

Business Journal

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF JOURNAL PUBLISHING AND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

MARCH 2011

Meeting business gets walloped

Slow economy,
increased
competition
cause slowdown.

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Meeting business gets walloped

■ Conference centers are battling with a slow economy, increased competition.

BY CARLIE KOLLATH

Business Journal

The convention and meeting business took it on the chin during the recession.

In Tupelo alone, the number of conventions, conferences and seminars has plummeted about 75 percent from 2008 to 2010.

"It's tough," said Phil McKay, general manager of the Hilton Garden Inn in Tupelo. "We are beating the bushes harder than we've ever had to find the piece of business that we haven't done yet.

"Everyone is saying we're in the middle of a recovery, but I'm not seeing it yet," he said.

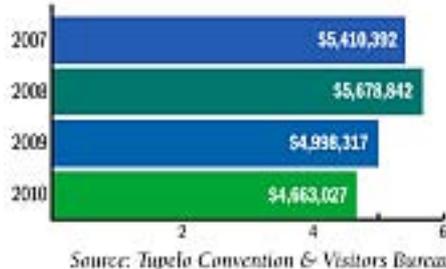
Nationally, the industry is experiencing some signs of hope, but it's still bruised.

Hospitality companies report that bookings are up from last year, but companies looking for meeting places are highly rate-conscious and value-focused.

Leaders in the meeting industry in

Economic impact

The economic impact has dropped by about \$1 million for conventions, conferences and seminars in Tupelo from FY 2008 to FY 2010.



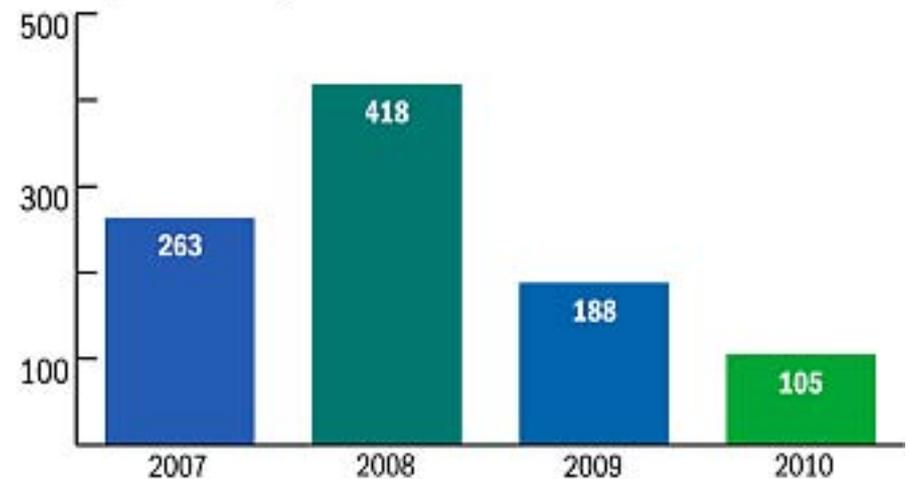
Northeast Mississippi are optimistic about bookings this year. But they still have many concerns. Not only are they facing a tough economy, they are dealing with a huge influx of competitors battling for a piece of a smaller pie.

"We are seeing more competition from all of the communities," said Shari Neely, sales director at the Hilton Garden Inn and BancorpSouth Conference Center in Tupelo. "I think they recognize what a value tourism is to all of our communities."

For example, Oxford has a conference center. Opened in 2004, the Ox-

Tupelo's meeting business

The number of conventions, conferences and seminars in Tupelo has dropped about 75 percent from fiscal year 2008 to FY 2010.



ford Conference Center competes with the four-year-old BancorpSouth Conference Center in Tupelo, along with the conference center at The Inn at Ole Miss in Oxford.

Neely also said other cities in the state, including Natchez, Meridian and Hattiesburg, have stepped up their recruiting efforts to snag more convention and conference business.

And Tupelo and Oxford continue to compete with casinos, which are able to significantly discount hotel room rates because of gaming revenues.

McKay said the BancorpSouth Conference Center also bumps into an unexpected network of competitors – churches.

"We lose a lot to churches," McKay said.

He said people will call the conference center looking for space for a lunch or dinner meeting for about 20 people

But, he said, "There are so many venues in Tupelo for that. Churches do it for free."

Neely and McKay said their focus now is to find groups that will use the hotel and the conference center. Weddings are a segment that has been doing very well lately, Neely said.

The wedding business also is trucking along in Oxford.

"The whole first quarter we've got a lot of bookings and things look good," said Hollis Green, director of

the Oxford Conference Center. "We do a ton of wedding receptions. We're booked through mid-April. I wish I had more Saturdays to do receptions."

He thinks business will become even rosier this fall when the 90-room Hampton Inn opens next door to the conference center.

"There are a lot of events and conferences that we'd like to go after but they won't even consider us because they don't want to be shuttled," Green said.

Last year when business was slower, Green said the conference staff got together and brainstormed about ways to generate business.

"One of our biggest events in our annual yard sale," he said. "It's hard to imagine 1,200 to 1,500 people showing up for a yard sale but they do."

Ideally, Green said, he'd like for the conference center to stick with the traditional business meeting events, but he's not going to turn away business.

"Our goal is a bunch of small events daily or a 600-700 person event," Green said.

He's seen an uptick in Oxford's convention business during the past few months that he hopes will continue.

"The last quarter of the year has been stronger than the last couple of years," Green said.

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

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■ **Gwen Unruh** recently was named Express associate of the month for Express Employment Professionals in Tupelo.



UNRUH

Unruh, who has worked for Express since October, has been a licensed practical nurse at several of North Mississippi Health Services' clinics.

■ **James D. Ward**, professor of political science at Mississippi University for Women, was elected to the National Council of the American Society for Public Administration.

Ward was elected to the organization's governing body from District 3, which spans the Southeast.



WARD

He will be sworn in for a three-year term at the ASPA National Conference March 11-15.

Ward, of Nettleton, is coordinator of the public administration certificate program at MUW. He also serves on the advisory board for the master's program in public policy and administration at Mississippi State University.

■ **Renee Reid** has been named director of marketing and public relations for Mississippi Methodist Senior Services.

She has more than 15 years of experience in marketing, public relations and donor relations.

Mississippi Methodist Senior Services serves more than 1,700 people in its 12 independent living, personal care and skilled nursing care retirement communities.

■ **Wesley Webb** of Mossy Oak Properties of Tupelo has been selected as one of 14 Realtors statewide to participate in the Mississippi Association of Realtors Leadership MAR program for 2011.

The program's curriculum combines individual study, group sessions and project experience to sharpen the leadership skills of each participant and cultivate future association leadership.

■ First American National Bank in luka recently made the following promotions:

• **Tommy Chamblee** to first vice president. He is branch manager of the Fulton offices.

Chamblee has been in banking 11

years and began his career with First American in 2004.

He received his bachelor's degree in business administration with majors in banking and finance and general business at the University of Mississippi. He also is a graduate of the Southeastern School of Commercial



CHAMBLEE



JOHNSON



MCANALLY

Lending at Vanderbilt.

• **Linda S. Johnson** to assistant vice president. She is branch manager of the Tishomingo office.

Johnson began her banking career with First American in 1988. She received an associate's degree in business administration from Northeast Mississippi Community College.

• **Steve McAnally** to first vice president. He is assistant credit administrator.

McAnally has been in banking for 19 years and began his career with First American as manager of the Belmont office in 1994. In 2006, he transferred to the luka office to join the corporate credit department.

He graduated from the University of Mississippi with a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in banking and finance. He is a graduate of the Mississippi School of Banking and the Southeastern School of Consumer and Commercial Lending at Vanderbilt.

■ **Rachel Gulston** was chosen as Franklin Collection Service's employee of the month for February.



GULSTON

Gulston is a customer service representative and has worked at Franklin for more than two years.

