

Commerce Center quickly becoming SHOPPING DESTINATION

By Howard Arceneaux

The developers of Zachary Commerce Center probably had the saying "If you build it, they will come" in mind when they began construction on the L-shaped shopping center a couple years ago.

The classic line from the 1980s movie Field of Dreams has certainly come true for Maestri-Murrell Property Management's team in the 27,000-square-foot shopping center located at the crossroads of Hwy. 964 and Hwy. 64.

Ben Stalter, who is Vice President for Commercial Real Estate for Maestri-Murrell, said the Zachary Commerce Center has been steadily filling up with solid tenants after anchor restaurant Sammy's Grill and Feliciana Credit Union opened last year and Popeye's this year.

In addition, it has attracted attention from a well-known pharmacy, which might purchase an outparcel and hold onto it until the traffic count increases. He said smaller shops are also looking at the remaining spaces in the center, and there's been interest from several restaurants and even a grocery store.

Papacito's restaurant has closed, but at least three other restaurants are looking at leasing the space.

"People are adjusting to the national economy and we're getting quite a bit of interest," Stalter said. "This is a popular area of Zachary."

Besides H&R Block, Snap Fitness, Just 4 Him and USA Nails, four new tenants have been added recently to the Zachary Commerce Center:

THE BOOKCASE

Owner John Barnett and his wife, Casey, love to read. So do their three children. They wanted to open a bookstore that would offer a wide assortment of new and used books so that people didn't have to go to Baton Rouge. They also loved books.

They purchased the existing inventory from The Bookstore on Main

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**MONDAY - SATURDAY
9:30 A.M. TO 6 P.M.**

Located in Zachary Commerce Center

NEW Business NEWS

Street before it closed. Now, The Bookcase offers more than 50,000 books, new and used, and if you can't find a particular title, they can order it.

"Some people don't know we're here, some people don't realize there's a bookstore here," said John. "We specialize in Bibles and Christian titles and we have books for all tastes."

In addition, The Bookcase offers Community Coffee and has tables and easy chairs up front to enjoy reading casually.

A unique feature of The Bookcase is customers can purchase books, read them, then sell them back if the title's not available in stock. Eventually, John said they plan to offer live music and sell artwork by local artists on consignment. He also said they plan specials for schools and churches.

The Bookcase is open 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.



John and Casey Barnett along with Dawn, the store manager.

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CB PARTY RENTALS

Owners Desireck Turner and wife, Chanda Hall Turner hope to create a one-stop party shop with everything necessary for a good time.

Desireck started the business two years ago, renting and delivering inflatable jumping space-walks and waterslides.

They offer a wide selection of inflatables and can deliver, set them up and take them down for a nominal fee. In addition, they rent karaoke machines, popcorn machines, cotton candy machines..."Just about anything you want, we can provide it," said Desireck. That includes tables, chairs, canopies and other rentals.

Since opening the store, they offer all types of party supplies for seasonal holiday parties, birthday parties and special theme parties like luaus. For birthdays, they also have nick-knacks for gift bags. They constantly change out the store's



Desireck and Chanda Turner of CB Party Rentals.

inventory.

CB Party Rentals has paper plates, napkins, plastic-ware and table settings for various themes. At this time of year,

bridal showers and wedding parties are popular and CB can help with whatever is needed to make for a memorable event.

"If we don't have something

in stock, we can order it," said Desireck.

CB Party Rental is open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays.



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NEW Business NEWS

P 4.13

Owner Marla Banks named the store after the Bible verse, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13. Her daughter, Christin Banks manages the store, which features a broad assortment of women's shoes, accessories and jewelry and will eventually expand to men's items.

"We strive for great customer service," said Christin, who recently graduated from LSU and is preparing to attend medical school. "We want our customers to feel welcome."

She offers customers bottled water and soft drinks as they shop and is close by with helpful advice. There are a wide variety of shoes to choose from, including designer and popular brands like Cupid, Jessica Simpson, BCBG and Wild Rose.

"We have the latest styles, from flats to sky-high heels," Christin said. "We offer casual up to dressy shoes."

Also available are the boutique-style purses like Alyssa, Sasha, and Big Buddha, all at reasonable prices. Clutch purses, coin purses and wallets are also available.

Shoppers can also find reasonable-priced jewelry like necklaces, earrings along with purse hold-



Christin Banks, store manager proudly show their new spring line of footwear and accessories

ers, lip gloss and various nick-knacks. For the month of May, the store is offering 20 percent off for teachers and a Mother's

Day weekend special.

P 4.13 is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.



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Persnickety showcases the latest Vera Bradley purses, wallets, bags and other popular items.

PERSNICKETY UNIQUE GIFTS

While unique gifts attract shoppers, the homemade fudge is perhaps the most popular product in the store. Six flavors are made fresh by Christine Carruth, who co-owns and manages the store along with her mother Cynthia Wilcox and friends Madison Lees and Gerie Foster.

“The fudge is very popular,” said Christine, who also co-manages Hilcrest in St. Francisville. “The most popular flavor is Chewy Praline, it's sinful.”

As its name implies, Persnickety features a wide assortment of distinctive gifts for every

price range. Several brands of candles are popular, including Tyler, Thymes and High Maintenance. The store also features baby gifts and unique children's toys and gifts, and functional and beautiful cookware.

Persnickety is Zachary's Vera Bradley headquarters, with a nice selection of the popular purses, wallets and bags. Costume jewelry by Susan Shaw, Chamilia and others is available. Christine said the store can also monogram items.

Persnickety is open 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

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