THE NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI

Business Journal

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NOVEMBER 2011



Retailers ready for shoppers

Inside

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Northeast MS's retail forecast is partly sunny

very year, the National Retail Federation, the International Council of Shopping Centers and other retail industry groups predict how much we'll be spending for the holidays.

Not that it really matters to most people. If you're going to shop, you're going to shop, no matter what the experts say.

But I suppose it provides some psychological boost to hear that people will be spending more money. In the U.S., where consumers help power two-thirds of the economy, it's vitally important our wallets and purses remain open.

And what better indicator than holiday sales?

"Holiday sales" include retail sales logged in November and December, the two busiest months of the year.

With Christmas helping drive shoppers to their stores during those critical two months, retailers ring up 25 percent to 40 percent of their sales for the entire year. Last year, holiday sales accounted for 19 percent of



DENNIS SEID

total retail industry sales, according to the NRF.

And the experts say this holiday season should be OK. The forecasts all call for increases this year, albeit on the low

end of the scale.

Compared to 2010, the NRF said holiday sales should track about 2.8 percent higher, hitting \$465.6 billion. Last year, holiday sales climbed 5.2 percent to \$453 billion, much better than the 0.4 percent decline logged in 2009. Over the past decade, holiday sales rose an average of 2.3 percent.

ShopperTrak expects holiday sales to pick up 3 percent, less than the 4.1 percent increase it tracked last year. But it also said foot traffic would drop by more

U.S. HOLIDAY SALES GROWTH

2000 2.3 percent

2001 3.4 percent

2002 1.3 percent **2003** 4.7 percent

2004 5.9 percent

2005 5.4 percent

than 2 percent.

The ICSC also projects a 3 percent increase this year.

In Northeast Mississippi, particularly in Tupelo recently, retail continues hold its own.

Despite the lingering impact of the Great Recession, there's been a mini-boom of sorts. New restaurants, stores and hotels have opened at a pace not seen in years. While many consumers – and developers – have been reluctant to pull the trigger on spending the past couple of years, it's clear there's some confidence returning to the market.

So what if Books-A-Million pulled out of its lease here – the book chain has been suffering for years. Having a Barnes & Noble a stone's throw away **2006** 3.1 percent

2007 1.8 percent

2008 - 4.4 percent **2009** -0.4 percent

2010 5.2 percent

Source: National Retail Federation

didn't help, either.

But two retail giants – Belk and JC Penney – that help anchor The Mall at Barnes Crossing together spent \$6.5 million to renovate and expand their stores. Reed's, the Tupelo-based department store, spent a chunk of change expanding its mall store, too.

Other new businesses and restaurants have opened away from the busy Barnes Crossing shopping district, too, which shows a desired diversity, always a good thing.

But there's still the underlying problem of unemployment. In Northeast Mississippi, we've been dealing with double-digit jobless rates for more than 2½ years. Get more of them working, and you would see more

spending. That obviously would help boost the economy.

Consumers are spending – but they still are wary. Expect many promotions and discounts to get shoppers into stores.

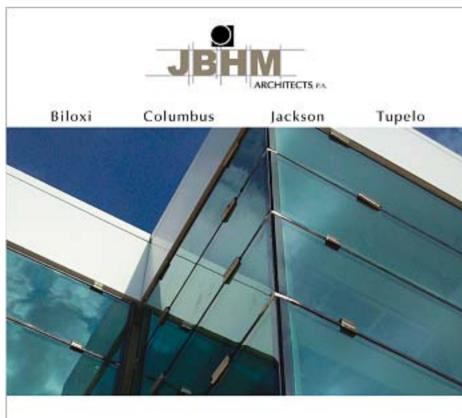
And retailers are pulling out the stops. Walmart recently said it would give gift cards to shoppers if they buy something there and find it somewhere else cheaper. Staples and Bed Bath & Beyond said they would match the low prices of Amazon.com and other big Internet retailers. Sears said it would beat any competitor's best price by 10 percent.

As a potential setup for the upcoming holiday selling frenzy, the U.S. Commerce Department said retail sales rose 1.1 percent in September, the largest increase in seven months.

So while the economy still has its problems, retail sales seem to be in a good spot for now.

I'm not retail expert, but my forecast says it's partly sunny.

Contact Business Journal editor **DENNIS SEID** at (662) 678-1578 or dennis.seid@journalinc.com.



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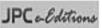
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Is Tupelo overbuilt?

Despite being the retail center of the region, some say the city has too much commercial property

BY DENNIS SEID

BUSINESS JOURNAL

TUPELO – The Shoppes at Barnes Crossing is ideally situated.

The retail center, built in 2004, sits in the busy Barnes Crossing shopping district off North Gloster Street, where some of the heaviest traffic crisscrosses daily. The plaza is anchored by Bed Bath & Beyond, Dollar Tree, David's Bridal and Margarita's Grill.

But no smaller stores help fill the 76,000-square-foot center. A long row of glass and metal are filled with "space available" signs.

A stone's throw away, King's Crossing is a 200,000-square-foot retail center anchored by Kohl's and Ross Dress for Less. Several smaller stores, including Kirkland's and Dress Barn, have helped fill some of the remaining space, which is spread over several buildings. Restaurants, a tanning salon and an eyecare store are among several other tenants at the center built in 2007.

But there's plenty of space available here, too.

To the east and behind King's Crossing is Barnes Crossing Plaza, a 157,000-square foot center anchored by big retailers like Hobby Lobby, Toys R Us, OfficeMax and TJ Maxx. The story is the same here: More than 12,000 square feet of space is available for lease, as is the former Books-A-Million location, which closed in September.

Nearby, the 21-year-old Mall at Barnes Crossing is faring better. With an occupancy rate of more than 90 percent, the 900,000-square foot center has managed to add several stores in recent years. Anchors Belk and JCPenney recently completed renovations totaling \$6.5 million. The mall ownership has spent more than \$13 million to renovate and add stores.

With retail sales hovering around \$1.7 billion annually, Tupelo and Lee County is a magnet for developers and would-be developers who seek to get their piece of the pie.

But swaths of empty space across the city suggest there's more inventory than needed.

Lee Norman of the Shopping Center Group, a third-party retail leasing company, said that's exactly the case.

"The Barnes Crossing area was just



square feet at The Shoppes at Barnes Crossing remain unfinished. The 76,000square-foot retail center was built in 2004.