■ **Katie McMillan**, branch manager of Key Staff Source in Tupelo, recently received the certified staffing professional designation from the American Staffing Association.

McMillan has worked with Key Staff Source for 1½ years.

The CSP program offers a profes-



McMILLAN

sional credential through completion of an in-depth, self-study course, and an exam of labor and employment law principles and ethical practices applicable to the staffing industry.

The program promotes industry-wide competency standards through a uniform national program.

■ **L. F. (Sandy) Sams Jr. and John G. Wheeler**, shareholders in the Tupelo office of Mitchell, McNutt & Sams, have been named among the top 50 lawyers in Mississippi, as well as the top 50 Memphis area attorneys by the publishers of 2010 Mid-South Super Lawyers. Sams and Wheeler were selected among the top 50 in both categories for the fifth and fourth times, respectively.

For the fifth year, Sams and **Wendell H. Trapp Jr.**, a shareholder in the firm's Corinth office, were among those chosen from Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi in the area of general litigation. Wheeler also was selected for the fifth year in the personal injury defense and medical malpractice group.

For the second year, **William C. Murphree** was included in the field of government, cities and municipalities.

For the third year, **William C. Spencer Jr.** was named as a Mid-South Super Lawyers Rising Star in the transportation practice area.

Scott R. Hendrix was chosen as a Rising Star in the banking area.

Murphree, Spencer and Hendrix are shareholders in the firm's Tupelo office.

■ **Rosamond Posey and Alison Ketter Goodman** have become shareholders in the law firm of Mitchell, McNutt & Sams.



POSEY



GOODMAN

Posey earned a Bachelor of Business Administration cum laude from the University of Mississippi and a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. She is an attorney in the Oxford office. Her practice includes bankruptcy and creditor's rights, business/commercial litigation and

general litigation.

Goodman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Japanese Studies from Rhodes College and a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. She is an attorney in the Tupelo office, and her practice includes general business, corporate and finance and workers' compensation.

■ Renasant Bank recently promoted the following:

• **Kevin Chapman** to senior executive vice president and chief corporate strategy officer.



CHAPMAN



HAYES



POUND



HUTCHESON



WRIGHT

He joined Renasant's control department in 2005. He received his MBA and Bachelor of Science in accounting from Troy State University. He also is a licensed CPA in Alabama.

• **James Hayes** to senior vice president of the IT department.

Before joining Renasant in 2003, he was the director of information technology for Community Eldercare Services.

Hayes received his Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Mississippi.

• **Thomas Pount** to senior vice president and corporate lending officer.

Before joining Renasant, he was a community bank president for another regional bank.

Pount earned a bachelor's degree from Belhaven College. He also attended the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin and the Southeastern School of Com-

mercial Lending.

• **Ryan Hutcheson** to credit officer. He has been with Renasant since May 2004 as a senior credit analyst. He attended the University of Mis-

issippi, graduating with a bachelor's degree in banking and finance.

• **David Wright** to vice president and facilities manager, property management.

He has been with the bank since October as facilities director. Before joining Renasant, he worked for The McCarty Company Architectural and Construction Groups.

Wright attended Mississippi State University, graduating with a master's degree from the College of Architecture, Art and Design.

■ Cooper Tire and Rubber Co. recently recognized service anniversaries for employees at its Tupelo plant.

• **25 years:** Ray Powell, Mark Harsin, Scotty Osborn, Charley Jenkins and Paula Whitlock.

• **20 years:** James Tallie.

• **10 years:** Donnie Bumphis, Robert Shook, Betty Brooks and Rocky Bishop.

• **One year:** Dee Sullivan, Latasha Randle, Aaron Pinkerton, Jeb Ozbim, Marty Abbott, Lewis Wilbanks, Stephen Chism, Rodney Hogan, Kyle Flynn, Danny Swords, Justin Bridgman, Charles Rogers, Randy Moore, Joshua Graham, Cody Stanford, Eric Marble, Andrew Bunch and Jason Loague.

■ Pontotoc native **Van Ray** has been named president of the Bank of Yazoo City. He has been employed by the bank since 1984.



RAY

Ray received his banking and finance degree and MBA from the University of Mississippi. He also graduated from the LSU Graduate School of Banking of the South and Independent Community Bankers of America Investment School at Vanderbilt.

He was elected to the bank's board of directors in 1993 and has been executive vice president since 1996.

■ The Eat With Us Group, the umbrella organization that owns Harveys, Jackson Square Grill, Central Station Grill, Fairpark Grill, Sweet Peppers Deli, Bulldog Deli and Park Heights, recently announced these promotions:

• **Aaron Jenkins** to general manager for Jackson Square Grill.

• **Ryan Silar** to chef at Jackson Square Grill.

• **Terry Long** to general manager at Central Station Grill.

The three employees have a combined 15 years working with the Eat With Us Group.

Travel and tourism could be picking up

Talked to a travel agent lately? Yes, they're still around, even in the age of the Internet. Like newspapers, travel agents haven't gone the way of the dinosaurs just yet.

Jeff Lambert, manager and travel consultant with Global Travel Service in Tupelo, said the office has been staying busy with people willing to travel again.

The buzzword during the recession, "staycation," is still around, but people are venturing out more, he said.

The recession, he added, had the most impact on travel in 2009.

"It really kicked in then," he said. "We thought there would be a sharp drop, and by the end of the year, even though it was down, it wasn't as bad as we thought it would be. Last year was better than the year before. If anything, this year looks like we're back on track."

Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla., is a popular destination as always. And with Disney recently pulling out all the stops, including letting kids up to age nine stay for free, families have been



**Dennis
SEID**

Snow skiing also has its fair share of fans in Northeast Mississippi, with Steamboat Springs, Colo., the most popular spot for families.

"But it's not cheap," Lambert.



Help me help you: As for online travel sites and greater use of the Internet by travelers to book their own flights, cruises, tours, etc., Lambert said it's a battle he's had to fight for years.

"The media has really helped the on-

taking advantage.

And a new Carnival cruise ship in Mobile – the Elation – has replaced the well-worn Holiday, eliciting greater interest from travelers, Lambert said.

"But the earlier you book, the better chance you have of getting a good deal," he added.

line companies, and if travel agents got that kind of free advertising, it would have been great," he said with a laugh.

"But people don't realize that whether they go online or see a travel agent, you're going to get the same price. The online companies are agents, and we're agents.

"I can go and let someone do it for me or I can talk to someone who does it for a living. I happen to this every day for a living."

In other words, Lambert and travel agents likely can provide a better perspective of where you're going and what you want to do. All for the same price.



Gulf Shores needs you: One of the favorite vacation spots for Mississippians is the Gulf Coast, especially Gulf Shores. And Alabama officials say they need more visitors after last year.

If you missed it, state tourism figures show Alabama's beaches had a million fewer visitors in 2010 than the year before, a decline attributed to the Gulf oil spill.

The Alabama tourism department

said the Gulf Coast beaches drew 3.6 million visitors last year, compared with 4.6 million in 2009. Many of those who did visit took advantage of deep discounts.

Leaders say the goal for the state and for the beach communities is to lure former visitors back to the shores.

For Spring Break, that's where we're going. Maybe we'll see some of you there.



Travel more, make more: According to the Global Business Travel Association, U.S. companies should increase their business travel spending by an average of 4 percent to optimize their sales revenue.

In the study that looked at the relationship between travel spending and revenue at 900 public companies from 1998 to 2009, the report concluded that for every \$1 strategically invested in business travel, corporations saw an increase of \$20 in additional gross profit.

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Q&A: Kent Bain

project coordinator for the Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance

The Tupelo-based Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance was started as a way to preserve, enhance, interpret and promote the cultural and heritage assets of the Hills region.

The region is bordered by the Tennessee state line to the north, the Alabama state line to the east, State Highway 14 to the south and Highway 55 to the west.

Reporter Carlie Kollath recently e-mailed with MHAA project coordinator Kent Bain to get an update about the organization.

Q: What's new with the Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance?

