



TALK TO US: Call Dan Loving, 316-269-6706, or e-mail dloving@wichitaagle.com

WWW.KANSAS.COM/BUSINESS

BUSINESS

Now you know.

5B
SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 1, 2009

Meritrust debuts Monday

BY JERRY SIEBENMARK
The Wichita Eagle

Today, BWCU will begin airing television and radio commercials and newspaper advertisements announcing its new name, Meritrust.

And Monday, the state's largest credit union will open its 13 Wichita branches as well as two in Lawrence with the Meritrust signs in place.

Though the conversion to a new name

and identity might seem rather quick, officials say the process began 15 years ago.

"This has been discussed, off and on, since 1994," said Meritrust chief executive Bob Corwin.

Still, the timing could have been better, Corwin said.

It makes him a bit nervous change names at the same time there's a financial industry upheaval and a recession, he said. Nervous because he doesn't

want members or potential members to think that the credit union has been sold or merged.

"We're just trying to make sure it's clear this is something we've been working on for some time," Corwin said.

The idea for a name change first came up when the credit union, then Boeing Wichita Employees Credit Union, received approval from regulators to

Please see MERITRUST, Page 7B



Courtesy image

BWCU, the state's largest credit union, has changed its name to Meritrust. It will open its 13 Wichita branches as well as two in Lawrence with new signs in place on Monday.



CARRIE RENGERS

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Another restaurant to take over Cibola site

Cibola has closed at Bradley Fair, and a new restaurant is coming to its space.

Cibola owners Kevin Brown and Tracy Fahrback didn't return calls for comment, but they've had some well-publicized tax issues in recent years.

Sources close to the new deal say the restaurant space is undergoing a significant redesign.

Along with some changes to the dining area, there will be dramatic changes to the patio and some at the bar as well.

Look for more details, including an opening date, in coming weeks.

Targeted development

The Village at Greenwich at 21st and Greenwich is going to be home to a new Firestone Complete Auto Care center.

Texas-based Mays & Co. is developing the one-acre property. The building will be a typical 7,575-square-foot Firestone prototype.

Construction is under way, but the company won't give a specific timetable for completion.

A Mays representative, who prefers not to be named, says the company liked the Village at Greenwich's location across from SuperTarget at Regency Lakes.

The real story

On a day already filled with news of thousands of layoffs last week, it was alarming to hear talk that Dillard's at Towne West Square might be going out of business.

We're happy to report that's not the case.

The fine-jewelry department is closing, though.

The company that runs the department, which is separate from Dillard's, is closing almost 80 of its stores.

The fine jewelry department at Dillard's at Towne East Square won't be affected.

The department closing at Towne West isn't an indication of how other business is doing at Dillard's.

Please see RENGERS, Page 7B

STRETCHING HELPS REDUCE WORKPLACE INJURIES



Photos by Mike Hutmacher/The Wichita Eagle

UCL employee Ed Armendariz stretches before starting his workday. Job-related injuries have dropped dramatically since the construction company started a comprehensive safety program more than a decade ago, which now includes morning stretches.

Safety pays off

UCL program draws special attention from OSHA



Stella Warhurst leads a safety meeting for UCL employees. Because of the firm's high safety standards, two of its Wichita job sites have qualified for OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program.

BY RICK PLUMLEE
The Wichita Eagle

Imagine a bunch of rugged construction workers beginning their day doing stretching exercises.

Actually, you don't have to imagine it at all.

Check out the workers for Wichita's UCL at any of its job sites or at its yard and you'll see exactly that.

But be on time. Stretching starts at 7:30 a.m. sharp.

"It helps sharpen you," UCL shop foreman Tom Reich said. "Gets your mind right for the day."

Even the office workers at UCL's headquarters, 659 N. Market, do their daily stretching.

Since UCL began a comprehensive safety program more than a decade ago, it has dramatically reduced injuries. And injuries dropped to



next to nothing since the morning stretches were added in 2001.

"When we started this, there were people in our industry who said, 'You guys are nuts,'" UCL president Chuck Grier said.

"Even people in our company told us we were nuts, that injuries are an inherent part of this business."