About 6.000

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DESTE LEE | DAILY JOURNAL

overbuilt three or four years ago, especially with all the small shops," he said. "There aren't enough stores to absorb it."

Norman is representing the undisclosed Atlanta-based owners of the Shoppes at Barnes Crossing, which was auctioned off in September.

"We've got 4,000 to 6,000 square feet that were never finished out."

Norman, who is based in Jackson, said commercial retail activity has picked up across the state, which could help solve his problem of finding tenants.

"There are a number of new companies coming to Mississippi, not necessarily to Tupelo," he said. "But there also are a number of retailers looking to add second locations. They're looking at West Main Street and in some other parts of the city. I'm hoping it will be a good 2012."

Clay Short, of TRI Commercial Realty in Tupelo, said he's seen more interest south of Highway 78 – which also happens to be south of the Barnes Crossing shopping district.

Short said many smaller mom-andpop operations are looking to avoid the higher leasing rates in that area. Downtown, South Gloster Street and areas on West Main Street have strong appeal, he said.

Tommy Morgan, whose Coldwell Banker franchise handles residential and commercial real estate, also said that

there's "plenty of commercial space" available across the city. But he said it only seems overbuilt now because at the time King's Crossing and The Shoppes at Barnes Crossing were built, there appeared to be a strong demand.

The good news, he said, is interest appears to be picking up again.

"There are several regional and national players looking around" he said.

But looking doesn't necessarily translate into leases.

Just ask V.M. Cleveland, the owner of the Tupelo Furniture Market. He bought most of the Tupelo Commons development in 2007, shortly before the recession began. The development is home to Best Buy, Ashley Home Furnishings, Hancock Fabrics and several popular chain restaurants, but finding additional tenants proved elusive for about three years.

"The bottom pretty much fell out after I bought it and there were times I thought, 'what was I thinking?'" he said.

But since July, two hotels have opened in Tupelo Commons. Crossroads Rib Shack opened last month, and Buffalo Wild Wings is under construction.

Cleveland said there's always a need for commercial space, but it may not always be where potential tenants want.

Plus, commercial real estate market activity all but dried up during the recession and is still trying to recover.

The higher leases in the Barnes Crossing shopping district also can be problematic.

But Norman said developers are more willing to back off their rates in order to help fill empty spaces – and have done so.

"For the most part, rates aren't a problem," he said.

And just to show that interest is picking up in Tupelo again, a Tennessee developer recently proposed a new shopping center at the Barnes Crossing Road-North Gloster Street intersection.

Called Tupelo Crossing, it would sit at the southwest corner of the intersection, where the northern loop is being built to connect the area to Coley Road in west Tupelo.

GBT Realty is the company proposing the nearly 135,000-square-foot center that could possibly be anchored by Target.

It's strictly an idea for now, but having a Target in Tupelo has been a much sought-after dream by area shoppers.

Past efforts to bring a Target-anchored retail center have been stopped in their tracks over development costs, and there's nothing solid to suggest GBT will succeed this time.

If it is, Tupelo Crossing would only add to the inventory of available space.

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Retail starts a slow rebound in Lee County

BY CARLIE KOLLATH

BUSINESS JOURNAL

TUPELO – Retail sales in Lee County grew nearly 4 percent in the most recent fiscal year, according to numbers from the state Department of Revenue.

The growth is helping the county offset a loss of nearly 7 percent in fiscal year 2010.

Lee County reported gross retail sales of \$1.75 billion in the state's fiscal year 2011, which ended in June. The figure is an increase of 3.84 percent from fiscal year 2010.

The increase was welcome news, after Lee County and the state both posted disappointing figures in fiscal year 2010. The gross retail sales across the state dropped almost 5 percent. In Lee County, retail sales dropped almost 7 percent.

The Department of Revenue defines gross retail sales as anything reported as taxable. It does not include prescriptions or gasoline.

The numbers began inching back up last year. Lee County ranked No. 6 in the list of counties with the most retail sales. Hinds, with sales in Jackson, came in at the top with \$4.3 billion in gross retail sales. Harrison, Rankin, DeSoto, Madison, Jackson, Lauderdale, Forrest and Jones counties rounded out the Top 10 list.

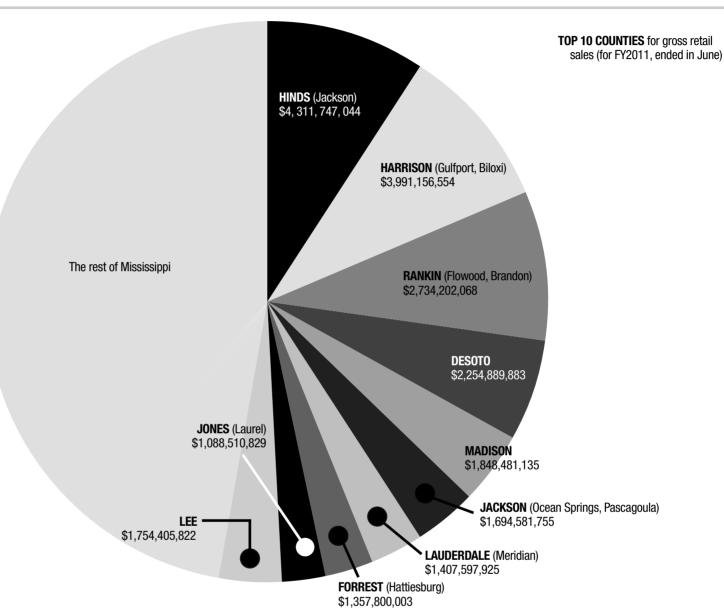
Lee County remains the dominant retail center in Northeast Mississippi, based on retail sales. Lee came in at the top of the county list with sales of \$1.75 billion. Lafayette County was No. 2, with sales of \$639.7 million

Benton was at the bottom of the list with \$22 million, but it also recorded the highest percentage growth – nearly 35 percent – in all of Northeast Mississippi.

Itawamba posted the biggest decline of 4.55 percent on gross retail sales of \$155.27 million, according to the Department of Revenue.

