

Cherokee Business

CONTACT US

▶ Telephone: 770-373-8711

▶ Fax: 770-373-8704

A WEEKLY REPORT OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS

BRIEFS

Building under way on new community

Construction has begun in Lantern Walk, a new residential community in Ball Ground. Lantern Walk has townhomes ranging from the \$160,000s to the \$190,000s and ranch homes priced from the \$180,000s to the \$240,000s. The two-story traditional townhomes offer basements and elevators as upgrade options. Ranch homes are Craftsman-style, and include basements as options. The first homes are expected to be completed in August. A grand opening is scheduled for Aug. 22. Lantern Walk is marketed by Prudential Georgia Realty. More information, www.cherokee.prudentialgeorgia.com.

Malloy reports strong sales

Carrollton-based Patrick Malloy Communities recently reported that its sales figures for May 2006 broke records for the company. During May 2006, the company sold 46 new homes — a 42 percent increase from its sales in May 2005. This follows five consecutive months of strong sales, company representatives said — an increase of 19 percent over the same five-month period during 2005. Patrick Malloy Communities builds homes in many metro Atlanta neighborhoods, including Harmony on the Lakes in Holly Springs.

McCurdy joins Jasper group

Carl D. McCurdy, M.D., and his staff have joined the Piedmont Physicians Group at Pickens County. McCurdy is board-certified in family practice. Before joining Piedmont Physicians Group, he worked as a family practice physician in private practice in Jasper. He received his medical degree from the University of Alabama School of Medicine and completed his internship and residency at The Medical Center in Columbus.

McCurdy is accepting new patients and accepts most major insurance plans. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information or appointments, call 706-692-2437. Piedmont Physicians at Pickens is at 1222-A E. Church St., Jasper.

Plemmons joins Cherokee

Marybeth Plemmons recently joined First Cherokee State Bank as a teller at the bank's Canton office, 134 Keith Drive. Plemmons has worked in banking for 25 years. A native of Massachusetts, she lives in Canton.

— Leslie Everton Brice

PlayNation showroom sells fun

Company offers safe, fun playsets

 By LESLIE EVERTON BRICE
For the Journal-Constitution

Even if you're several decades done with childhood, your inner 10-year-old might still enjoy a romp around PlayNation Play Systems' new Marietta showroom and display center.

But, just for form's sake, you might want to let your kids go first.

PlayNation's playsets are designed and manufactured in its plant in Canton, which is also the site of its corporate headquarters.

The Marietta showroom gives a good sampling of the company's most popular playsets; you can choose one of the models or create a combination of your own. You can start out small and add on, or go for the whole thing at once.

The array of choices is dizzying — two- and three-story towers with playhouses; swings; rope ladders; rock-climbing walls; trapezes; corkscrew climbers and fireman's poles; slides of all varieties; and even built-in picnic tables. It's a kingdom for a kid, and a blessing for parents who are running out of options when their kids moan, "I'm bored: what can I do?" It's also ideal for those who simply want to keep close tabs on their youngsters.

"With more and more stuff going on out there, more moms really want their kids to play in their own backyard," said Jeff Robertson, owner and founder of PlayNation.

"We try to encompass [in the playsets] everything mom and dad and the kids could want."

Robertson is a Marietta native. He started the company almost 15 years ago, and he started small.

"I used to get out there and build them myself," said Robertson. "Now, I mostly concentrate on the



RENEE BROCK / Special

Jeff Robertson is the owner of PlayNation, which recently opened a new playground equipment showroom on Cobb Parkway. The Marietta native, who started the company 15 years ago, says safety-minded moms "want their kids to play in their own backyard."

PLAYNATION PLAY SYSTEMS SHOWROOM STORE

▶ **Where:** 480 Cobb Parkway, Marietta

▶ **Phone:** 770-424-7779

▶ **Hours:** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays; noon-5 p.m. Sundays

▶ **On the Web:** www.playnation.com

designs."

The company's come a long way. PlayNation now has distributors all over the country and internationally, and more than 100 employees. PlayNation also sells playsets on the internet.

"I found a niche in the medium-priced market," said Robertson. "It just wasn't being addressed here." Apparently, it wasn't being ade-

quately addressed elsewhere either. The company went national by its third year.

"The product just took off," Robertson said. "Our playsets are exceptionally big and heavy. They're the heaviest on the market, and they're absolutely solid."

The Marietta showroom is the only one that PlayNation runs under its own flag.

The product is sold through other dealers elsewhere.

"Nationally and internationally, our market is primarily wholesale," said Robertson.

"But metro Atlanta is our best market; Atlanta is our lifeblood, and this is our home. So it makes sense to have the retail business and showroom here."

PlayNation makes and sells playground equipment for residential use only.

But Robertson also manufactures

and sells commercial playgrounds through Planet Playgrounds, another arm of his business.

Design kits, for those who want to buy their own lumber and build the equipment themselves, are available through Plan-It Play, yet another spin-off from the original business. And gorilla playsets are the ready-to-assemble version, complete with lumber.

With four children of his own, Robertson is adamant about the safety of his playsets.

"One big difference with us is the integrity of our units," he said. "We build them to be solid and strong and safe. I wouldn't sell anything I wouldn't let my own kids play on."

PlayNation Play Systems' showroom store will have its grand opening on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with food, clowns, face painting and "the best prices we've ever had," said Robertson.