"We didn't think that was necessarily the case."

Grier led the results do the talking. UCL hasn't had a recordable accident in 20 months and has gone 37 months without a lost-time accident.

No small thing for a company that has 110 of its 145 employees in the

Please see SAFETY, Page 7B

SAFETY

From Page 5B

field, doing heavy construction jobs that can put workers 35 feet below ground or 50 feet in the air.

In 2006, the construction industry standard was 5.9 job-related injuries or illnesses for every 100 employees, according to the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

There are plenty of good reasons to make job safety a high priority for a business.

Costs of a job-related injury or illness can be staggering. In 2008, OSHA reported the average cost to an employer was \$39,000 for an injury serious enough that it forced an employee to miss work time.

But that's only the average. When considering the broad range of direct and indirect costs, the numbers can really take off, according to a formula tabulated by OSHA.

Consider a company with a 10 percent profit that has a worker suffer a sprain.

Costs to the company can reach up to \$48,505. The amount of additional sales needed to recover that loss would be \$485,000. The lower the company's profit margin, the more additional sales are needed.

Decreased injuries have certainly paid off for UCL.

From 1995 to 1998, the family-owned business spent \$810,000 on workers' comp claims. Over the past four years, which saw only one injury that resulted in lost time, UCL spent less than \$45,000 on claims.

"It takes time to process the claim, find someone to fill that spot and manage the medical case," Grier said. "It's really wasted motion."

Fewer injuries also mean lower insurance premiums.

ON-THE-JOB INJURIES OR ILLNESSES BY THE NUMBERS

4,002,700 — Recordable nonfatal injuries or illnesses nationally in private industry in 2007

1,158,900 — Days away from work nationally in 2007

444,510 — Cases involving sprains, strains or tears in 2007

235,960 — Cases involving back injuries in 2007

253,410 — Cases involving falls in 2007

\$170 billion — Most recent national estimate of annual business costs resulting from occupational injuries

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and OSHA

Don Ostrander, director of consulting services for the National Safety Council, said subcontractors with strong safety records can benefit because their chances of being hired will increase.

"You can manage safety just like any other management endeavor," he said.

A 'culture change'

Grier said the bottom line isn't what drove him to start UCL's safety program.

"We started out with this thing to send people home with all their fingers, toes and eyes every night when they go home," he said. "This thing isn't just motivated by dollars. It's out of respect for our employees and their families."

"When you've watched people get hurt badly or been to a funeral . . ."

Grier, 57, has done both in his nearly 40 years in the construction industry.

As a summer laborer while still in college, he watched a man sustain severe internal injuries from being buried in a ditch. Not long after that, he was the first company representative to meet with the family of an employee who fell from an elevator shaft.

And then in the mid-1990s at a UCL project in Tulsa, a

worker was electrocuted when

his crane touched an overhead power line.

"We had just had a meeting on electrical safety," Grier recalled.

Meetings aren't enough. Just meeting OSHA's minimum standards isn't enough.

"It takes a culture change," said Larry Schmitz, who was hired as UCL's safety director in 1997 after serving in a similar capacity for Koch Industries' refinery in Corpus Christi, Texas.

That also means it has to be employee driven. Each UCL job site has a safety observer, who are frequently just regular laborers.

If the observer sees a worker doing something unsafe, he tells the individual and then reports the incident. The report isn't for punishment but so statistics can be logged and trends followed, Grier said.

That was significant in establishing the stretching program in 2001.

UCL reduced its total accidents from 22 in 1997 to 10 in 1999 but remained at 10 each year through 2001.

Grier and Schmitz checked the trends and found all but one of those injuries had been a muscular-skeletal issue that happened before 10 a.m.

"Guys were jumping out of the trucks, slapping on a tool belt that could weigh as much

as 40 pounds and going to work," Grier said. "It wasn't hard to figure out what was happening."

Most of UCL's employees were being sent to Wichita's NovaCare for physical therapy after injuries. UCL asked NovaCare to set up a stretching program to prevent injuries.

Again, there was some employee resistance.