In Lee County, Tupelo is the heavy lifter with retail sales. The sales translate to added income for the city. According to City Clerk Kim Hanna, Tupelo received \$16,919,191 sales tax income in fiscal year 2011, which

MISSISSIPPI'S FY 2011 GROSS RETAIL SALES



NEMS FY 2011

NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI'S FY 2011 gross retail sales (by county)

Lee \$1,754,405,822 Lafayette \$639,740,958 Oktibbeha \$579,916,802 Alcorn \$530,765,038 Union \$309,908,570 Monroe \$290,324,377 Pontotoc \$232,804,307 Prentiss \$232,723,414 Marshall \$205,057,030 Clay \$196,914,170 Itawamba \$155,271,728 Tippah \$149,636,990 Tishomingo \$139,707,652 Chickasaw \$138,551,641

Calhoun \$100,843,487 **Benton** \$22,428,886

TURN TO **RETAIL**, 5

Retailers gearing up for holiday sales

BUSINESS JOURNAL AND WIRE REPORTS

Some stores in Northeast Mississippi are more optimistic about holiday hiring than their national counterparts.

Reed's, the 106-year-old Tupelo-based department store, will hire about 15 additional workers for the holiday season at its stores downtown and at The Mall at Barnes Crossing.

Clyde Biddle, Reed's chief financial officer, said many have been hired already.

"Sales have been up this year for us, and we're seeing an increase on the weekends," he said.

The company's other stores in Columbus and Starkville also expect to bump up its holiday staff, Biddle said.

At JCPenney at the mall, manager Al Cox said he expects to hire 20 to 25 seasonal work-

Another mall anchor, Belk, has added 30 more workers for its two stores.

According to the National Retail Federation, retail directly and indirectly supports one of four jobs in Mississippi. Based on information from a PriceWaterhouse study, the NRF esti-



Shoppers lined the street and sidewalk as they waited for the doors of Toys R Us to open for last year's Black Friday shopping. Two hours before the store opened, the line had stretched to Of-

more than 250,000 people in Mississippi and support more than 346,000 jobs overall.

With the holiday shopping for the holidays? season starting in earnest, those numbers should be rising.

The NRF projects holiday sales to increase about 2.8 percent. ShopperTrak projects

mates retail directly employs sales to rise 3 percent, as does the International Council of Shopping Centers.

So how will that impact hiring

Outplacement consulting company Challenger, Gray & Christmas said retailers were likely to hire the same or possibly fewer seasonal workers as they hired in 2010.

Retail employment grew by 627,000 jobs from October through December in 2010, Challenger said. That was up 27 percent from 2009 and nearly double the 26-year low set in the midst of the recession in 2008, when only 231,000 were hired for the season.

"It would be surprising if holiday hiring exceeded last year's level," said John Challenger, the company's CEO.

Challenger said holiday hiring would not reach pre-recession levels, which averaged 720,000 additional around workers.

In another survey, Snagajob, a search site that focuses on hourly jobs, calls its holiday forecast the best it has seen in the last four seasons. More than half of managers (51 percent) tasked with hiring seasonal workers for the holidays said they'll be hiring this year, up from 43 percent in 2008.

Most retailers, from grocery stores to tov-selling giants such as Toys R Us and Walmart, have part-time options available. But they lack the incentive to add higher numbers of workers be-

cause many have higher rent, energy and wholesale costs, Challenger said.

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Best Buy said it planned to hire about 15,000 seasonal workers nationwide, about half of what it did last year.

TJ Maxx Inc. (TJ Maxx, Marshall's) and Sears Holding Group Inc. (Sears, Kmart) said they plan to hire around the same amount of seasonal workers as last year.

Overall, retailers are heading into the holiday season with about 160,000 more workers than last year. And not all seasonal positions end up being temporary. Nearly 10 percent of the 2010 holiday workforce is still employed at Toys R Us, said Katie Reczek, Toys R Us spokeswoman.

Even with a tepid hiring forecast, Challenger said applicants should not be overly discouraged because retail has some of the highest turnover rates of any industry.

"You may walk into a store one day and they are not hiring," said Challenger. "Walk in the next day, and they may have had an employee quit and plan to replace him.'

Retail: Tupelo's share of the retail tax has grown about \$9M since 1992

FROM PAGE 4

is from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 for the

She said the city keeps 18.5 percent of sale tax collected inside the city limits. The state keeps the rest.

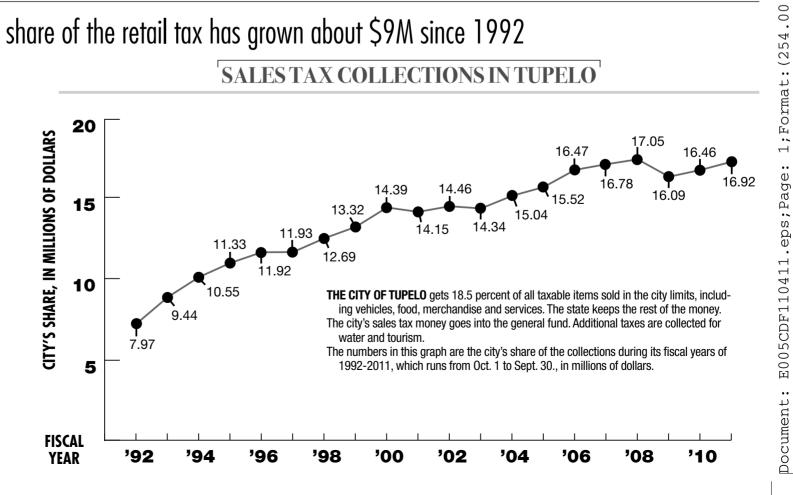
Tupelo's collections are up about \$9 million since 1992, which the city received \$7.97 million. The collections slowly crept up over the years, reaching a peak in FY 2008 of \$17.05 mil-

Collections slipped to \$16.09 million in FY 2009, but they have been gaining ground the past two fiscal years.

So far, sales in Lee County this fiscal year are slightly below last year's mark. For August and September, the county's gross retail sales were down 0.44 percent.

Statewide, gross retail sales were down 7.67 percent for the same time period.

SALES TAX COLLECTIONS IN TUPELO



carlie.kollath@journalinc.com

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

JMT Consulting opens, offers PR services

TUPELO – JMT Consulting, a public relations firm, has opened in Gloster Creek Village.

Owned by Michael Tonos, former managing editor of the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, JMT Consulting offers a variety of public relations services, including media relations, strategic planning, training and freelance writing and editing.

