

3-15-09

Branson Chamber Chatter

Simon Cowell, Proms and Meat Loaf

Hollywood Wax Museum Gets \$5 Million Makeover

Tej Sundher, one of the owners of the **Hollywood Wax Museum** that opened in 1996, said they're confident in Branson's future as a popular tourism destination. Enough to invest \$5 million in a re-do of the attraction, he said.

Wax sculpture techniques now produce even more realistic figures, and guests will be able to walk right up to the new Wax Museum "stars" and take their pictures with them. He hopes lots of those photos will be on Facebook and other social networks.

Sundher's grandfather built the first Hollywood Wax Museum in Hollywood, Calif. One of the new displays allows guests to sing for the American Idol judges. Recently, Simon Cowell was seen sitting in one of the museum's offices—at least, it sure looked like him.

The outside of the building also is changing and will become an attraction in its own right. The museum will open Tuesday, March 17, although exterior work will continue.

No Prom Duplicates

Lana Johnson Nichols, who owns the **Touch of Class** shop in the **Shoppes At Branson Meadows**, recently talked about the store's special efforts to make prom-goers very happy. She keeps a list of those who purchase prom dresses in her formal-wear shop—as well as the men's tuxedos—from all the area high schools. That way, the girls don't have to worry about seeing someone else in their dress on that all-important night, she said.

She said the popular prom dresses this year are more sophisticated than ever. They're also already selling wedding attire. And the shop has a new in-house alteration service. Call 334-0303 or visit www.touchofclassformals.net.

The "Clever Store Name" Category

Never a Dull Moment is a new shop across from **Arvest Bank** in Branson Landing. It's a knife shop but also sells a variety of hunting, camping and sporting goods; outfitter supplies, books, camping food and more. They carry Browning Knives with bone handles, or lapis and inlaid wood. They also have professional knives used by police, military and hunters.

It's owned by Joseph and Karen Duaimé, who had a similar store in Dallas for years, but decided they love Branson and plan to retire here, he said. Call 239-1122.

Upcoming Community Economic Forecast

The community is invited to attend the annual Community Marketing Presentation by the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention &

Visitors Bureau from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, April 3, in the Keeter Center on the campus of **College of the Ozarks**.

The presentation will cover 2008 research statistics on visitor numbers and revenue; a forecast for the 2009 season; details of the marketing, media, public relations and sales plans and news from the organization. Mark the date on your calendars.

Momma's Meat Loaf

Andy William's Moon River Grill will be open from 3 to 9 p.m. beginning March 27, and will start regular lunch and dinner hours April 21. They'll still feature favorite recipes of Andy's mother, Florence Williams, including meat loaf and chicken pot pie, said general manager Lorelei McCoy. And don't miss the Gouda Macaroni and Cheese.

The restaurant has become an entertainment destination where local performers drop in. This year, Bill Medley, The Comets and Paul Revere will be there to meet visitors before or after their shows in the Moon River Theatre.

Thursday is Midweek Moon Madness where there will be Happy Hour drink specials 10 to 11 p.m. and Open Mike from 9 p.m. to midnight. There are Friday and Saturday night jam sessions after the shows let out, and the fabulous Gail Lennon will be back for her popular special engagements.

Kathryn Buckstaff is membership public relations manager for the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce. Send your birthdays, gossip, big events and other Branson Chamber Chatter to kbuckstaff@bransoncvb.com. Check "Chatter" archives at www.tri-lakestribune.com in Entertainment and at www.explorebranson.com in Media.