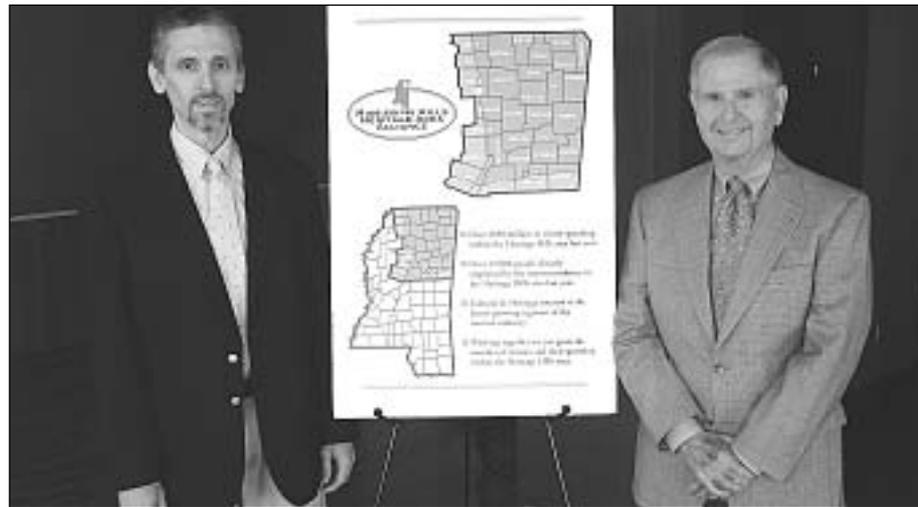
A: Staff is working on finalizing details in contracts for the development of our management plan and Heritage Center, both of which are scheduled to be awarded at the April board meeting.

Q: What is the Heritage Center and what's going on with it?



Find out more about the organization via its website, MississippiHills.org

A: The Heritage Center will present visitor information about the 30 counties in the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area, as well as thematic exhibits covering the Civil War, Civil Rights, etc. We anticipate that work will begin



COURTESY PHOTO

Kent Bain, left, is project coordinator of the Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance. Bobby King is the program manager for the organization.

on the center within the next month or two (inside the Renasant Center for IDEAs), and we plan to set an opening date upon completion of the renovations and installation of exhibits.

Q: What are the goals of the MHAA?

A: This year we are expanding our marketing program to include paid media, both print and electronic. We are increasing our social network content and presence, and we make routine updates and upgrades to our website, www.mississippihills.org.

We aim to enlarge our membership and partnership networks, and develop specific marketing components for the Civil War 150th observance.

Q: What have been the most popular itineraries on your site?

A: Not surprisingly, with 2011 beginning the four-year sesquicentennial commemoration of the Civil War, information related to the war is being read the most.

Q: Do you have any other itineraries in the works?

A: With the anticipated increase in interest about the Civil War over the next four years, we will concentrate on keeping current with related content about events and attractions pertaining to the war.

We do see an opportunity to develop itineraries centered upon culinary and unique shopping experiences within the heritage area.

Q: If you had unlimited resources, what would you do to improve cultural and heritage tourism in the region?

A: The region's many compelling stories would make excellent exhibits in a multimillion dollar state-of-the-art interpretive center.

Q: What's your favorite cultural and heritage attraction in the region? State? Country?

A: The Natchez Trace Parkway is an incredible asset for the region, state and nation. Stretching along a 444-mile route between Natchez and Nashville, it has been called one of America's greatest treasures.

Q: What cultural/heritage attraction in the region, in your opinion, has the most potential for growth?

A: Without singling out any individual attraction, our primary approach is to look for "clusters of significance," and link together sites with common themes such as music, literature, architecture, etc.

We work to develop these into packages that will hopefully have broad appeal to potential visitors.

On a related note, the Mississippi Division of Tourism's blues, culinary and country music trails have significant potential to increase heritage tourism within our state and region.

Q: Is there anything you've found out about Hills' culture or heritage that has surprised you?

A: Many people still don't value their own history or recognize the significance of the stories our region has to offer. We hope to increase local awareness of the value of our region's rich and diverse heritage, and to interpret and promote this heritage to a broader audience.

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Avoid the pitfalls of leadership

While attending a conference in the beautiful Black Mountains of North Carolina, I received a handout from a former professor of the U.S. War College. In fact, he has taught five members of the Joints Chiefs of Staff.

I've included a list of definitions of leadership he shared with the audience.

See if you prefer one over the others and then ask yourself, "Why?" This exercise, often used in my leadership seminars, is food for thought.

Leadership is ...

■ Leadership is an invisible strand as mysterious as it is powerful; it pulls and it bonds. It is a catalyst that creates unity out of disorder. Yet it defies definition. No combination of talents can guarantee it. No process or training can create it where the spark does not exist.

■ The qualities of leadership are universal; they are found in the poor and the rich, the humble and the proud, the common man and the brilliant thinker; they are qualities that suggest paradox rather than pattern.



Deborah
TIERCE

But wherever they are found, leadership makes things happen.

■ The most precious and intangible quality of leadership is trust – the confidence that the one who leads will act in the best interest of those who follow – the assurance that the leader will serve

the group without sacrificing the rights of the individual.

■ Leadership's imperative is a "sense of rightness – knowing when to advance and when to pause, when to criticize and when to praise, how to encourage others to excel. From the leader's reserves of energy and optimism, followers draw strength. In the leader's determination and self-confidence, they find inspiration.

■ In its highest sense, leadership is integrity. This command by conscience asserts itself more by commitment and example than by directive. Integrity recognizes external obligations, but it

heeds the quiet voice within rather than the clamor without.

With leadership comes a great deal of power. With power come temptations from every angle. Abraham Lincoln once said, "If you want to test a man's character, give him power."



While attending the Leadership Summit hosted by The Orchard Church here in Tupelo, I heard some amazing speakers, via satellite, on the topic of leadership. One man in particular appealed to me. He warned leaders what can happen if they fall into the trap of the seven deadly sins of leadership. Perhaps you'll find them useful.

It's called the seven deadly sins of leadership:

1. Leader tries to do it all. Result: Burn-out. Leader becomes the bottleneck in the organization. Solution: Delegate.
2. Leader stops growing. Result: Leaders becomes inflexible, becomes resistant to change. Solution: Continuous improvement.
3. Leader stops caring. Result: Resentment. Leader resents the very peo-

ple he/she leads and loses passion for the people and the cause. Solution: Maintain original passion for work.

4. Leader loses touch with followers. Result: Aloofness. Leader isolates himself from followers. Solution: Always seek feedback – it is the breakfast of champions.

5. Leader becomes complacent and ungrateful. Result: Followers suffer. Leader starts off as servant and ends up a celebrity. Solution: Retain attitude of gratitude and bear fruit.

6. Leader becomes arrogant. Result: Downfall/destruction.

Leader fails to listen to input of others. Solution: Humility and integrity.

7. Leader gets distracted. Result: With fame comes distraction. Leader gets distracted by finances, politics, hobbies and pride. Solution: Be purpose-driven, keep focused, looking straight ahead with the end in mind.

Deborah Tierce is owner of Tierce Motivational Training in Tupelo and has a free conference call on the third Thursday of each month. Contact her at (662) 790-5331 or deborah@deborah-tierce.com. Readers also can visit deborah-tierce.com for more information.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Nations' Best Catering, My Michelle's merge

■ OXFORD – My Michelle's, a provider of home-cooked meals for families, couples and individuals, has partnered with Nations' Best Catering, a caterer for special events and dinners, to become a new company at the existing Nations' Best location at 1308 N. Lamar Blvd.

The new company will have between seven and 10 part-time employees, Rounsaville said.

My Michelle's/Nations' Best Catering is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. My Michelle's weekly specials will continue to be offered. For more information, call (662) 236-1512 or visit www.mymichellesoxford.com or www.nationsbestcatering.com.

