



Biz Buzz

Baxter Dollar Plus to close

Baxter Dollar Plus is closing at the end of the month. The business opened about a year ago on Edgewood Drive in Baxter next to Grizzly's.

"I gave it a good run," owner Doug Gillette said, adding life has been good to him for nearly 55 years and it's not over yet. Gillette said he enjoys working with people and plans to take the month of August off to regroup and then look at opening a new store and a new location.

Working with Nate Grotzke at Close-Converse Commercial Properties of Brainerd for a location, Gillette said he hopes to open a store for closeout/liquidation items.

With the tough economy, Gillette said this winter was particularly brutal making it all the more necessary to have the rent overhead in a range that is sustainable. Gillette said the idea for the discount store was great, but the timing and location didn't quite fit. And he began to question having "dollar" in the store's name as not everything in the store was just \$1, which could be a point of contention with customers.

But Gillette was ready to move on and he isn't giving up on retail.

"There is a reason for everything in life," he said.

Gillette said Sprint is moving into his space, in what was once Chef & Co.

The Leech Lake Brewing company will open in Walker's Industrial Park, the Cass County Economic Development Corp. reported. The EDC reported it assisted owner Greg Smith with financial counseling, the business plan, grant applications for infrastructure improvements, site selection and pricing as Smith moved from a hobby to a commercial setting.

The EDC reported the project cost \$250,000 with financing from Bank Forward with Smith planning to hire two people.

The Phone Zone moved into the business strip at the corner of Washington and Southwest Fourth Street in Brainerd between the Minnesota Vacuum and Sewing Center and Rafferty's Pizza.

Cool Beans Coffee Shop and Mother Earth's Bounty opened in Pine River offering natural and organic groceries, coffee, health drinks, soups, salads and sandwiches, the Cass County EDC reported. Cool Beans owners are in-laws Sandra Linn and Christina Linn. The EDC provided assistance with cash flow projections, equipment, inventory and financial needs. Project costs were \$89,000 with financing from Pine River State Bank, the EDC reported. The business planned to provide seven jobs.

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