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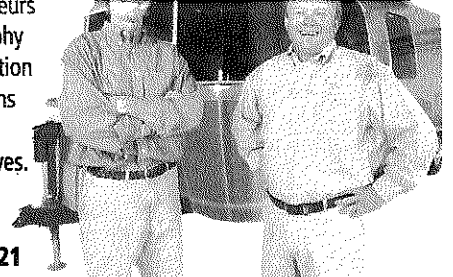
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# BUSINESS JOURNAL

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Two entrepreneurs find photography at the intersection of their passions and their professional lives.

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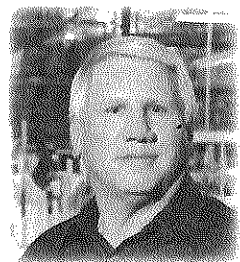
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## HEALTHY DESIGNS:

Ellerbe Becket builds a health care practice in the booming KC market. | 3



## FEELING QUEASY:

Small businesses get nervous about efforts to expand the FMLA. | 6



## NEWSMAKER:

David Miller hopes to be a playmaker for Humana's KC-area team. | 8

## THE LIST:

Charitable trusts and foundations | 32

# East Side investor has big plans, but provides few details

BY JIM DAVIS | STAFF WRITER

Ephren Taylor II's bold plan for building housing in Kansas City's urban core doesn't lack for ambition.

The one-time Internet prodigy, 23, said he wants to



Taylor

make good on Bank of America's previous designs for an area south of the 18th & Vine Historic Jazz District.

Taylor also mentions plans to build houses on the site of Kansas City's old Municipal Stadium, cites involvement in an apartment redevelopment on the city's East Side and says he'll soon announce plans for another project

**MORE THAN** real estate is on Ephren Taylor's varied list of interests. | 45

in Wyandotte County.

But tracking Taylor's business activities is complicated by the numerous corporate entities he operates through. Although one of his companies' Web sites describes him as lead investor for a group that manages tens of mil-

lions of dollars for people from coast to coast, details about other members of the group or the projects mentioned on Web pages and in news releases are sparse.

"I'm at the top of the food chain," Taylor said. "I don't know about details. I try to let my managers do what they do the best. I'm the

SEE TAYLOR | 45

# \$115M in retail follows roofs

## Housing boom lures project to Raymore

BY CHRIS GRENZ | STAFF WRITER

A group of local investors is banking on a housing boom in Raymore to bolster a new \$115 million, nearly 700,000-square-foot shopping center near the intersection of U.S. Highway 71 and Missouri Highway 58.

The center - called Raymore Galleria - will be anchored by an existing Wal-Mart, which recently was expanded to a supercenter, and a just-completed Lowe's, which is the project's first store.

The developer is Raymore Galleria LLC, led by David Block, a principal and broker with Block & Co. Inc. Realtors, and Becky Goodman, a Block vice president. The other partners are Jeff Kieffer, a local banker, and Steve Corwine, an area real estate investor.

Block said the development would benefit from good visibility and highway access and draw from miles around.

"It will be the premier shopping experience in that part of town, drawing from that whole southern region of greater Kansas City," he said. "The majority of residential growth down there of late and proposed for the future is in Raymore. They're just rocking. There's been significant residential growth, which typically drives major community shopping centers like what this will be."

In a little more than two years, the city has platted 5,300 new home sites - a number that exceeds its existing houses, said Gene Thompson, Raymore's economic development director.

"It's kind of a neat time to be in Raymore right now," he said. "There's just so many exciting



DAVE KAUP | KCBJ

David Block and Becky Goodman are partners in what they hope will be "the premier shopping experience" in fast-growing Raymore.

things going on. And it's sort of just the tip of the iceberg with all the things starting to surface."

Raymore Galleria, to be done in three phases, will feature a bank, nationally known junior anchors and about a half-dozen restaurants, Block said.

Phase one will encompass about 60 acres on the south side of Highway 58. Block is close to completing talks with Office-Max and Bed Bath & Beyond to serve as junior anchors, he said.

Other key stores will include a "major" electronics retailer, a clothing store, a shoe store and a large pet supply store, Block said. An auto parts, tire and bat-

tery store is negotiating to lease a pad site out front.