LEE COUNTY

Malone's Catfish Express now open in Saltillo

■ SALTILLO – Malone's Catfish Express is now open in Saltillo on Highway 145 in the old gas station next to the farmer's market. Hours are Monday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The phone number is (662) 869-2636.

On the menu are catfish plates, with either

catfish fillets or whole catfish, along with butter-fried shrimp. Fries or a baked potato, plus hush puppies, come with the dinners.

Pizza Doctor, Sugaree's open in Gloster Creek

■ TUPELO – Pizza Doctor and Sugaree's Bakery have moved to the Gloster Creek Village in Tupelo.

The two businesses previously were next to Kroger's gas station on West Main Street.

Hours for the new location are Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

For more information, call (662) 844-2600 or visit pizzadx.com.

Romie's BBQ opens in old Rib Cage spot

■ TUPELO – Romie's BBQ, formerly located on South Green Street, has moved to the former Rib Cage location at 206 Troy St. in downtown Tupelo.

Menu items include barbecue nachos, fried pickles, barbecue quesadillas, wings, burgers, sandwiches, pulled pork, pulled chicken, ribs, potatoes, salads and desserts.

Hours are 11 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday.

For more information, call (662) 842-5700.

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Journal, Inc.
Lamar Advertising
LSI Human Resource Solutions
Mississippi Employees Federal Credit Union
Mississippi Radio Group
Mississippi Small Business Development Center
Mitchell Signs
MSU Division of Academic Outreach & Continuing Education
Mybesco.com
NE MS Contract Procurement Center, Inc.
New Beginnings Adoption and Family Services
NMMCI-WORK LINK
Pro Oil Inc. (Xpress Lube)
Professional Coffee Service
Renasant Bank
Renasant Center for IDEAs
Servpro of Tupelo
Snyder & Company
Sportsman Lawn & Landscape

Suntronics LED Message Center
Telesouth Communications
Trustmark Bank
Tull Brothers, Inc.
Tupelo Automobile Museum
Tupelo Coca-Cola Bottling Works
Tupelo Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tupelo Radio Broadcasting
U.S. Lawns of Northeast Mississippi
University of Mississippi -Tupelo
WTVA-WLOV-WKDH



Thank you to the CDF-member businesses that supported the 5th Annual Taste of Tupelo

Atlanta Bread Co.
The Bakery
Bar-B-Que by Jim
Bishop's BBQ Grill
Chick-fil-A
(Thompson Square)
Creative Cakes
Downtown Eatery/
Stults Catering
Edible Arrangements
Eli's BBQ Grill
Fairpark Grill
Great American Cookie
Harvey's
Hilton Garden Inn/
BancorpSouth
Conference Center
The Home Chef Market
LaVino
Newk's Express Café
Old Venice Pizza Company
Olive Garden
Park Heights
Professional Coffee Service
Romie's Grocery
Sweet Peppers Deli
Sweet Treats Bakery
Tellini's Pasta Market
Tupelo Coca-Cola Bottling Works
West End Catering Company



Chamber focus

Dear Friends,
The 5th Annual Taste of Tupelo and Business to Business Connection was a huge success. THANK YOU to the exhibitors, restaurants, and food service vendors for your participation. Your involvement was key to the success, and we appreciate your support. Also, thanks to John Lindsey and Deborah Tierce for presenting two outstanding seminars. Cassandra Moore was the winner of the iPad, and Earlene Christian and Greg Villaflor were winners of the \$100 gas gift cards.

Congratulations to Beverly Bedford on her recognition as Ambassador of the Quarter. Thanks to all our Ambassadors for their service to CDF. The Ambassadors are volunteers from the Community Development Foundation member investors, who work to enhance communication between CDF and its membership. More importantly, the Ambassadors are vital links in helping CDF understand the needs of its membership. Ambassadors are required to attend events such as First Fridays, Ground-breakings, Ribbon Cuttings, and any other functions in support of the Community Development Foundation. A major benefit of attending Ambassador's Club meetings is the exchange of ideas and leads within the Ambassador's Club membership. For more informa-



GREEN

tion on the CDF Ambassador's Club or to find out how your business can have an Ambassador, please call 662.842.4521 or e-mail eaddison@cdfms.org.

Are you effectively using social media in your business? Do you have questions about how to start utilizing Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outlets? If so, you will not want

to miss the March Business Boxed Lunch & Learn to be held in the CDF Boardroom on Thursday, March 10, from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Carey Snyder of Snyder & Company will present "Social Media: Are You Confused?" Submit your social media questions to carey@careysnyder.com by Monday, March 7. Your questions will fuel the discussion during the seminar. To reserve your \$10 boxed lunch, please visit www.tupelochamber.com or call the CDF office at 662.842.4521.

Sincerely,

Vice President,
Chamber of Commerce

New CDF MEMBERS

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>45 Wrecker Service, LLC
Mr. Malcomb Driskell
2113 Hwy 145 N
Saltillo, MS 38866
(662) 871-5039
<i>Automotive</i></p> | <p>Carousel Industries
Mr. Trevor Edwards
1000 Ridgeway Loop Rd.
Memphis, TN 38120
(901) 746-5708
<i>Telecommunications</i></p> | <p>Mybesco, LLC
Mr. Barry Jagers
404 Air Park Rd.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 231-4790
<i>Office Supplies & Equipment</i></p> |
| <p>BNI (Business Networking International)
Mr. Brad McCully
P.O. Box 2127
Tupelo, MS 38803
(662) 844-6539
<i>Organizations</i></p> | <p>CORT Business Services
Ms. Mercedes Gaia
3777 Winchester Rd.
Memphis, TN 38118
(901) 365-2560
<i>Furniture</i></p> | <p>PHI Fabric Warehouse
Ms. Jona Rae Collum
2020 S Gloster St.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 407-0026
<i>Fabric</i></p> |
| <p>Cardiothoracic Surgery Clinic
Ms. Ginger Windham
830 S Gloster St.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 377-7436
<i>Health Care</i></p> | <p>Laura Gray, M.D., P.C.
905 Garfield St.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 842-9677
<i>Physicians and Surgeons</i></p> | <p>Renfro Homebuilders
Mr. Carl Renfro
2624 Pemberton Ave.
Tupelo, MS 38801
(662) 213-6862
<i>Contractors, Construction Companies & Building Materials</i></p> |

Community Development Foundation's

Board of Directors for 2010-2011

CDF is governed by a 57-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.

2010-2011 Executive Committee

- | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Billy Crews, Chairman | Sue Gardner | Guy Mitchell |
| David Irwin, First Vice Chairman | Shane Hooper | Aubrey Patterson |
| David Copenhaver, Second Vice Chairman | Octavius Ivy | Jane Spain |
| David Rumbarger, President/Secretary | Pat Jodon | Buddy Stubbs |
| Chris Rogers, Past Chairman | Glenn McCullough | Mitch Waycaster |

2010-2011 Board of Directors

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| R.V. Adams | Gunner Goad | Fred Pitts |
| Mike Armour | Chauncey Godwin | Harry Rayburn |
| Bernard Bean | Lisa Hawkins | Jack Reed |
| Ronnie Bell | David Henson | Scott Reed |
| Charles Bouldin | Reed Hillen | Rob Rice |
| David Brevard | Frank Hodges | Eddie Richey |
| Gary Carnathan | Jerry Maxcy | Cathy Robertson |
| Mike Clayborne | Robin McGraw | Tom Robinson |
| V.M. Cleveland | Joe McKinney | Mike Scott |
| Scott Cochran | Paul "Buzzy" Mize | Randy Shaver |
| David Cole | Mary Pace | Barry Smith |
| Norma Cother | Jim Pate | Jeff Snyder |
| Tom Foy | Mimi Pettit | David Steele |
| L.E. "Bo" Gibens | Greg Pirkle | Mary Werner |

