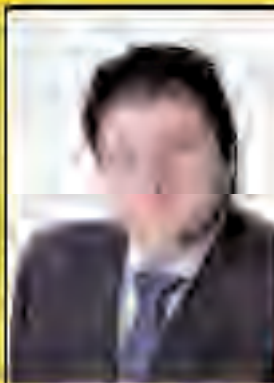


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