The second phase will feature about seven buildings that will form a smaller "convenience-oriented" shopping center on 15 to 20 acres north of Highway 58, Block said. Those shops probably would include service-oriented businesses, such as a video store or a dry cleaner, Block said.

A third phase could include about a dozen buildings ranging from 11,000 square feet to about 28,500 square feet to the south of the shopping center.

SEE RAYMORE | 9

# Out-of-town banks join JoCo fray

## Wachovia, BOK will jump into fierce competition

BY JIM DAVIS | STAFF WRITER

Two large out-of-town bank owners plan full-service branches in Johnson County.

The county's already-competitive banking market will become even more fierce with the entry of Bank of Oklahoma and national powerhouse Wachovia Bank.

Bank of Oklahoma could open by late summer in Overland Park. Its proposed Bank of Kansas City would be at 7500 College Blvd.

BOK Financial Corp., the bank's Tulsa-based owner (Nasdaq: BOKF), already knows Johnson County. Bank of Oklahoma Mortgage entered the market in 1998 and ranks No. 22 on the *Kansas City Business Journal's* list of the Top 25 Area Residential Mortgage Lenders. BOSC Inc., a BOK-owned securities broker and municipal bond underwriter, opened in Lenexa in 2003.

In September, BOK opened a lending office just south of Kansas City International Airport that focuses on agribusiness.

Dan Ellinore, a BOK senior executive vice president, said the company also wants to mine metropolitan Kansas City for more commercial loans. The bank has booked more than \$300 million of this business in the market since early 2003, Ellinore said.

Ellinore said BOK wants to do full-service banking in Missouri but would need a separate charter. The bank has not filed a charter application, he said.

BOK also runs full-service banks

SEE JOCO | 45

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## RAYMORE: Housing will surround shops

FROM PAGE 1

Block said he envisions that portion as an office/light industrial park, possibly also including more retail components.

The entire development will include about 50 stores and restaurants, he said.

"Certainly by summertime, we should have all of these tenants solidified, signed and either in the construction phase or in preparation for construction," Block said. "We intend to be completely leased and finished by summer or fall of next year."

Block & Co. sold about 174 acres south of the project to Hunt Midwest Residential Development Inc. to build a residential subdivision that will back up to the new shopping center. The subdivision, called Timber Trails, will include 330 single-family homes and 340 town houses, said Tammy Henderson, director of residential marketing for Hunt Midwest, a division of Kansas City-based Hunt Midwest Enterprises Inc.

The single-family homes will range from \$180,000 to about \$215,000, with an average price of about \$205,000, she said; the town houses will start around \$100,000.

The subdivision will connect to the shopping center via walking trails. Coupled with strong public schools and good highway access, Henderson said, it should be an attractive neighborhood,



BLOCK &amp; CO. INC. REALTORS

This is an aerial view of Raymore Galleria, a new \$115 million, nearly 700,000-square-foot shopping center near the intersection of U.S. Highway 71 and Missouri Highway 58.

particularly for first-time home buyers.

"With the price of housing in Johnson County and Lee's Summit, you've got people taking a look a little farther south," she said. "And it's really not that much farther south."

The new shopping center also is near Creekmoor, an upscale subdivision on an 18-hole golf course and a 116-acre recreational lake that will have more than 1,500 homes. That project is be-

ing developed by Cooper Land Development, based in Rogers, Ark.

Raymore's Thompson said city leaders have been working with the Raymore Galleria developers for nearly two years to help make the center a reality, including the establishment of a tax increment financing district to use new tax revenue generated by the development to help cover construction costs.

"It's a wonderful project," he said. "It

means that we will finally have the retail shopping that many of our residents have asked about. And for those to the south, this will be the first really nice shopping opportunity as you get into the metro region. There won't be any need to go any further into the metro to do their shopping than our retail center."

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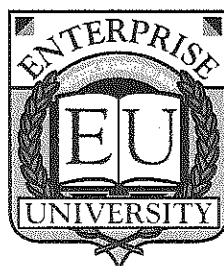
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