2010-2011 Ambassador's Club

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ms. Richelle Anderson..... | Lighthouse Web Dezines |
| Ms. Veleka Ball | CB&S Bank |
| Ms. Beverly Bedford | Honda of Tupelo |
| Ms. Cindy Black | Prudential 1st Real Estate |
| Mr. Richard Carleton..... | Mall at Barnes Crossing |
| Ms. Shavonne Collier | Renasant Bank |
| Ms. Molly Crews | Express Employment Professionals |
| Ms. Sheila Davis | PPI, Inc. |
| Mr. Chris deLambert | Century 21 Sue Gardner Realty |
| Ms. Danielle Del Grande..... | Comfort Suites |
| Ms. Shanelle Gardner | BancorpSouth |
| Mr. Toby Hedges | Shelter Insurance |
| Ms. Waurene Heflin..... | Crye-Leike Realtors |
| Mr. Karen Hester..... | Community Bank |
| Ms. Dianne Loden..... | Trustmark Bank |
| Mr. Tim Long | Cellular South |
| Ms. Bea Lockett | TRI, Inc. Realtors |
| Mr. Louis Marascaloco | M&F Bank |
| Mr. Ben Martin | RE/Max Associates Realtors |
| Ms. Megan McCarty | Gibens Creative Group |
| Mr. Marcus McCoy | Prudential 1st Real Estate |
| Mr. Brad McCully | Sportsman Lawn & Landscape |
| Mr. Bill McNutt | WLM Insurance, LLC |
| Mr. Scott Medlock | The McCarty Company |
| Mr. Paul Mize | BancorpSouth |
| Ms. Haley Monaghan | Alliance Collection Service |
| Ms. Carolyn Moss | Comfort Inn |
| Mr. Joe Nobles | Tupelo Radio Broadcasting |
| Ms. Chandra Pannell | Get It There Auto Transportation |
| Ms. Kara Penny..... | Tupelo Convention & Visitors Bureau |
| Mr. Les Perry..... | North Mississippi Medical Center |
| Ms. Katie Pickens McMillan | Key Staff Source |
| Ms. Amy Richey | Amedisys Hospice |
| Mr. Chris Richburg | Lamar Advertising |
| Mr. Greg Thames | Trustmark Bank |
| Ms. Dana Thompson..... | Gentiva Hospice |
| Ms. Susan Webb..... | Room to Room |

All types of utility vehicles at Martin Golf Cars

After the uncommon snowy winter, most people are experiencing "spring fever" and want to enjoy a warmer outdoors. With spring expected to show up later this month, plans are already being made for outside activities.

Brent and Eddie Martin, owners of Martin Golf Cars, know this too well. Golfers, farmers, and customers of all ages are beginning to call for new and used utility vehicles.

For over 25 years, the Martins have been in business and at their current location on Air Park Road the last eight years. It's second nature to Brent, who had his first golf car when he was in the tenth grade. Brent said, "Eddie and I have always enjoyed the golf car business. I guess that's why we've stuck with it all these years. What's amazing to us is the changes in the industry that have happened so rapidly. Golf cars are a vital part of our business, but the recreational, hunting, and utility vehicle segments are exploding.

Having an electric hunting vehicle allows the hunter to put a lift on his car, ease out to his stand, and have a much better chance of a successful hunt because the vehicle is so much quieter than the gas operated alternatives.

Hunters are not the only ones that have found the quieter, electric vehicles to assist and contribute to their successful ventures. Nowadays, you will see golf cars and utility vehicles being used at apartment complexes, schools, farms, and major manufacturing operations. The ease of travel

"What's amazing to us is the changes in the industry that have happened so rapidly. Golf cars are a vital part of our business, but the recreational, hunting, and utility vehicle segments are exploding."

Brent Martin

and lower cost are just a couple of reasons that maintenance and security workers at all business types are trekking around in a golf car instead of cranking up a gas vehicle.

Another example is the popularity of "yard vehicles" in neighborhoods. It is not uncommon to see teenagers driving to the tennis courts or zipping through the vicinity because these golf cars/utility vehicles are more affordable and much less dangerous than your gas operated 4-wheelers.

The great advantage to a good used car, which sells for \$2,000 - \$3,000, is that you can customize it: change color, add beds, windshields, headlights, 4-passenger kits, radios, or even a carry-all that has a heavier bed with heavier springs. Gas powered cars are also available for purchase. They have more power but are not as quiet.

Whether you need a new or used golf car, yard vehicle, or utility ride, head out to Martin Golf Cars at 502 Air Park Road or give them a call at 662-620-7242. Brent and Eddie will find the ideal fit for your outdoor needs.



Emily Addison, CDF, presents Beverly Bedford, Honda of Tupelo, with the Ambassador of the Quarter honor.

Bedford named Ambassador of the Quarter

Beverly Bedford has been named CDF Ambassador of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2010-2011. The CDF Ambassadors serve as official representatives of the Community Development Foundation and assist the staff by attending ribbon cuttings and groundbreaking, recruiting new CDF members, and participating in a member retention program.

The mother of two and grandmother of six, Bedford has served as a CDF Ambassador since 2006. Sixteen ribbon cuttings were held this quarter, of which Bedford attended 14. She also gave her time during the CDF Job Fair. Bedford enjoys serving as an Ambassador because she benefits from networking with both other Ambassadors

and the business people that she meets representing CDF as an Ambassador.

"I love being a CDF Ambassador because I have contact with a lot of people that I would normally not meet. This is great for me because I love people and enjoy interacting with them," said Bedford. "I have met so many new friends since becoming an Ambassador and the CDF staff is wonderful to work with."

For over 30 years, Bedford and her husband Bill have run Honda of Tupelo, a business that they own together. A staple on Daybrite Drive, the dealership offers Honda motorcycles, ATVs, scooters, generators, lawn mowers, motorcycle trailers, and weed eaters. Honda of Tupelo also

carries all types of Honda parts and accessories, as well as leather ware, helmets, rain suits, and boots.

Bedford has served as Vice Mayor of the City of Saltillo, where she was an Alderman for over 22 years. During her service to the City of Saltillo, Bedford earned Certified Municipal Official status, Advanced Municipal Certification, and Professional Municipal Certification through the Mississippi Municipal League. Bedford was also inducted into the Mississippi Municipal League Hall of Fame.

For more information on the CDF Ambassadors Club or to find out how your business can have an Ambassador, please contact Emily Addison at (662) 842-4521 or eaddison@cdfms.org.

Portrait studio in the sky

Reggie Furtick is a licensed pilot and a certified aerial photographer. He began his career in photography as a teenager helping his dad with weddings, portraits, and 50th wedding anniversaries. He was skilled in black and white dark room work in the earlier days of film. In the fall of 2007, Reggie took his camera in the airplane and started taking pictures. That was the beginning of his aerial photography business named AeroStudio. Oddly enough, AeroStudio is the best-kept secret in this area because 100% of his business is from out of town.

Reggie stated, "The need for aerial photography is here, but the local folks just don't know it yet. It is here on a local basis and is very affordable." Reggie is certified in aerial photography, and AeroStudio provides professional high resolution digital aerial photography services to businesses and homeowners in the North Mississippi, West Tennessee, and North Alabama areas. From the beginning, most of his work has consisted of construction progress where he photographs and documents certain or all phases of the building development for all involved in the project. He provides aerial photos for com-



mercial businesses, real estate, industrial parks, and if a business needs work out of state, Reggie is networked with about 400 other aerial photographers in the Professional Aerial Photographers Association International (PAPA) and can get aerial photographs from other states shipped to him.

He has won several photography awards, his most recent in September of last year when he displayed vertical shots of highway bridges. PAPA members from all over competed in a print competition in Charlotte, NC, and Reggie secured one of three first place prizes. He won \$1,000 and was presented the Aesthetics and Impact Award.

