



Photo by Mary Beth Phillips

GO TO THE LIGHT: Billy Pressley holds one of the lights in his 3,000-square-foot store, Cary Lighting, which moved to Quail Fields Court off Morrisville Parkway last fall.

Local business a shining success

BY MARY BETH PHILLIPS

Billy Pressley began his career in the lighting industry as a delivery person for a large lighting store in Durham.

Within a year, he was managing another store owned by the same company in Smithfield. Today, he owns the "best display of lights bar none in the Raleigh area," with 3,000 square feet of lights, and another 11,000 in the warehouse.

He moved his store, Cary Lighting, which had been operating from a rented building, to Quail Fields Court off Morrisville Parkway in October of 1996. The family had bought the acre of land in December of 1994, but had to wait a while for water and sewer services. They started building in October of 1995.

Paula Pressley worked as a service representative for Southern Bell for 16 years. In October of 1994, she began working full time for the family business.

The new store keeps nine full-time employees busy, designing lighting systems for houses for about 100 area building contractors, or selling lights to retail customers at wholesale prices. Their two daughters, Crystal, 14, and Courtney, pregnant with her first child, also help out in the business.

"When you own your own business you have to do everything, including take out the trash and clean the toilets," Mrs. Pressley said with a laugh. She mostly takes care of accounts receivable and payable,

but also waits on customers.

For that task, "You have to be a salesperson, a decorator, and a listener," she said.

Customer service is the Pressley's main goal. They count on word of mouth to increase their business.

So far it has worked. They are in the process of opening new stores in Smithfield and another area that Pressley did not want to divulge yet.

Pressley said he finally gave himself a raise this year. He had been turning the money back into the business.

"You need pretty stuff hanging here," he said, "or the people will not come."

As another sign of his success, he recently invested in a set of expensive chandeliers for his showroom, ranging from \$6,000 per light and up.

Pressley looks for lights that are out of the ordinary. If he doesn't like a light, he asks the distributor to change it. His changes have turned some lights into popular sellers.

Pressley hopes to have his certification as a lighting consultant in the next month, which would allow him to write blueprints for new homes.

In their spare time, Billy and daughter Crystal like to fish. Billy also enjoys motorcycles. Paula's hobby is cooking. They hope to build a home in Morrisville, and leave MacGregor Downs in Cary so they will be closer to the business.

After dealing with 100 contractors for all of their lighting needs, their biggest problem is who to choose to build their new house.

Town board approves site plans for new two-story office building

Two public hearings for rezoning set for July 14

The board approved the site plan for a two-story office building at the intersection of Sorrell's Grove Church Road and Slater Road at its June 9 meeting.

The office building, to be called Concourse Lakeside, will contain 78,416 square feet on 6.5 acres. The owner is Copley Capital One Partners of Cary. The board of commissioners required the developer to upgrade a water service line from four inches to six inches.

A new self-storage business may be built on the west side of Church Street near the south boundary of Treybrooke apartments.

Wanda Ivey of Medlin Drive in Cary has a contract to purchase the 4.791 acres of property, which is currently zoned agricultural district.

Ms. Ivey is asking that it be rezoned to industrial management district, on the condition that a mini-self storage business be the only use allowed there.

A public hearing was set for July 14 to discuss the rezoning.

Public hearings will also be held on July 14 for another rezoning petition and an annexation petition. Algie I. Stephens requested to rezone 88.83 acres on the east side of Airport Boulevard north of International Drive from agricultural district to industrial management district.

The annexation petition was submitted by Preston Development Corp. for the annexation of the rest of the property in Preston Grande subdivision.

Rep. Price to attend flag ceremony

A flag that was flown at the capitol in Washington, D.C., will be presented during a Fourth of July ceremony at the Morrisville Chamber of Commerce building on Church Street on Saturday, July 5.

The ceremony, organized by Mayor Margaret Broadwell with the help of Congressman David Price's

office, will be held at 10 a.m. Students at Morrisville Elementary School will be on hand to read essays of "What the Fourth Means to Me," and an award will be presented to the winning essay.

A member of a military organization will conduct the ceremony. Price also plans to be in attendance.

DOT plans to widen Airport Boulevard, Wade Avenue to six lanes this summer

Over 2,000 improvement projects slated for N.C. roads

BY MARY BETH PHILLIPS

The Morrisville Chamber of Commerce got one of the first peeks at the annual Transportation Improvement Program, adopted in June by the North Carolina Department of Transportation to cover road projects for the next seven years.