Tonos formed JMT Consulting in 2000 in Gulfport after serving as executive editor of the Sun Herald newspaper. Among his clients were DuPont, the Mississippi Contract Procurement Center and the Gulf Coast Carnival Association. He also was editorial coordinator for the Journal of South Mississippi Business until moving to Tupelo in 2003.

Tonos, a native of Greenville, also has worked for the Vicksburg Post and taught as an adjunct professor at Tulane University's Biloxi campus.

For more on JMT Consulting, visit www.jmtpr.com, call (662) 322-9399, or

visit www.face book.com/jmtconsulting.

Downtown tea room now open in Tupelo

The Tea for T'Arts Tearoom is now open inside His Hers Antiques & Collectibles.

The business is located at 307 W. Main St. in Tupelo.

St. in Tupelo. The phone number is (662) 269-2108.

The tea room offers savory and sweet sandwiches and tarts from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The business has a private room to accommodate groups.

New frozen yogurt store open in King's Crossing

TUPELO – Extreme Yogurt has opened next to Mt. Fuji in the King's Crossing shopping center.

Marcus Harris is the owner of the Tupelo business. He also owns Extreme Heat Tanning, which is next door.

The store is set up with self-serve frozen yogurt containers in the back and toppings dispensers closer to the

egister.

It charges 45 cents and ounce.

Tutti Frutti opens location in Mall at Barnes Crossing

TUPELO – Tutti Frutti has opened in The Mall at Barnes Crossing.

The frozen yogurt shop is in the food court. It's in the spot previously occupied by Cancun Express.

Tutti Frutti will be open during regular mall hours, according to mall management.

This is Tupelo's second Tutti Frutti location. The first one is on North Gloster Street in the Crye-Leike Plaza. Bruce Patel's company owns both locations.

Burton is consultant for Tastefully Simple

TUPELO – Jamie Burton has become an independent consultant with Tastefully Simple Inc., a national direct sales company featuring more than 60 foods.

As an independent business owner, Burton offers food samples at home taste-testing parties, along with ideas for everyday meals, recipes and serving suggestions.

For more information about Tastefully Simple products, taste-testing parties or starting your own Tastefully Simple business, contact Jamie Burton at gourmetburton@gmail.com.

Pizza Circus now open across from Ripley High

RIPLEY – The Pizza Circus is open at 708 City Ave. in Ripley.

It is next door to the China Kitchen and across from Ripley High School.

The restaurant features a daily buffet with 12 different pizzas, bread sticks, calzones, dessert pizzas and salad. Items also can be ordered off the menu. The night-time pizza includes pasta dishes.

Pizza Circusalso has cotton candy, cookies, cinnamon rolls and video games.

It is open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for lunch and 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. for dinner.

For more information, call (662) 837-4400.

Daily Journal reports

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What's the big idea?'

his was a question asked again and again by advertising legend Leo Burnett, who was one to buck trends. He opened his agency, Leo Burnett Co., in Chicago when the big players were in New York. However, he never bucked his own trend of trying to get to the "Big Idea."

And just what is the big idea? The big idea is the core of a marketing message. When you boil everything else away from a company, what will make a consumer use its product and/or services? Another advertising great, David Ogilvy, called it the "unique selling proposition."

When features, benefits, wording and layout were being discussed and argued, Burnett was notorious to cut to the heart of the matter and ask, "What's the big idea?" This dedication to determining and sometimes creating the unique element is what helped his company build some of the biggest brands in the world.

This vision gave Minnesota Valley Canning Company a mascot that later became the brand – the Jolly Green Giant. Burnett helped position StarKist



Marketing Matters Josh

MABUS

as a company that sold good-tasting tuna, not tuna with good taste. Sorry, Charlie. Anyone born after 1985 can search YouTube for "Charlie Tuna" to get the reference.

You don't have to have an animated mascot to be unique, but you do have to find a way to stand out. I passed a local restaurant that has a large, expensive sign with a message board that said,

"We now have chips & bottle water."

I must admit, I don't know how many previous requests this restaurant had for chips and water, but I do know they have a lot more to offer. Someone spent time in the summer heat putting up a sign that didn't embody anything that almost all other restaurants offer. You have to realize that all ad space is valuable and all messages are critical.

When creating marketing messages, you must work to avoid the mundane. Again, I'm not saying that you have to have characters or gimmicks. Your offer must stand out.

When creating marketing messages, you must work to avoid the mundane. Again, I'm not saying that you have to have characters or gimmicks. Your offer must stand out. My term for the big idea is "key benefit" and my method for determining this can be found in the May issue of the Northeast Mississippi Business Journal.

How big is your idea? How unique is your proposition? These are questions you must ask yourself when you look at your own advertising. Is your message "just another message" or will it stand out next to the competition?

A good exercise to review a copy of the Business Journal or the Daily Journal.

Find a page with several ads grouped together. Look at these ads and try to find one that stands out. Why does this ad stand out among the others? Is it written better? Is the layout and design better? Are the photographs more appealing? There are several factors than can make an ad stand out, but the most failsafe is a strategically focused benefit statement.

Determine what the "big idea" is about your business and be sure to tout it everywhere.

JOSH MABUS is the owner of the Mabus Agency, an advertising and marketing agency in Tupelo. Contact him at (662) 823-2100 or josh@mabusagency.com.

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Chamber Connection

A publication of Journal Publishing and the CDF Chamber Division - November 2011

35th Annual Industry Education Day held

600 area teachers & administrators participate in annual event

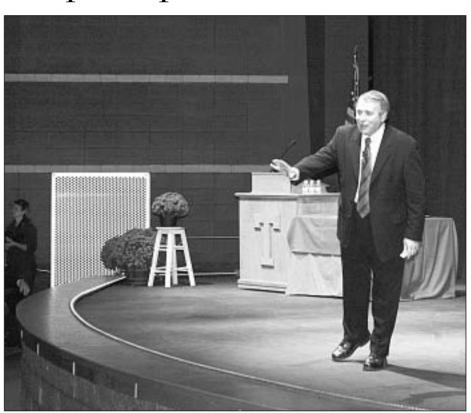
Day event was held at Tupelo High School's Performing Arts Center October 26. Educators in grades six through twelve in the Tupelo and Lee County school districts attended the event, headlined by keynote speaker, Dr. Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D., CEO of the International Center for Leadership in Education.