Last year Reggie made air-to-air photos at the Up, Up, and Away hot air balloon festival. For safety reasons, that photo flight was coordinated with the control tower at the Tupelo Airport. Because of the wind, the balloons travel together in the same direction, and the use of telephoto lens keeps a very safe distance. His most frequent question is: "Do you fly the



Reggie Furtick is pictured during an aerial photo shoot.

airplane and make pictures at the same time?" The answer is, "No." There are two pilots in the airplane on all photo missions, a commercial pilot in the right seat who devotes 100% to flying, and Reggie in the left seat with the camera.

For affordable aerial photos of real estate, industrial parks, marinas, con-

struction sites, and other beautiful scenery, contact Reggie Furtick for "Your Portrait Studio in the Sky" at 662.554.5199 or visit his website at www.AeroStudio.biz.

Through the CDF Chamber Advantage, Reggie also gives a 10% discount off basic aerial photo shoot within 50 miles of Tupelo.

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*Based on dollar amount on regular SBA loans

Business Boxed Lunch & Learn

Thursday, March 10
11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.

“Social Media: Are you confused?”

Presented by Carey Snyder,
Snyder & Company
Cost to participate is \$10.

To reserve
your spot,
please visit
www.tupelochamber.com
or call the CDF office
at (662) 842-4521.
\$10, includes lunch



Please join us for two TYP events in March

Business Boxed Lunch & Learn
Thursday, March 10
11:45 a.m. - 1p.m.
“Social Media: Are you confused?”
register at www.tupelochamber.com



TYP Networking Event
Barnes and Noble
1000 Barnes Crossing Road
Thursday, March 17
5:00 -7:00 p.m.
RSVP to ttyp@cdfms.org



Pictured are Computer Universe owners Joe Scott, Kelly Scott, and Eddie Scott.

Computer Universe approved to be an Apple reseller

Did you realize that nowhere can someone buy a Mac computer product between Birmingham and Memphis? That problem is about to change because Computer Universe is now an Apple authorized service center and has also been approved to become an Apple Reseller. Computer Universe owners, Joe Scott, Eddie Scott, and Kelly Scott have built their business for the past ten years by manufacturing their own computer systems and reselling equipment for Dell and Apple.

When Apple surpassed PCs (Personal Computers) in sales last year, the Scotts began to discuss the fact that becoming an Apple reseller was something they needed to do in order to grow and sustain their business. Kelly Scott stated, “Ten people a day come into our business and ask if we work on Mac computers.” The

reality is that the local students in schools are now using a Mac and when they get out of school – what do you think they are going to buy for their personal use? Yep, a Mac.

To include Apple to their product line is a whole new realm for them. Even though the 19 employees, who double as sales people and “techies,” service over 400 PCs per month, to add Apple will certainly increase work load and traffic into their store.

Eddie Scott gives the credit for a lot of his success to the Marine Corp. There he learned pride, self-respect, hard work, discipline, and many of the tools to run a successful business. After the Marine Corp, Eddie and his wife, Kelly, worked for a computer company in Oklahoma from 1997 to 2001. They saved their money, came home in 2001, and opened

Computer Universe in Tupelo.

The Scotts are transforming the building next door into the new Apple Store. A combined 12,000 square feet will house both Computer Universe and the new Apple Store with a projected opening date of March 15 for the Apple Store. Being an authorized Apple service center means a lot of warranty work, service work, and a lot of focus on retail and local government work.

Eddie said, “We do a lot of work for Lee, Monroe, and Itawamba County Schools. We supply the hardware for all the New Albany schools. When we work for our customers, it becomes personal, and that is why our customers come back to us.” Visit Computer Universe and the new Apple Store (opening March 15) at 1139 West Main Street or call 662.844.6991.

NAPA AUTO PARTS



A ribbon cutting was held for NAPA Auto Parts to celebrate their second anniversary. Pictured on the front row are: David Rumbarger, CDF; Bobby Smith, Lee County Supervisor; Michael Addison, NAPA Auto Parts; Emily Addison, CDF; Councilman Markel Whittington; Tony White, NAPA Auto Parts; Charlie Kinney with Ella Kinney, NAPA Auto Parts; Courtney Kinney with Reese Kinney, NAPA Auto Parts; and Tommy Green, CDF. Pictured on the back row with CDF Ambassadors are Ray Barnett, NAPA Auto Parts; and Jay Robertson, Tom's Automotive. NAPA Auto Parts is located at 898 Harmony Lane in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 842-4521.

Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts hosting March events

The North Mississippi Green Festival will be held Saturday, March 19, 2011, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Ballard Park in Tupelo. Hosted by the Girl Scouts Heart of the South, the Green Festival is sponsored by Tennessee Valley Authority and invites families to participate in activities that explore the outdoors, promote environmental stewardship, and build community awareness. This free, family event is open to the public. Over 250 booths are available for businesses, organizations, and artists.

Jenny H. Jones, Director of Marketing and Communications for the Girl Scouts, stated, "Girl Scouts Heart of the South and the Yocona Area Council of Boy Scouts of America have partnered for the North Mississippi Green Festival to offer Girl Scout and Boy Scout badges, awards, and belt loops to earn during the event. The North Mississippi Green Festival is a FREE event for families and highlights eco-friendly activities and information to keep our communities beautiful!"

Some of the events the



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

guests will enjoy are live music by The Blues Rangers, The Energizer Guyz, and local talent playing throughout the event, authentic arts and craft vendors, ecological displays and events for learning, ecological theatrical events such as: Watershed Harmony, a musical puppet show teaching water quality, delicious foods and organic farmers, and jumpers, arcades, climbing walls, and much more.

In addition to the Girl Scouts' event, the Boy Scouts will host their annual Boy Scout Distinguished Citizen Dinner Thursday, March 10. Mr. Rick Chapman, Yocona Area Council Scout Executive, stated, "For his outstanding achievements and bringing positive acclaim to the citizens of Mississippi, the Yocona Area Council is proud to recognize Sam Haskell, former World Wide Head of Television for the William Morris Agency, bestselling author and producer, as its 2011 Distinguished

girl scouts
heart of the south

Citizen. We are also excited to have former Miss Mississippi, Mary Donnelly Haskell, and 2011 Miss America Teresa Scalan joining Sam and performing at the dinner."

The evening begins with a time of fellowship at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7:00 p.m. at the Bancorp South Conference Center in Tupelo. Reservations are required. This event benefits the Yocona Area Council, Boy Scouts of America. While at the dinner you will be offered an opportunity to financially support the Scouting program in our area.

For reservations or for more information, please contact Scout Executive and Dinner Advisor, Rick Chapman, at (662) 842-2871 or Jenny Jones at (662) 844-7577. Support your local Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts with one or both of these events.

April First Friday

Please join us for First Friday
April 1 at 7 a.m.

Mall at Barnes Crossing Food Court

Guest speaker:

Mr. Les Range, Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Sponsor: Magnolia Business Centre



13 14
Dates to remember

CDF Annual Meeting
Thursday, May 5, 2011

FEBRUARY TUPELO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



The Tupelo Young Professionals enjoyed the poetry writing session with poet Glenis Redmond for their February meeting.

BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

The CDF Business Roundtable will meet Wednesday, March 23 at 4 p.m. in the CDF Boardroom. For more information or to appear on the agenda, please contact Emily Addison at (662) 842-4521 or eaddison@cdfms.org.

Cal TV, Inc. awarded National Buyer Appreciation Award during Spring Furniture Market

The Spring 2011 Tupelo Furniture Market presented the National Buyer Appreciation Award to Cal TV, Inc., headquartered in El Paso, Texas. This award recognizes those furniture industry retailers and their buyers who have consistently supported the State's furniture industry and the biannual Tupelo Furniture Market. This award is the premier honor bestowed in connection with the Tupelo Furniture Market by the Tupelo Furniture Marketing Association.



Pictured (left to right) are Janice Coleman, Representative Steve Holland, Patsy Harris, Senator Jack Gordon, Councilman Fred Pitts, CAL TV Award recipient Patty Anaya Giner, V.M. Cleveland, Adam Cleveland, David Rumbarger, and Neal McCoy.