Calvin Leggett of the North Carolina Department of Transportation focused in on Morrisville area projects in his talk, and fielded questions about roads that were not included in the plan.

Leggett was speaking at the Morrisville Chamber of Commerce Issues and Eggs breakfast on June 12 in lieu of Transportation Secretary Larry Goode, who had an unexpected engagement in Washington, D.C.

One of the most interesting projects listed on the TIP will begin this month (July 1997), Leggett told about 40 chamber members. Motorists may find some relief traveling to Research Triangle Park, when the section of I-40 between Airport Boulevard (exit 284) and Wade Avenue (exit 289) is resurfaced and restriped into a six-lane section. The lanes will become 11-foot lanes instead of 12-foot lanes, and there will be less shoulder, Leggett said, but "we can squeeze more capacity out of that road and provide a whole lot of relief."

Leggett admitted that it was only a "Band-Aid" solution. There are no plans to widen the segment before the year 2004.

This project is one of 2,600 projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), adopted in June to cover road projects for the next seven years—through 2004. Because North Carolina has no county roads, the state has the largest state-maintained road system in the country, Leggett said.

The cost of finishing this TIP will be \$8-and-a-half billion across the

state. That may sound like a lot of money, but it doesn't stretch far.

The 3.7-mile stretch of I-540 between U.S. 70 and I-40 that was recently completed cost \$100 million, Leggett said.

That stretch is part of the Northern Wake Expressway, which will eventually connect U.S. 1 in North Raleigh to U.S. 55 in the Morrisville area. The leg from U.S. 70 to U.S. 1 is under construction now, and right of way acquisition for the leg from I-40 to N.C. 55 will begin in the year 2000.

Obtaining rights of way will take about two years, Leggett said. Construction of the western leg will take place after 2004, however, according to the current plan.

A new route is now under construction, which will connect the recently completed section of the Northern Wake Expressway to Aviation Parkway. It is anticipated to be completed in June of 1999. Another connector with Aviation Parkway will be named Brier Creek Parkway, a four-lane section connecting Aviation Parkway to U.S. 70. Construction on that segment is slated to begin in July of 1998.

Planning is also under way for the Western Wake Expressway, which will carry the Northern Wake Expressway from N.C. 55 southwest to Holly Springs. Plans are slated to be completed in the year 2000. Right of way acquisition will not begin until after 2004, although a corridor has been reserved now.

Chamber members were interested to learn about Airport Boulevard and Aviation Parkway widening projects. Transportation officials are now acquiring right of way for the segment of Airport Boulevard from McCrimmon Parkway to I-40. Widening of that section to five lanes will begin in August of 1997.

Right of way acquisition to widen the segment from N.C. 54 to

McCrimmon Parkway will begin in August of 2001 and construction for that section of Airport Boulevard will begin in November of 2002, according to the TIP plan.

The planning process for Aviation Parkway's expansion to a four-lane facility will begin in March of 1998 and be completed by September of 2000.

Right of way acquisition is slated to begin in the year 2003 with construction slated for a later time.

The businessmen and women gathered at the meeting were disappointed that McCrimmon Parkway is listed as an "identified future need," which means it will not be paved before 2004. The section between N.C. 54 and Airport Boulevard is slated to be paved and widened to four lanes sometime after the seven-year program is complete.

Chamber members also asked about Davis Drive, which is not mentioned in the TIP. Leggett suggested that board members lobby their CAMPO representatives, members of the Capital Area Metro Planning Organization, who help determine which projects are included in the Transportation Improvement Program.

Morrisville's representatives to that board are Mayor Pro Tom Billy Sauls and Town Engineer Jay Gibson.

N.C. 55 was also mentioned as a problem area. "The overall traffic numbers are not bad there," Leggett told the group, "but they all come through at peak hours." The road will be increased to four and five lanes from N.C. 64 to RTP. Planning for the N.C. 55 widening will begin in October of 1998. Right of way acquisition will begin in April of 2003, and construction will be after the current TIP.

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Town Appreciation Day successful

A successful Employee Appreciation Day was held at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park on June 15.

About 75 town employees attended, including families. Employee Appreciation Day was cancelled last

year because it had been scheduled a week after Hurricane Fran hit. In 1995 a celebration was held at the Morrisville Community Center swimming pool for employees and their families.

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