

Business

Business Pulse will not use steroids

Some people have mentioned the past few weeks of Business Pulse have been really solid columns. While I tend to agree, I want to get one thing out in the open before rumors start to circulate.

I have not - at any time - taken performance enhancing drugs to improve the readability of Business Pulse. In this day and age, such allegations are rampant. Barry Bonds and the steroid scandal has tainted baseball, for example.

I don't want anything to hurt the integrity of this column. OK, so maybe integrity isn't the word I'm looking for, but you get the point. This column is all natural, brought to you without the aid of synthetic drugs.

Granted, steroids might allow me to type a few more words a minute, and they might make my brain even bigger to store more business information, but



At the man park in Germany, you can operate a jackhammer or a backhoe.



There are barrels by the entrance of Pit Stop closed. It is one of four stations owned by Sid North on Chancery Street and the gas station is closed. It is one of four stations owned by Sid Stanton that was shut down last week.



I won't bend my ethical standards.

As for other news, summer is around the corner which means it's time to start thinking about baseball and amusement parks. For the past gazillion years, we've gone to Dollywood and I was thinking it would be great if Tennessee had another big-time amusement park.

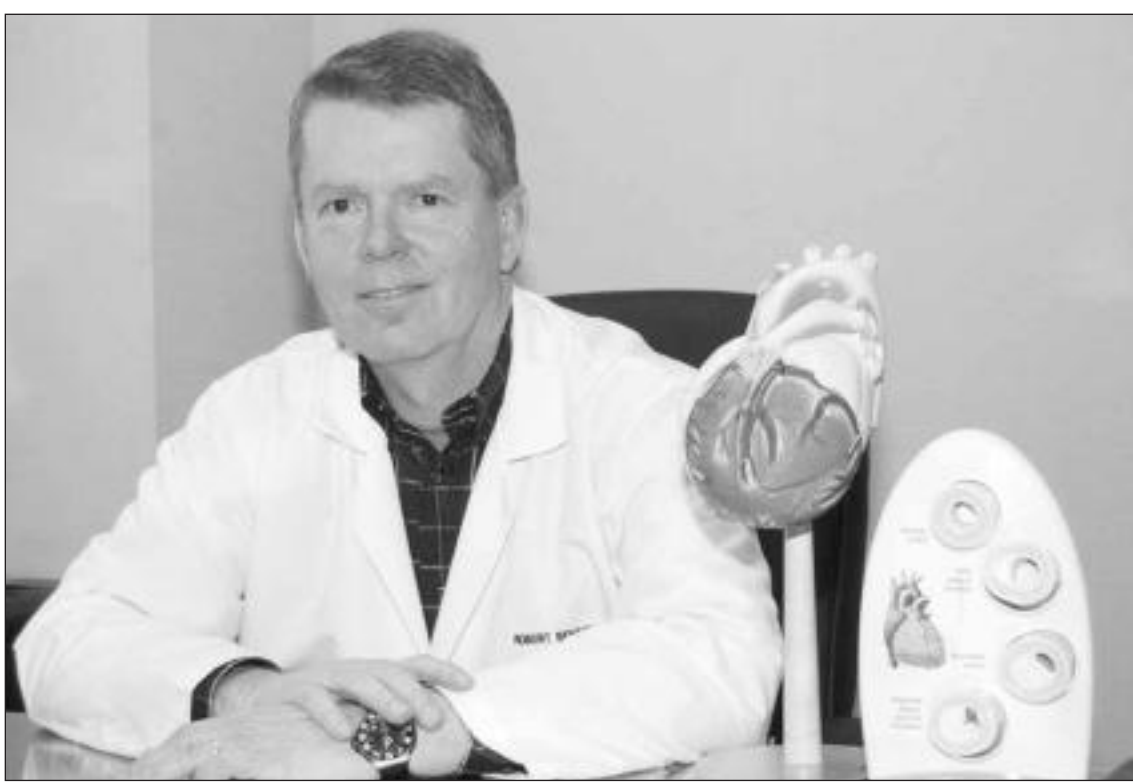
I found just what I'm looking for, although it's located all the way in Germany. It's called Mannerspielplatz, which translates into Men's Playground.

The theme park includes backhoes, front-end loaders, jackhammers, dirt bikes, bows and arrows, four-wheelers, and off-road vehicles, just to name a few attractions. Men can frolic and enjoy some real man fun on heavy equipment. It's an experience, the park owner says, to remember.

I don't know about traveling to Germany, but I sure would visit such an amusement park if there was one around these parts. Maybe somebody can take this idea and run with it. There's nothing wrong with the power of suggestion.

Bad news wasn't so bad after all

Some of you may remember I talked about a major retail store that was on the verge of closing in last week's column. I



Dr. Robert Benson is a board-certified cardiologist who is working full time at River Park Hospital. Dr. Benson opened his practice here last week and is now accepting new patients. His number is 815-4770.

thought, at the time, the news about Bi-Lo shutting down would be a major blow.