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Advice from our Lawn and Garden Members

With spring just around the corner, some of our lawn and garden members share some very helpful tips for your outdoor gardening and landscaping.

Now is the perfect time of year for pruning Crape Myrtle trees, trimming Monkey Grass, mulching, and spring pre-emerge treatments. These services



(662) 534-7447

not only are instrumental in enhancing the appearance of your landscape during the remainder of winter, but they are key services that help to ensure a prosperous and healthy landscape throughout the remainder of the year. U.S. Lawns is eager to make your landscape the "Talk of the Town," and our success is achieved when we help our clients succeed.

■ **Turf Pre-emerge:** With temperatures soon to rise, this will cause those pesky spring annual weeds to germinate and disrupt your turf appearance. Spring pre-emergent helps to control the germination of weeds and keep your lawn weed-free all year long. We are now starting to schedule spring turf pre-emergent within the next couple of weeks.

■ **Seasonal Color:** Right now is the time to be selecting your seasonal color choices for spring flowers or looking to add a bed for spring color. We are connected to local growers that supply us with an extensive color selection, and our staff can sit down to discuss seasonal design, installation, and maintenance in order to give your landscape that splash to separate your landscape from your neighbors.

Lime Application and Aeration

■ Here are just a few lime application benefits:

- increases fertilizer effectiveness
- acts as a natural irritant to insects
- helps to balance soil pH
- creates better soil structure

■ Core aeration benefits:

- helps prevent thatch build up
- improves penetration of fertilizer and lime

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"Time to" tips:

- ... plant fruit tree and bushes, shade trees, deciduous flowering shrubs
 - ... feed roses and begin fungus control spraying
 - ... feed fruit trees & shrubs and continue with spray programs
 - ... plant perennials
 - ... feed perennials
 - ... pre-emerge and feed lawns
 - ... feed trees and deciduous shrubs
 - ... prepare beds for later spring annual plantings
 - ... weed removal in established planting beds
- Specific questions? Come on in for the answer.

Spring is a time when people think of gardening and setting out plants. As you visit your locally owned trusted garden center to purchase



National Tree Preservation

young trees, please seek guidance in regards to proper pruning techniques. Every cut made to a young tree has the potential to adversely affect the tree for years to come. Please consider the following suggestions when pruning

young trees.

■ **Limit pruning** at the time of planting to corrective pruning by removing torn or broken branches. Branches that are touching and rubbing against each other should be removed. Remove co-dominant stems that can lead to structural weakness as the tree matures.

■ **Leaving lower lateral branches unpruned** for a period of time can help the trunk caliper and root system develop quicker than plants pruned at the time of planting. Leaving these temporary branches will also help protect the trunk from sun and mechanical injury.

David Fulgham - (662) 255.5127
ISA Certified Arborist #SO-5802-A

Registered Landscape Architects, Pete Poland and Ellen Harrison, provide comprehensive planning, design and construction administration services for residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal projects.



4237 Westside Drive
Tupelo, MS 38801
662.842.4245

Landscape Architecture Tip: The time to plan is now. If you have a landscape project in mind, it is best to begin developing a plan early. A well-developed plan is

the first step to a successful outdoor space.

■ **Forecast:** Rainwater Harvesting Systems. An innovative method to provide sustainable irrigation solutions. Rainwater harvesting systems can be designed to fit any size site.

Can you design, install and maintain a landscape?

Yes, we can design, install, and maintain a landscape for your home. We can start with your ideas or come up with our own for your landscape needs. Then we install your landscape

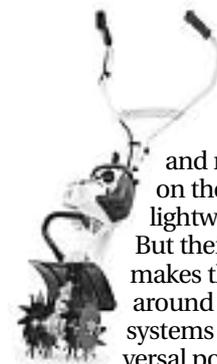


area according to the ideas created. After all that fun work is done comes keeping

it that way. We can maintain your landscape and keep it looking like the show place you envisioned.



(662) 844-0308



A beautiful landscape demands attention to detail and a powerful MM 55 or

MM 55 C-E STIHL YARD BOSS®. Check out this yard care system from STIHL.

Professional landscapers and master gardeners can count on these high-performance, lightweight, powerful products. But their incredible versatility also makes them a great tool to have around the house. These yard care systems from STIHL feature a universal powerhead, and they work with several optional attachments

that let you do a wide variety of landscaping and gardening chores. The STIHL YARD BOSS® machines are compact and balanced with a streamlined ergonomic handle design. The folding handles make it easy to transport and store.

STIHL optional attachments let you cultivate, dethatch, edge, aerate, and sweep up large outdoor debris.

Preparing your lawn for spring

■ **Thatch:** Dethatching and mowing your lawn low in March will aid in early green up. After the first mowing, you can return your

mower to the desired height. Suggested heights: Bermuda 1-2 inches; Zoysia, St. Augustine, & Centipede 1.5-2.5 inches; and Fescue 2-4 inches.



■ **Weed Control:** Now is the time to apply a preventative weed control

for summer weeds and spray a post emerge on the Spring weeds that are up.

■ **Water:** As weather dictates, you shouldn't usually begin watering until May. Keeping lawns too wet promotes troublesome weeds like nutsedge and buttonweed as well as mold and algae.

■ **Core Aeration:** Spring is the best time to aerate your lawn and receive its benefits of loosening compacted soils, water absorption is improved, grass roots are stimulated, lawn response improves to fertilizers, and reduces thatch.

■ **Insect Controls:** Spring is the time to put out preventative insecticides for fire ants and grubs.

Each type of business has advantages, drawbacks

Starting a business is an exciting venture, whether it is an operating enterprise or an investment vehicle. The owner has many business issues to address and decide, from location of the business to marketing, budgeting and insurance.

One item that many business owners don't spend adequate time thinking about is the structure of their business. But the owner needs to understand the benefits and risks involved in the various business structures in order to organize his or her business in the best manner, given the nature of the business and the owner's tolerance for risk.

The four basic business structures are a sole proprietorship, a general partnership, a corporation and a limited liability company. There are other types of legal formations – joint ventures, limited liability partnerships, subchapter "S" corporations and trusts, to name a few – but due to space limitations, I will discuss the advantages and drawbacks of only the four basic structures.

Business formations and the applicable laws and regulations governing them are creations of state law. As such, each state has its own particularities regarding formation, governance, taxation and regulation.

■ **Sole proprietorships** require no formal organization in Mississippi. If you are in business for yourself, then you would be operating as a sole proprietor.

The obvious advantages are that operating as a sole proprietor is cost-effective and easy to do. The disadvantage is that all personal assets of the proprietor are at risk if a lawsuit is filed against the proprietor/business, since Mississippi does not recognize the sole proprietorship as an entity distinct from its owner.

■ **A general partnership** is defined in Mississippi as an association of two or more persons who carry on as co-owners of a business for profit. As with a sole proprietorship, no formal organization is required. A partnership agreement among the partners may be written or oral, but partners should have a clearly drafted partnership agreement to specify each partner's rights and duties.

The advantages of a general partnership is that it is cost-effective and easy to do.

The disadvantages of a general partnership are that disputes among partners regarding their roles and authority within the partnership often put the continued operation of a partnership in jeopardy, and all personal assets of the partners are at risk if a lawsuit is filed against the partners/partnership, since Mississippi does not recognize



**Bill
TURNER**

the general partnership as an entity distinct from the partners.

■ **A corporation** is a formal organization governed by the Mississippi Business Corporation Act. Articles of Incorporation must be properly completed, signed and filed, along with the required

filing fee, with the Mississippi Secretary of State's office. The act requires that initial bylaws (the document governing the organization and functional operation of the company) be adopted by the incorporators or the board of directors.

The advantages of a corporation are:

1. People and other companies like conducting business with corporations because they understand what a corporation is and, right or wrong, many people assume that the organizers/shareholders of a corporation have a thoughtful and organized approach to the business.