Dr. Daggett is recognized throughout the world for his proven ability to move education systems towards more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for all students. He has assisted a number of states and hundreds of school districts with their school improvement initiatives, many in response to No Child Left Behind and its demanding adequate yearly progress (AYP) provisions. Dr. Daggett has also collaborated with education ministries in several countries and with the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the National Governors Association, and many other national organizations. He is the creator of the Application Model and Rigor/Relevance Framework, a practical planning and instructional tool for nity Development Foundation.

The 35th Annual Industry Education determining the relevance of curriculum and assessment to real-world situations. Dr. Daggett's Rigor/Relevance Framework has become a cornerstone of many school reform efforts throughout the United States.

"We were very excited to bring Dr. Daggett to Tupelo for Industry Education Day," said Todd Beadles, vice president of workforce development for the Community Development Foundation. "His message to our area educators was strong and it is our hope that each teacher present took something away from Dr. Daggett's talk that will help them educate the future workforce of our community."

The purpose of Industry Education Day is to bring together area educators and industrialists, to promote cooperation and collaboration, to enhance job opportunities for future employees, and to improve the overall economic climate of the region. Industry Education Day is considered to be an in-service training for participating teachers and is sponsored by area industries and the Commu-





Dr. Bill Daggett is pictured speaking to over 600 educators at the 35th Annual Industry Education Day event.

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Chamber focus

Dear Friends:

As Member Appreciation Week draws to a close, let me take this opportunity to once again thank our nearly 1,300 members for investing in CDF. We appreciate you and are here to serve you. Your Chamber team provides development seminars, networking opportunities, community leadership programs, publicity for your business, and much more. Please give us a call to let us know how we can help your business grow.

The current class of the Jim Ingram Community Leadership Institute recently completed their opening retreat at Whispering Woods Conference Center and Hotel in Olive Branch. Facilitators for the session were J. Mac Holladay, founder and CEO of Market Street; Phil Hardwick with the Stennis Institute; David Rumbarger, CEO of CDF; and Mike Clayborne, president of CREATE Foundation. The November session is focused on Education and will be held November 10.

This week begins the third year for our ChamberAdvantage affinity program. The program is designed to encourage CDF members to do business with other CDF members by offering special discounts on products and services over and above what they offer to the general public. Last year, 160 of our members representing 55



Green

categories offered special discounts. Member businesses and their employees are given key tags that show they are eligible to receive the Chamber-Advantage discounts. Please visit www.cdfms.org/chamberadvantage and review the discounts that began November 1. By participating and

taking advantage of the discounts, members will realize a quick return on their CDF membership investment. To enlist your business, or if you have any questions, please contact Emily Addison at eaddison@cdfms.org.

As we approach this season of thanksgiving, we remain thankful to you, our members, and are reminded of how blessed we are to be a part of such a vibrant and progressive community. Best wishes to you and your family for a happy, safe, and joyous Thanksgiving holiday.



Community Development Foundation's

Board of Directors for 2011-2012

CDF is governed by a 61-member Board of Directors. The Executive Committee is composed of the CDF Officers and eleven additional members of the Board. CDF's goals and objectives are accomplished through the efforts of members appointed to committees operating under one of CDF's three divisions: Chamber Division, Economic Development Division, and Planning and Property Management Division.

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New CDF Members

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Mr. Terrance Bolton P.O. Box 272 Baldwyn, MS 38824 (662) 808-0278 Janitorial

Dennen Steel Corp.

Ms. Debra Smale P.O. Box 3200 Grand Rapids, MI 49501 (616) 785-8350 Manufacturers & Distributors

Don Julio Tex-Mex Restaurant

Mr. Rafael Mendoza 837 Kings Crossing Dr., Ste. 12 Tupelo, MS 38804 (662) 840-1740 Restaurants & Catering

Elite Medical, LLC

Dr. Anne Haire 2633 Traceland Dr. Tupelo, MS 38801 (662) 205-4652 Health Care

Employment Plus

Ms. Denise Webb 140 S Industrial Rd. Tupelo, MS 38801 (662) 844-2250 Employment Agencies

JMT Consulting

Mr. Michael Tonos 499 Gloster Creek Vlg., Ste. F9 Tupelo, MS 38801 (662) 322-9399 Consulting 2011 16:21:36; JPC

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People Link Staffing

Ms. Renee Sappington 2436½ W Main St., Ste. A Tupelo, MS 38801 (662) 680-7200 Employment Agencies

Subway

Mr. Nick Patel 2270 W Main St. Tupelo, MS 38801 (662) 680-4828 Restaurants & Catering

The UPS Store

Ms. Monica Jones 1020 N Gloster St. Tupelo, MS 38804 (662) 840-7222 Mailing Services

Wild Hogs Biker Gear

Mr. Cody Bullock 1001 Barnes Crossing Rd., Box 155 Tupelo, MS 38804 (662) 680-8645 Retail & Specialty Shops

2011-2012 Ambassador's Club

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Ms. Beverly Beatora Honda of Tup	eio
Ms. Beverly Bedford Honda of Tup Mr. Richard Carleton Mall at Barnes Cross	ing
Ms. Rhonda ChrestmanSnelling Staff	ing
Ms. Jan Collins	
Ms. Molly Crews Express Employment Profession	ale
Me Kim Crumn	ne
Ms. Kim CrumpLIFT, I Ms. Shirley CurryCrye-Le	iko.
Ms. Sheila Davis PPLI	nc
Ms. Sheila Davis	ern
Ms. Karen Dickey	ank
Ms. Cheryl Foster Wingate by Windh	am
Ms. Shanelle Gardner	uth
Mr. John Hamlin The McCarty Company - Construction Group, I	ne
Mr. Toby Hedges	ice
Ms. Dee Hooper The Hannahouse Adult Dayc	are
Ms. Christy Hurt The Nowell Ager	
Ms. Carman Jones	
Ms. Melonie Kight AdvanceStaff I	nc
Ms. Vivian I ee)eli
Ms. Vivian Lee Weezie's I Ms. Dianne Loden Trustmark Ba Mr. Tim Long C Sp Ms. Bea Luckett TRI, Inc. Realt	ink
Mr. Tim Long	ire
Ms. Bea Luckett	ors
Mr. Ben Martin	aitv
Mr. Brad McCully	ıpe
Ms. Katie McMillan Key Staff Sou	rce
Mr. Bill McNutt	lac
Ms. Andrea Mobley	RG
Ms. Andrea Mobley	nc.
Ms. Carolyn Moss Comfort	inn
Ms. Carolyn Moss	ing
Mr. Ricky Orr	ank
Mr. Allen Pegues Premium Video Production	ons
Ms. Kara Penny Tupelo Convention & Visitors Bure	eau
Mr. Carl RenfroeRenfroe Homebuild	ers
Ms. Amy Richey	ice
Mr. Greg Thames	ınk
Ms. Marv Sue Tudor Lamar Advertis	ina
Mr. Cole WiygulIndependent Furniture Sup	ply