"We tried to promote it by telling them professional athletes don't go out and play a game until they stretch," Grier said. "We told them, 'You guys are professionals at what you do. If we put you out there without stretching, we're not giving you a chance to perform to your potential.'"

From 2002 through 2008, UCL has had 16 accidents, two that resulted in lost time.

UCL has rewarded the good results by paying expenses for a spring trip to Worlds of Fun in Kansas City for the employees and their families.

"The interest is there," Gaines said, "but there are many companies worrying about keeping their doors open. Things are tough right now."

He said most of the resistance is from smaller construction companies, which can't afford to hire more people to oversee safety. UCL has only a two-man safety department, but its safety culture was established years ago.

"Once you get a good health and safety program up and running," he said, "it's pretty easy to manage. (UCI) doesn't have just two safety directors, they have 145 safety directors."

One of Grier's employees corrected his boss because Grier wasn't wearing his orange safety vest in a required area.

"They caught me," Grier said, "and that's the way it's supposed to work."

Reach Rick Plumlee at 316-268-6660 or rplumlee@wichitaagle.com.

RENGERS

From Page 5B

Store manager Mike Baker says sales are as strong as they were a year ago, and maybe even a little better.

"People still need to buy things," he says. And he says that while the store still sells some more exclusive brands, like Coach, it also offers a lot of moderately priced items.

"You can buy some things here that you can't buy at Target for that price point," he says.

And although the mark-downs cut into Dillard's profit, Baker says, the reduced pricing is "why we're not hurting."

After a delay in opening of about eight months, the Renglers at 912 E. Douglas in Old Town has closed.

"It's just tough, tough times for the economy," says Whitney Vliet Ward of Redstone Design Development, which owns the building.

"We all need to do a better job of supporting our locally owned businesses," Ward says.

Even in a tough economic time, though, Ward has already had interest from at least four potential tenants within two days.

— A sign at Pro Kansas Miller Recycling Center

Get a hot tip or quirky story? Call Carrie Rengers at 316-268-6340 or e-mail crengers@wichitaagle.com.

MERITRUST

From Page 5B

open its field of membership from Boeing employees and their families to anyone living or working in Sedgewick County and 16 other Kansas counties.

Almost a year later it changed its name to Boeing Wichita Credit Union. More recently, the credit union had slowly and quietly adopted the BWCU name.

Wade Bruendl, Meritrust's chief operating officer, said that the real push for an identity away from the Boeing brand began after Boeing sold its commercial aircraft operations in Wichita to Onex Corp. in 2005.

"That really brought it to the forefront," Bruendl said. The credit union hired Monigle Associates to come up with a new name.

Monigle is a Denver branding agency that has done rebranding work for a number of Fortune 500 companies. For instance, it was hired by AT&T to bring the Cingular mobile phone brand under the AT&T umbrella.

The Meritrust name represents two "pillars" of the credit union, Bruendl said. It wants its 50,000 members to have a sense of trust in the credit union, and it's the credit union's mission to merit, or earn, that trust, he said.

Bruendl said the credit union chose the name Monigle came up with nearly a year ago.

Lee Williams has been through the same thing that Corwin and Bruendl are going through now.

The president of Central Star Credit Union oversaw a name change from Aviation Associates Credit Union in 2005.

Central Star's name change also was prompted by a change in its field of membership to serve more people than just those affiliated with Hawker Beechcraft.

"It's real difficult to do," Williams said of name changes. But a good marketing plan and lots of member communication helps to overcome any confusion, she said.

"Once you embrace it and it feels right, it starts to take on its own identity."

Reach Jerry Siebenmark at 316-268-6576 or jsiebenmark@wichitaagle.com.