But that bad news won't be bad at all if an even better supermarket replaces Bi-Lo. And that appears to be what's going to happen with the announcement Foodland Plus will be opening at the Bi-Lo spot in April.

For those who missed Wednesday's edition, Foodland Plus will be owned by local residents and grocery veterans Richard McMahan, Noel Pepper and Dennis Lann. Bi-Lo is

scheduled to close March 14 and Foodland Plus is expected to open April 3. I'm confident it will be a great new store where we can all enjoy shopping.

As for what's been happening since Wednesday's edition, I do have a couple developments to announce. The first is that Foodland Plus may have a pharmacy after all.

"We're in negotiations now to try to bring a pharmacy back to that store," said Dennis.

As for retaining current employees, Dennis says that is happening for the most part.

"The interviews have taken place and it looks like the majority of Bi-Lo teammates will be on board with us," said Dennis, who added the general reaction to Foodland Plus has been overwhelmingly positive. "We're going to do everything we can to make this community proud and we've had so many people come up and thank us for taking over the store. We'll get it back to where it needs to be."

Cardiologist joins River Park staff

I've been impressed by the recent additions to the River Park medical community and the positive momentum keeps going. Dr. Robert Benson, a board-certified cardiologist, has joined the hospital staff and will be serving local patients on a full-time basis.

Personally, I hope you don't need Dr. Benson's services. But if you do, it's reassuring to know you can get first-rate heart care right here at home.

When talking about cardiology, I think of a heart attack. As you'd expect, Dr. Benson says a quick reaction to a heart attack greatly increases your chances of a full recovery.

"The recommendation today is that if you're having chest pains for five minutes, you should go right to the emergency room," said Dr. Benson.

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Quote NOTEBOOK

"It matters not whether you win or lose. What matters is whether I win or lose."
- Darrin Weinberg

"Anybody who wants the presidency so much that he'll spend two years organizing and campaigning for it is not to be trusted with the office."
- David Broder

"I have noticed the people who are late are often so much jollier than the people who have to wait for them."
- E.V. Lucas

"Your true value depends entirely on what you are compared with."
- Bob Wells

"There's always somebody who is paid too much, and taxed too little - and it's always somebody else."
- Cullen Hightower

"I like to play blackjack although I'm not addicted to gambling. I'm addicted to sitting in a semi-circle."
- Mitch Hedberg

"Skepticism, like chastity, should not be relinquished too readily."
- George Santayana

"Listening, not imitation, may be the sincerest form of flattery."
- Dr. Joyce Brothers

"I believe that professional wrestling is clean and everything else in the world is fixed."
- Frank Deford

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One thing many college students learn right away is that many classes are conducted as lectures in large halls and auditoriums where the listening conditions are less than ideal. If you are a student with a hearing impairment, getting the necessary information can be all the more difficult. Fortunately, students who have difficulty distinguishing the lecturer's voice from background noise may get an assist with an assistive listening device (ALD). ALDs utilize different technologies, ranging from radio

frequencies, light rays, or magnetic inductive energy to transmit sound, but all generally consist of a microphone/transmitter near the speaker and a receiver that is worn by the student. This creates a clear and direct audio connection between speaker and listener.

P.S. Assistive listening devices may be used in conjunction with a hearing instrument or used alone, as they are in many movie theatres.



Lisa Davidson, M.A. Audiologist



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Business Pulse

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"If you're having really bad chest pain it's better to call an ambulance than to try to drive yourself," added Dr. Benson. "If you sit and wait for 35 to 40 minutes, you put yourself at risk for something much more serious to happen."

When it comes to care, Dr. Benson can put in a pacemaker, treat peripheral arterial disease for circulation problems, and treat heart attacks, heart failure, and heart beat problems, just to name a few common ailments. Despite having the latest technology, Dr. Benson says the best way to diagnose a problem is through one-on-one consultations with patients.

"Even a chest X-ray isn't as good as spending time and talking to the patients about their symptoms," said Dr. Benson. "That's probably the most important thing."

Dr. Benson says he's used to working in rural communities. In fact, he grew up in a Connecticut town that was so small it didn't even have a high school. He had to graduate in the next town over.

Dr. Benson says he feels right

at home in McMinnville and can perform just about any treatment except bypass surgery or an angioplasty.

"I'm a McMinnville resident and I'm going to be here day in and day out," said Dr. Benson. "Patients are going to see the same doctor every time they come."

If you're concerned about a heart attack, Dr. Benson says the most important thing you can do is to quit smoking if you're a smoker. For other people, it's vital to exercise, monitor cholesterol and watch your diet.

"Those are all clearly so important," said Dr. Benson. "I know it's tough to get people to change their lifestyle, but if you can get people to do those simple things, you're making a big difference."