Tupelo Academy of Cosmetology offers education today for a beautiful tomorrow

In 2002, Kathy Tollison started the Corinth Academy of Cosmetology, enabling students interested in pursuing a career in cosmetology to participate in classroom instruction and gain valuable real life experience. It quickly became apparent that a branch location was needed to assist even more students in meeting their career goals. Tollison began to look for a place in the Northeast Mississippi region that was experiencing growth, but also had a true community feel. In June of 2011, Tupelo Academy of Cosmetology (TAC) opened offering students education today for a beautiful tomorrow.

"We looked for a community that wasn't too big or too small, but one that was experiencing growth," said Tollison. "I absolutely love it here in Tupelo. There is a community feel, but this place is growing. There is always something going on and people truly care about other people here."

While Tollison has been overwhelmed by the support received from the City of Tupelo, CDF's Chamber of Commerce division, and others, she will tell you that it is all about her students. She offers a 1,500-hour program in cosmetology, as well as 750 and 2,000-hour programs for cosmetology instructors.

"I love my business, and one thing that has really helped us is our love for



Holly McNutt observes as TAC instructor Telicia Braddock practices on Lydia Dulaney. beautiful tomorrow," Kathy Tollison's fu-

our students," said Tollison. "We always put the student first and help them in anyway that we can. We strive to teach our students in the best way possible, using high-tech training."

The latest way that Tollison is reaching out to help her students, is through "The Fabulous Basket." In order to help fund scholarships for continuing education for several TAC students, Tollison

has garnered jewelry, gifts, clothes, hair products, colognes, a myriad of restaurant gift certificates, and more, all donated from businesses from Corinth to Tupelo and everywhere in between. All of these items are put together in a basket, with chances to win sold for \$3 or four chances for \$10. The drawing will be held December 10 and tickets may be purchased at TAC.

TAC is open to the public, offering all of the services of a full-service salon and spa. From hair care, waxing, and spray tans, to spa manicures and pedicures, customers can choose from a list of services provided by the cosmetology students, at reduced prices. Because Tollison and her students attend many of the national hair shows, they are able to offer the latest services in hair and nail technology.

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"Whatever is coming out, we are doing it," said Tollison.

One visit to TAC will confirm Tollison's passion for her business and the immense love she has for her students. Cosmetology is a fast-growing profession in America, and Tollison is helping create jobs by highly training cosmetologists, completely preparing them for the real world that lies ahead. With the mantra "offering education today for a beautiful tomorrow," Kathy Tollison's future is stunning.

Tupelo Academy of Cosmetology is located at 205 Commerce Street in Downtown Tupelo, and can be reached at (662) 840-3131. Tupelo Academy of Cosmetology is open to the public Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00 noon to 10:00 p.m., Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m., Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

THE WHIMSEY WINE & WHISKEY BAR



To celebrate the opening of The Whimsey Wine & Whiskey Bar in Downtown Tupelo, a ribbon cutting was held. The Whimsey is part of Nautical Whimsey Italian Bistro, opened and operated by Amanda Knuckles. Surrounded by friends, employees, and CDF Ambassadors, Knuckles and Councilman Fred Pitts officially opened the bar by cutting a ribbon. Nautical Whimsey is located at 210 W Main St., Ste 103 in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 842-7171.

KELLY SERVICES



A ribbon cutting ceremony was recently held at Kelly Services, in celebration of 25 years of meeting Tupelo and Northeast Mississippi's workforce needs by bringing together companies and the best employees for Northeast Mississippi's diverse job market. With the help of Councilman Mike Bryan, Andy Dechira, interim district manager for Kelly Services, officially cut the ribbon. Kelly Services is located at 100 Parkgate Ext., Ste. A 1-B in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 842-9602. For more information on Kelly Services, visit www.kellyservices.com.



Reed's recently celebrated its 106th anniversary with the Grand Opening of their newly renovated and expanded Mall at Barnes Crossing Store – featuring Mississippi's first The North Face Concept Shop. Members of the Reed family, CDF Ambassadors, employees, and excited customers participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony. Reed's is located inside the Mall at Barnes Crossing, and can be reached at (662) 842-5287. For more information, visit their website at www.reedsms.com.

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2012 Business to Business Connection and Taste of Tupelo

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Thursday, November 17 5:00 p.m. — 7:00 p.m. 122 W Main St.

Please RSVP to typ@cdfms.org For more information please visit the TYP website at www.typs.biz or contact the CDF Office at (662) 842-4521.



Watch the latest edition of CDF "THREADS," a monthly 30-minute TV show that airs the fourth Saturday of each month on WTVA at 5:00 p.m. The show features news about economic development activity and chamber of commerce events. The October show, featuring information on your Chamber of Commerce, can be viewed at www.cdfms.tv



BELK REMODELING



To celebrate the completion of the remodeling of their store located inside the Mall at Barnes Crossing, Belk held a ribbon cutting. At the celebration gift cards were given to the first 700 guests who visited the retail location and Belk presented the Tupelo-Lee Humane Society with a \$5,000 donation. Joel McKinley, Belk storemanager, cut the ribbon with the help of Mayor Jack Reed, Jr., officially opening the newly remodeled store. Belk is located at 1001 Barnes Crossing Rd. in Tupelo, and can be reached at (662) 690-6334. For more information, visit their website at www.belk.com.

MOBILITY MEDICAL



Mobility Medical specializes in custom pediatric and adult rehab equipment, power wheelchairs, manual wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, hospital beds, and more. With the help of members of the CDF Ambassador's Club and Councilman Markel Whittington, Ramey House cut the official ribbon. Mobility Medial is located at 609 S Gloster St. in Tupelo, and can be reached at (662) 844-9212. For more information, visit their website at www.mobilitymedicalinc.com.