INDEXES, RATES AND COMMODITIES

INDEXES	This week	Last week	Month ago	Year ago
Dow Jones	8,000.86	8,077.56	9,034.69	12,650.36
S&P 500	925.88	931.95	931.80	1,411.63
NASDAQ	1,476.42	1,477.29	1,632.21	2,504.65

LOAN RATES (%)	3.25	3.25	3.25	7.25
Prime, 30-day T-bill	5.10	5.12	5.10	6.07
1-yr. adj. mortgage, nat.	4.90	4.92	4.85	5.47
48-mo. new car, intrust	5.15	5.15	5.15	6.90

SAVINGS (%)	1.15	1.24	1.24	2.97
90-day CDs	1.49	1.49	1.49	3.22
6-month CDs	1.99	1.99	2.48	3.95
2-year CDs	0.15	0.15	0.25	0.75

BONDS (%)	5.16	5.13	5.33	4.32
Municipal, Bond Buyer	5.64	5.64	5.64	4.28

TREASURIES (%)	0.06	0.05	0.07	3.19
3-month Treasury bills	2.67	2.60	2.22	3.87
10-year Treasury notes	3.42	3.26	2.81	4.38

COMMODITIES (\$)	927.00	895.00	876.00	863.00
Gold, HSBC	12.59	11.93	11.50	15.30

*Source: Fidelity Bank

**Current annual yield, guaranteed minimum, Series I

OMNI BUSINESS CENTER

Let us run your office, while you run your business.

VIRTUAL OFFICE

You don't have to office at Omni to receive...

◆ Phone Answering ◆ Conference Rooms
◆ Fast Internet ◆ Workstations ◆ Mail Address

DOUGLAS at ARMOUR 316 689 3537 www.omnibizcenter.com

Las Vegas

FROM \$79*

*One way

Only one flight to Las Vegas airport ticket center

Enjoy the sunshine, savings and nonstop jet service from Wichita.

Save even more by booking your complete air, hotel and car rental package.

www.allegiantair.com **allegiant** travel company

*Seats are limited. Fares are one-way and not available on all flights. Must be purchased by Feb. 11, 2009 for travel completed by July 31, 2009. Offer not available Feb. 13-16, April 5-20, May 22-25 and July 2-6, 2009. 7-day advance purchase required. Prices do not include taxes, equipment fees, etc. Security fees of up to \$16.00 per segment. A segment is one take-off and one landing. A convenience fee of \$13.50 per passenger will apply when booked on allegiant.com. A convenience fee of \$13.50 per passenger, plus \$10.00 per segment, will apply when purchased through Allegiant Air call centers. Purchase made at any Allegiant Air Agent ticket office will not incur a convenience or call-center fee. When purchased at time of booking, a fee of \$15 for first checked bag and \$25 for second checked bag will apply per person, per segment. If purchased at flight check-in, a fee of \$25 for the first checked bag and \$35 for the second checked bag per person, per segment will apply. All rates additional higher fees will apply for three or more checked bags. Tax rates, routes and schedules are subject to change without notice. Restrictions apply.

STOCKS OF AREA INTEREST

STOCKS ON KANSAS.COM													
Stock	Market	52-week High	52-week Low	Div.	Last	Chg.	Stock	Market	52-week High	52-week Low	Div.	Last	Chg.
OKSBC	N	51.23	51.54	1.00	29.22	-.93	Pennney	N	51.42	13.95	0.80	16.75	-1.16
Peapack	N	75.25	32.76	1.20	58.20	-1.45	PharMCA	N	40.60	40.75	1.02	18.19	-.35
Raytheon	N	67.49	41.81	1.12	56.62	-.32	RockCell	N	64.56	27.76	0.56	37.68	-.02
ReMax	N	26.00	9.27	0	14.85	-.52	Robins	N	75.50	44.13	1.64	53.19	-.56
RockCell	N	64.56	27.76	0.56	37.68	-.02	RYCBarr	N	41.99	5.97	0	6.49	-1.36
Sarcelle	N	13.07	7.04	0.04	10.03	-.37	ShoCo	A	387.00	770.00	3.00	100.00	0.00
SearsRogers	N	114.00	26.80	0	40.92	-2.77	Shawnee	N	65.00	44.53	1.40	47.25	-.96
SimonProp	N	106.43	37.78	3.00	42.98	-1.46	SpiritAer	N	31.49	7.14	0	13.60	-.65
Smith's	N	32.18	5.46	0	11.87	-.49	Sprinkler	N	10.99	1.35	2.43	1.14	-.14
SpiritAer	N	31.49	7.14</										