If you'd like to make an appointment with Dr. Benson, his office can be reached by calling 815-4770.

Sid Stanton closes his gas stations

If you drive around McMinnville, you'll notice the four gas stations owned by Sid

Stanton are closed. Most notably, those are the Pit Stop North and Pit Stop South gas stations.

I called Sid to ask about his future plans for the properties, but he's a busy man and he didn't get a chance to return my calls. So I did the next best thing and talked to one of his employees, or should I say former employees.

This nice lady told me the four stores have been closed all week. She has no idea if the stores will remain closed, but she did say all the gas has been removed and sent to other stations, and all the inventory has been removed too.

Like the rest of the nation, business had really slowed down at the gas stations, this woman said. She added that the stores were all opening later and closing earlier for lack of business. And she said employees were told to come pick up their final checks Wednesday.

As for whether the stores will reopen or be sold to someone who will reopen them, that's a topic for another day. All I can say for sure is they're closed right now. At least they were when I was finishing this column at 2:30 p.m. yesterday.

Unemployment rises across state

In last week's column, I reported Tennessee's statewide unemployment rate had climbed to 8.6 percent in January, up a full percentage point from the month before.

Now the state has released its county-by-county unemployment breakdown and the numbers are not pretty.

For Warren County, the unemployment rate has climbed to 12.8 percent. In a sad sign of the times, the unemployment rate climbed in all 95 Tennessee counties. While 12.8 percent may seem high, it's not in comparison as 66 of the 95 counties now have double digit unemployment rates.

If you think things are bad here, just look at Perry County where unemployment is a staggering 27.3 percent. Lauderdale County was next at 18.6 percent.

Knox County had the state's lowest major metropolitan rate of 6.6 percent, followed by Davidson County at 7 percent.

For those folks who like to look back and remember the days of yesteryear, Warren County's unemployment rate was 7.8 percent one year ago today. Ahh, the good ol' days.



Khristina Walling has opened A Step Ahead from 6 weeks to 12 years old. She is pictured with 5-month-old Lexi at the daycare Friday.

New daycare open in downtown Morrison

Khristina Walling went to college to be a teacher and has found a profession that isn't far off. As owner and operator of A Step Ahead Daycare, she's around kids all day. They are just a little younger, some starting at 6 weeks old to be exact.

"I want people to know this daycare is under new ownership and it's not Morrison Learning Center anymore," said Khristina. "I'm not going to hire people to do everything for me. I'm going to be here doing it myself."

Khristina says one of the perks of the job is she gets to be with her own son all day long. She also offers a preschool curriculum from September to June that features art and music. She provides daily reports and monthly newsletters for parents.

"I really like the teaching part of it and I love being around babies," said Khristina. "But I've already found out there are some children who don't want to stay and they cry for mama when she leaves."

Khristina says she and her helper, Dawn Winningham, are CPR certified and first aid trained. She's also licensed with the state, which means

various state departments can drop in at any time.

A Step Ahead is a neat little daycare. In addition to several rooms inside and an outside playground, there are hot and healthy meals served each and every day. Khristina says she realizes these are not the most robust economic times, but that business has been steady thus far.

"I chose one of the worst times to open," said Khristina. "But enrollment keeps growing."

The cost for toddlers is \$85 a week, while infants are \$95. Drop-ins are welcome for \$25 a day. If you'd like to sign-up, the number is 635-KIDS.

Longtime hairdresser hangs up scissors

There's no telling how long Louise Cunningham, 75, had been cutting hair at her cozy shop in downtown Morrison. Some people believe it's been more than 50 years. I believe that regardless of how many years it was, it's still quite an accomplishment.

With so many years under her belt, Louise decided it was time to hang up her golden scissors. And when she made that decision, Rachel Freeze was ready to step in.

"Louise was ready to retire and she says me coming was

an answer to her prayers," said Rachel. "I feel the same way. She gets to retire and I get to come here and work. It came around at the right time for both of us."

Rachel has renamed the beauty shop and it is now more appropriately called Rachel's His and Her Beauty Salon. The phone number is 635-2324.

Rachel has 17 years experience cutting hair but only recently returned to the trade. She's taken some time off to be with her children, ages 11, 9, and 5.

Hair styling is sort of like riding a bicycle. Once you learn, you're set for life. While Rachel says that is the case, she's nonetheless going to take a few classes to catch up on all the latest techniques. She plans to take some coloring courses to refresh herself on the latest trends.

So if you need your hair cut and in you're in the Morrison area, think of Rachel.

That's all folks

I am sorry to say I have no more business news to report. If you have a juicy tidbit you'd like to see in this column, give me a call. If the Business Pulse board of directors approves your tip, you may see it in this column. The phone number to call is 473-2191.



Longtime hairdresser Louise Cunningham has retired and Rachel Freeze has taken over her business in Morrison. Freeze has opened Rachel's His and Her Hair Salon and can be reached at 635-2324.