OCTOBER FIRST FRIDAY



Cam Sholly, superintendent of the Natchez Trace Parkway spoke at the October First Friday networking breakfast. During the program, he presented a photo of the Natchez Trace Parkway to Harry Martin, CDF CEO from 1956-2000, and Dr. David Irwin, CDF chairman.

EMPLOYMENT PLUS

Employment Plus, a human resource solutions firm headquartered in Bloomington, Indiana, celebrated its 17 year anniversary in February 2010. In addition to staffing services, Employment Plus provides Technical Recruiting, Coaching and Training, Assessments and Screening, Safety Tools and Supplies, and HR Admin Support. They will host an open house at their new location Monday, November 7 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **Employment Plus is located** at 140 S Industrial Rd. in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 844-2250. For more information, visit www.employmentplus.com.



During this time of giving thanks, your Chamber of Commerce is thankful for our members.

Happy Thanksgiving from the staff of the Community Development Foundation.



The CDF
Business
Roundtable
will meet
Wednesday,
November 16
at 4:00 p.m.
in the CDF
Boardroom.

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For more information or to appear on the agenda, please contact Emily Addison at (662) 842-4521 or eaddison@cdfms.org.



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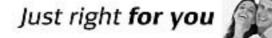
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MIDDLETON LAW OFFICE



Middleton Law Office provides representation with bankruptcy, divorce, child custody, adoption, wills, and other matters. Located on West Main Street, they offer convenient and confidential consultations. Dalton Middleton cut the ribbon in the presence of his family, friends, CDF Ambassadors, and Councilman Willie Jennings. Middleton Law Office is located at 2604 W Main St., Ste. C in Tupelo, and can be reached at (662) 205-4749. For more information, visit www.mlawms.com.

MISSISSIPPI HILLS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA EXHIBIT CENTER



The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area Exhibit Center opened in the Renasant Center for IDEAs with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Located in the former restaurant space of the business incubator, the Center features exhibits depicting the communities within the Mississippi Hills National Heritage area. Mississippi Development Authority's Director of Tourism, Mary Beth Wilkerson, cut the ribbon for the center. Other special guests participating in the event included Senator Nancy Adams Collins, Natchez Trace Superintendent Cam Sholly, and Mayor Jack Reed, Jr. The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area Exhibit Center is located at 398 E Main St. in Downtown Tupelo, and can be reached at (662) 844-1276. For more information, visit their website at www.mshills.org.

J.C. PENNEY

JC Penney unveiled its newly renovated store at 1001 Barnes Crossing Rd. with a ribbon cutting ceremony October 28. After an over \$1.5 million renovation, the store has the look and feel of a new JC Penney store, highlighting jcpenney's most innovative new brands and concepts including their newest brands Call It Spring by Aldo® and MNG by Mango®. The Tupelo store is one of 69 JC Penney stores undergoing a storewide renovation this year as part of the company's ongoing transformation into a destination for great style. JC Penney is located inside the Mall at Barnes Crossing and can be reached at (662) 844-2660. For more information, visit their website at www.jcpenney.com.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



First Friday

First Friday December 2

Speaker:

Ms. Meri Armour President LeBonheur Children's Hospital

Sponsors:

Computer Universe







The Mall at Barnes Crossing Food Court 7:00 a.m. Continental breakfast will be served.

For more information, call: 662.842.4521

Over 2,200
retention visits
were made to CDF
members in 2011



656 relocation packets were distributed by CDF

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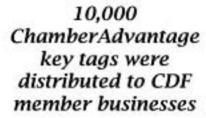
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67 ribbon cuttings were conducted



Over 850 phone referrals were made to CDF members



Over 2,500 people attended the Business to Business Connection





875
CDF members
attended First
Friday networking
meetings



250 CDF members attended professional development events



Jim Ingram Community Leadership Institute has graduated 203, with 22 in this year's class



Thank you to the 1,252 members of CDF for your investment in Tupelo/Lee County. Your Chamber of Commerce looks forward to serving you.

It's always the best technology that rules

ccording to the current advertisements of a certain wireless provider, "The business with the best technology rules."

On the surface, such statements seem to have some substance, but when I examine them in more detail, I find fluff.

When I think of "the best technology," I think first of IBM. A recent article at forbes.com points out that for the past 18 years, IBM has been granted more U.S. patents than any other company. In 2010, IBM received 5,896 U.S. patents, and before that, no company had ever received as many as 5,000 patents in one year.

Nevertheless, while IBM does make a lot of money from sales of hardware and software, neither of these patent-centric revenue sources could be considered IBM's bread and butter. IBM's software segment accounts for 23 percent of revenue, and the systems and technology segment only 18 percent. The biggest part of IBM's revenue – 57 percent – comes from Global Services, IBM's consulting division. As strange as it sounds, the manufacturing of computers has been a sideline business for IBM since Louis Gerstner became CEO. Even before Gerstner, industry ex-

Historic Downtown Tupelo • 842-6453

Mall at Barnes Crossing • 842-5287

Tech Talk TED HOLT perts were adamant that IBM did not have the best technology. Rather, IBM had the best marketing of technology. I agree with this position, because I worked on both IBM and non-IBM computers in those days.

Maybe we need to look elsewhere to find "the best technology." I suggest we look to the Philippines, where Illac Diaz's MyShel-

ter Foundation has been changing lives with solar bottle bulbs. In case you're not familiar with this "technology," let me fill you in.

In the Philippines, many people live in cinder-block shanties with roofs of corrugated tin. These dwellings often have no windows, and so they are very dark inside, even in the daytime. Using an idea developed by students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, many Filipinos now have free daytime lighting.

Here's how it works: The "manufacturer," if you want to call him that, fills a one-liter soft-drink bottle with purified water and adds a small amount of chlorine bleach to prevent the growth of algae. He squeezes the bottle into a tight hole that has been cut in a small square of tin and seals the joint with caulk.

The installer cuts a hole slightly larger than the bottle in the tin roof of a house, lays the square of tin over the hole so that the bottom of the bottle hangs into the room below, then caulks around the square of tin to keep rain from pouring through the roof.

Sunlight hits the top of the bottle, travels through the water and into the room below, giving 55 watts of illumination to the occupants of the house.