2. Mississippi recognizes the corporation as an entity separate from its owners/shareholders and, provided that formalities are observed and followed, the owners/shareholders do not risk their personal assets if the corporation is sued.

The disadvantages of a corporation are:

1. It is more costly to organize than a sole proprietorship or partnership.

2. Certain formalities must be observed to qualify for limited liability.

3. A subchapter "C" corporation, which is what most corporations are typically designated, is subject to taxation.

■ **A limited liability company, or LLC**, is also a formal organization requiring certain formalities. The Revised Mississippi Limited Liability Company Act went into effect on Jan. 1 and significantly changed the prior limited liability company act. A Certificate of Formation must be properly completed, signed and filed, along with the required filing fee, with the Secretary of State's office. An operating agreement (the agreement governing the organization and functional operation of the company) may be written or oral, but members of the limited liability company should have a clearly drafted operating agreement to specify the rights and duties of the members.

The advantages of an LLC are:

1. People and other businesses understand what it is, giving them comfort in transacting business with it.

Many business owners don't spend adequate time thinking about the structure of their business. But the owner needs to understand the benefits and risks involved in the various business structures in order to organize his or her business in the best manner, given the nature of the business and the owner's tolerance for risk.

2. Mississippi recognizes it as an entity separate from its owners/members and, provided that limited liability is elected and formalities are observed and followed, the owners/members do not risk their personal assets if the LLC is sued.

3. It can be formed to operate in a variety of ways, giving it more flexibility

than a corporation.

4. Limited liability companies have flexibility in their taxation designation.

The disadvantages of a limited liability company are that it is more costly to organize than a sole proprietorship or partnership, and certain formalities must be observed to qualify for limited liability.

Also, federal and state securities laws must be observed when offering a security, which is broadly defined and will include stock in a corporation and membership interest in an LLC. Violation of securities laws carries both civil and criminal penalties, so observance of those laws is critical to the formation of any business venture.

There are many other issues to address when starting a business. This column contains only an overview of the basic business structures. You should always seek the counsel of a knowledgeable attorney and accountant when establishing a business.

Bill Turner is a business law attorney and the principal of William F. (Bill) Turner Law PLLC in Oxford. He is licensed to practice law in Mississippi, Tennessee, New York and Washington, DC. Contact him at (662) 234-8137 or bturner@billturnerlaw.com.



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BRIEFING

LEE COUNTY

CDF to host Incoterms seminar series March 8

■ TUPELO - The Mississippi World Trade Center, Mississippi Development Authority and the Mississippi Export Assistance Center will have a seminar on March 8 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. to review the key provisions in the new edition of Incoterms.

The first changes to Incoterms in 10 years went into effect on Jan. 1.

The seminar is \$75 per person.

For more information, call (601) 353-0909 or e-mail aatkins@mswtc.org.

OKTIBBEHA COUNTY

MSU to host furniture manufacturing summit

■ STARKVILLE - Mississippi State University's Franklin Furniture Institute will host the American Home Furnishings Alliance's 2011 Manufacturing Summit on March 9 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The cost is \$89 for AHFA members and \$139 for non-members.

Speakers include Howard Armistead, a founder and managing director of investment banking and corporate advisory firm Mann, Armistead & Epperson; Mary Jean Gates, presi-

dent of environmental services company ESCOM Inc.; Wanda Land, work force specialist at the Mississippi Development Authority; Bill Simmons, managing principal at Dutko Worldwide; and Donald Meurer, director for product sourcing and development for Flexsteel's commercial seating division.

For more information or to register, contact Patricia West at the AHFA at (33)6 884-5000, ext. 1000 or pwest@ahfa.us.

PRENTISS COUNTY

Northeast to host annual career fair on April 6

■ BOONEVILLE - Northeast Mississippi Community College will host its annual career fair April 6 in Bonner Arnold Coliseum from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The event is designed to give the college's prospective graduates from its 25 career and technical programs opportunities to present resumes to area employers, set up interviews and possibly line up jobs following graduation.

Allied health, business-related, industrial and skilled-trade graduate candidates will be in attendance.

For information on how to register a business or industry for the career fair, call (800) 555-2154, ext. 7312, or e-mail tjbullard@nemcc.edu.

Daily Journal reports

Computer's victory is a win for humans

One of the biggest news items in the world of computing is the recent victory of IBM's Watson computer system over two human opponents on the Jeopardy game show. Watson's score was \$77,147, far ahead of the humans, who scored \$24,000 and \$21,600.

It's no wonder. According to IBM, Watson is "a cluster of ninety IBM Power 750 servers - plus additional



Ted
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TECHTALK

I/O, network and cluster controller nodes in 10 racks - with a total of 2880 Power7 processor cores and 16 terabytes of RAM. Each Power 750 server uses a 3.5 GHz Power7 eight core processor, with four threads per core." Watson ran IBM's DeepQA software under SUSE Linux.

In other words, the humans were outclassed.

But according to IBM, the real winner was humankind. IBM says that a computer that can compete on Jeopardy could be immensely valuable in areas such as science, finance and health care. On the Watson website, IBM says "the goal is to have computers start to interact in natural human terms across a range of applications and processes, understanding the questions that humans ask and providing answers that humans can understand and justify."

In other words, IBM will incorporate the technology underlying Watson into marketable products. What will that mean for us?

First, now that computers can process natural languages, some of the jobs that now require humans will be assigned to computers. You can see this as a loss of jobs in an already depressed economy, but I don't think that's the best way to look at it. People have been making all sorts of machines for a long time, and I think we're the better for it. I wouldn't trade bulldozers and track hoes for armies of men with shovels. And I like the fact that vending machines sell me goods when I want them, any time of day or night, rather than during business hours only.

Second, not only can machines do

IBM says that a computer that can compete on Jeopardy could be immensely valuable in areas such as science, finance and health care. ... IBM will incorporate the technology underlying Watson into marketable products.

jobs that humans once had to do, machines can often do them better than humans can. When I was a kid, my mother calculated payroll for Hunter-Sadler. Today one computer takes less than a second to do the work she and her coworkers did in 40 hours.

Third, machines alter the way we live. Can you imagine life without cell phones or the Internet? In the near future, we won't be able to imagine a world without computers that process natural human languages.

Fourth, no matter what machines, including computers, are engineered to do, they never will replace humans. Doctors will soon have access to systems that take patient information - medical history, current symptoms, vital signs, etc. - and return a report showing possible diagnoses. The doctor will consider the computer's findings, but the doctor will make the final diagnosis.

Every few months I receive a telephone call from a telemarketer who represents a company with which I have done business. I suspect, but cannot prove, that the telemarketer is a computer. He sounds like a human. He even stammers occasionally. But something is odd about him. Maybe it's the way he pauses more than I would expect before his turn to speak. IBM is not the only company researching natural-language processing.

Maybe one of Watson's siblings is already a part of my life.

Ted Holt is president of BINaRE, a Tupelo-based organization of professionals interested in the application of technology to the workplace. BINaRE welcomes new members. For more information, visit www.binare.org.

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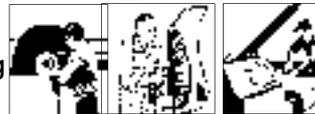
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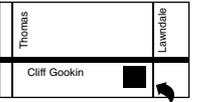
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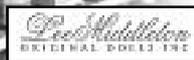
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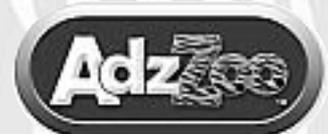
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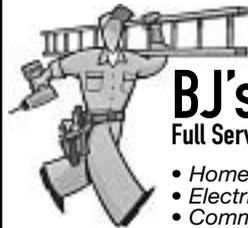
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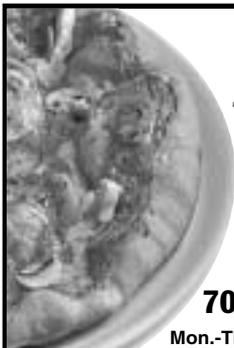
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