So what's the best technology? I say the best technology is that which improves the lives of people. In the case of impoverished Filipinos, repurposed disposable soda-pop bottles are better technology than all of IBM's patents.

TED HOLT is president of BINaRE, a Tupelobased organization of professionals interested in the application of technology to the workplace. BINaRE welcomes new members. For more information, visit www.binare.org.

BUSINESS REWIND

Tupelo airport looking for input on commercial airline service

Tupelo Regional Airport officials are reviewing two bids from airlines hoping to provide air service Tupelo, and they're asking for the public's opinion. The airport's website, flytupelo.com, has a survey.

Airport and city leaders will meet with Air Choice One and SeaPort Airlines on Nov. 9, when they'll listen the companies' plans to replace Delta Air Lines.

Both airlines are offering service on nine-passenger Cessna Grand Caravan single-engine planes.

In one of its two-year proposals, Sea-Port is offering 18 weekly flights to Memphis and 26 weekly flights to Nashville for more than \$2.64 million in its first year of operation and more than \$2.67 million its second year.

In its other proposal, SeaPort would provide 19 flights to Memphis, 19 to Nashville and 21 to New Orleans. In this proposal, the flights to the Crescent City would make a stop in Hattiesburg. The bid also is contingent upon the U.S. Department of Transportation selecting SeaPort to provide service in Hattiesburg.

Air Choice One's two-year bid proposes 52 weekly flights, all to Memphis, for more than \$2.3 million annually.

Daily Journal reports





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BRIEFING

MEC progress tour to make several stops in the region

JACKSON – The Mississippi Economic Conference Progress Tour, featuring the latest on Blueprint Mississippi 2011, will be held in 12 cities throughout Mississippi during November and December.

The Progress Tour, sponsored by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi, will take a closer look at the Blueprint Mississippi priority goals and recommendations, which were released Oct. 13. The tour also will seek feedback from business and community leaders before the release of the final report Jan. 5.

Blueprint Mississippi is a \$1.25 million research project funded by the private sector and coordinated through the Mississippi Economic Council, Mississippi Partnership for Economic Development and Momentum Mississippi.

There is no cost to attend. All meetings will be held from 11:30 a.m.- to 1 p.m.

The tour will be in Northeast Mississippi in December at these locations:

- Tupelo Dec. 2, with Kiwanis at the Summit Center.
 - Starkville Dec. 12 with Rotary.
 - Oxford Dec. 13, with Rotary.
 - Corinth Dec. 15 with Rotary.

SBA seeking nominations for business person, champ awards

JACKSON – The U.S. Small Business Administration is seeking nominations for the 2012 Mississippi Small Business Person of the Year and Small Business Champion awards.

National Small Business Week will be observed May 20–26, in Washington, D.C.

The 2012 Mississippi Small Business Person of the Year will attend the national celebration to compete for the National Small Business Person of the Year award.

Small Business Champions of the Year award categories are for those who promote small business, including volunteering time and services to small business interests and groups. Champions may or may not be small business owners.

A list of categories, nomination form, guidelines and information for each and other awards is available on the SBA Mississippi website at www.sba.gov/ms under "What's New." A completed nomination package must be received at the SBA's Gulfport Branch office before Nov. 11

Daily Journal reports



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y \$11.9 million, or

BUSINESS REWIND

Toyota line-off ceremony to mark start of plant

BLUE SPRINGS - A line-off ceremony marking the first Mississippi-built Corolla will be Nov. 17.

The event, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., is for invited guests only at the plant. A special public celebration will be held the next day in Tupelo.

Guests will be shuttled to the plant from the Tupelo Furniture Market, starting promptly at 11 a.m., with check-in starting at 10 a.m., according to the invitation. No vehicles will be allowed to park at the plant.

Production of the Corolla sedan began in earnest last month, and the Nov. 17 ceremony will mark the official roll-off of the plant's first vehicle.

Earlier last month, Toyota closed the application process for production workers, after having identified the applicants it planned to bring aboard the Blue Springs plant.

Hancock Fabrics names Morgan president, CEO

BALDWYN – Baldwyn-based Hancock Fabrics named Steven R. Morgan its new president and CEO last month.

Morgan had been the interim CEO and president since January, after the company's board did not renew Jane Aggers' contract. Aggers' contract, revealed in April 2009, provided her with an annual base pay of \$450,000 from 2008 until January 2011.

Morgan will receive a base salary of \$600,000 a year.

He has been on Hancock's board since June 2010. He has more than 30 years of retail experience, according to a press release from the company.

BancorpSouth posts \$11.9M in third-quarter net income

TUPELO – BancorpSouth Inc. reported third-quarter net income of

\$11.9 million, or 14 cents a share. That's a 6 percent increase compared to the \$11.3 million, or 13 cents a share, it earned in the third quarter of 2010.

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At the end of the quarter, total assets were \$13.2 billion. Total deposits were \$11.1 billion. Loans and leases, net of unearned income, were \$9.1 billion.

TRA completes land sale for restaurant in Fairpark

TUPELO – Fairpark developers have completed their first land sale in two years.

The Tupelo Redevelopment Agency has signed a sales contract with Slow's Eateries, which plans to build a restaurant next to the Renasant Center for IDEAs.

Franchisees with Oby's previously owned the lot, which faces Main Street. TRA bought the land back nearly two years ago from Oby's for \$265,800 after the franchisees didn't develop it.

The TRA board last month agreed to sell the land to Slow's Eateries for \$230,000. Slow's Eateries is owned by Johnny Robbins, owner of Papa V's in Fairpark, and his brother, Ben.

Robbins said the proposed business will be a sit-down, casual restaurant with a sports bar atmosphere.

He is working on a franchise agreement with a well-known, Mississippibased restaurant chain.

Renasant reports \$6.5M in third-quarter net income

TUPELO – Renasant Corp. reported net income of \$6.5 million, or 26 cents per share, for the third quarter of this year.

The year-ago earnings are skewed for Renasant because of its FDIC-assisted acquisition in 2010. In the third quarter of 2010, the company's net income was \$19.55 million, or 81 cents a share.

Total assets as Sept. 30 were about \$4.14 billion. Total deposits were \$3.34 billion at the end of the quarter, and total loans were about \$2.57 billion.

Daily Journal reports



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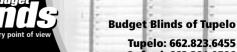
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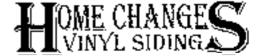
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