



DEAL DIVA
More coupon advice from Tara McAlister: 7 items for which you should never pay full price. **2D**

The Charlotte Observer

Business incubator is energizing space

CLT Joules, in Packard Place, is recruiting young energy companies

By **BRUCE HENDERSON**
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Amid an energy cluster in which a few companies tower like redwoods, Curtis Watkins decided the saplings needed a little fertilizer.

Watkins, 34, works for one of those giants, Duke Energy, but he was first an entrepreneur. His brainstorm is coming to life as CLT Joules, an energy-business incubator.



Watkins

The name is a play on Charlotte's energy roots (a joule is a unit of energy), its logo a stylized crown topped by a start button. It will be housed in Packard Place, the Church Street building with the abstract paint job and rooftop wind turbines that is uptown's entrepreneurial hub.

The 6,000-square-foot Joules space holds offices, conference rooms and an open "bullpen" where entrepreneurs can briefly touch down. The space is empty now as it awaits its occupancy permit.

"This is the energy community coming together in one place for the first time," Watkins said.

The nonprofit initially will select six to eight mid-level companies, typically those that already have products and some sales, to share the space. Joules will offer the companies an uptown site and immerse them among other entrepreneurs. Volunteer mentors will help vet ideas and advise on legal, financial and regulatory matters.

Watkins expects most companies to spend a year or two maturing at the incubator, departing with investors, new expertise and expanded business networks.

"Tapping into resources is difficult," said Rick Sabath, CEO of year-old startup Energy River Inc., which will move its four employees to the incubator. The company's platform helps utilities shave peak energy demand while giving homeowners increased control of their energy use.

At Joules, Sabath foresees new access to potential investors and relationships with other companies, including established ones.

"Any city that has developed a good technology base cultivates an incubator that fosters growth," said Sabath, who has been in-SEE **INCUBATOR**, 2D

Entrepreneur plans to open brew pub in Highland Mill as new businesses, residents and proposed Lynx extension pump life back into arts district



PHOTOS BY DIEDRA LAIRD - dlaird@charlotteobserver.com

Zach Hart, brewer for the new Heist Brew Pub, gets the new brewery's brew house equipment up and running Thursday in preparation for an inspection. Owner Kurt Hogan is set to open Heist at NoDa's Highland Mill this June.

Betting on a NoDa revival

By **KERRY SINGE**
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Kurt Hogan longed for years to open a pub, a vision he shared with his dad and older brother.

Armed with an MBA, a love of the restaurant business and an appreciation for craft beers, the New England native visited Charlotte in early 2011 and decided the artsy North Davidson Street community was a perfect fit for his entrepreneurial dreams.

About that same time, the neighborhood, along with the rest of Charlotte, was suffering. Stalwart galleries and eateries that had helped define the eclectic community went out of business.

A new condo project in the heart of the district turned to rentals as the residential market tanked.



Heist will be the third brewery to open in NoDa in less than a year. NoDa is experiencing a burst of growth.

Hogan wasn't fazed. He continued with his plan to open a brew pub serving handcrafted beers and artisan breads.

He's been remodeling for more than six months, hiring a millworker to craft tables out of 100-year-old walnut

and he's finalizing the menu, described as "American with a twist."

He's looking to open Heist Brewery - the name is an edgy homage to the banking industry - in mid-June.

"The recession hit a lot of people pretty hard," said Ho-

gan, who said he is a distant relative of Baby Face Nelson, the notorious 1930s bank robber. "But it's pretty evident people are being drawn back to NoDa. Everything points to NoDa being on the mend."

Hogan isn't the only one seeing promise in the neighborhood north of uptown.

NoDa, locals say, is showing signs of a rebound.

In addition to Hogan's Heist Brewery, a new Asian fusion restaurant, Miyagi, is opening next to Revolution Pizza.

Apartment complexes are fully leased. On weekends, food trucks swing by more often, residents say, following the increased crowds.

When Heist opens at Highland Mill next month, it will be the third local brewery to open in NoDa in less than one year, joining NoDa Brewing Co. and Birdsong Brewing Co.

SEE **NODA**, 2D

As Facebook gets bigger, millions say, 'no, thanks'

900 million use it, but many others say they don't want it or need it

By **ANICK JESDANUN**
Associated Press

Don't try to friend MaLi Arwood on Facebook. You won't find her there.

You won't find Thomas Chin, either. Or Kariann Goldschmitt. Or Jake Edelstein.

More than 900 million people worldwide check their Facebook accounts at least once a month, but millions more are Facebook holdouts.

They say they don't want Facebook. They insist they don't need Facebook. They say they're living life just fine without the long-forgotten acquaintances that the world's largest social network sometimes resurrects.

They are the resisters.



2009 AP FILE PHOTO

Internet pioneer Len Kleinrock says Facebook is fine for his grandchildren, but it's not for him.

"I'm absolutely in touch with everyone in my life that I want to be in touch with," says Arwood, 47, a restaurant manager in Chicago. "I don't need to share triviality with

someone that I might have known for six months, 12 years ago."

Despite the holdouts, Facebook is one of the biggest business suc-

SEE **FACEBOOK**, 3D

Small fibs on resume can cause big problems in job

A tough job market has led some to embellish details about career

By **KRISTIN SAMUELSON**
Chicago Tribune

A little GPA padding. A slight fib on a job title. A clerical error on dates.

What might seem like innocuous tweaks or typos on a resume can compound themselves, creating a mess for the individual and company.

"As tempting as those things are to do, it will always come back to haunt you," said David Hoffmann, chairman and chief executive of Chicago-based executive search firm DHR International. "There is no room for embellishment."

Even high-level executives aren't immune. Scott Thompson, former chief executive of Yahoo Inc. stepped down May 13 after an activist shareholder flagged a discrepancy in

Thompson's resume.

Recent Yahoo filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission said Thompson received undergraduate degrees in accounting and computer science from Stonehill College in Massachusetts. Turned out, he never took home a computer science degree, a claim that Yahoo called an "inadvertent error."

Adding to the upheaval at Yahoo, Thompson told directors before resigning that he has been diagnosed with thyroid cancer, according to a person briefed on the matter. The cancer disclosure was previously reported by the Wall Street Journal.

"The consequences are unbelievably significant," Hoffmann said, noting that companies often allow candidates to explain discrepancies. "If any of these,

SEE **RESUME**, 3D

Food on a plane: High altitude, low expectations

For all the airlines' efforts, food, planes not a natural pairing

By PAUL NUSSBAUM
Philadelphia Inquirer

If this is May, it must be pumpkin-seed-encrusted chicken breast.

Or pesto grilled mahi mahi. Or portobello mushroom stuffed with wild rice on a bed of sauteed spinach.

Airlines are refreshing their menus for the busy summer flying season, wooing first-class and international travelers with fare as ambitious as cramped, low-humidity, low-pressure cabins will permit.

In coach class, passengers get a hot meal only if they cross an ocean, but even there, change is in order. Yesterday's Danish on US Airways' trans-Atlantic coach service is gone, replaced by today's flappot muffin (blueberry for May, apple-cinnamon for June).

For all the airlines' efforts, high-altitude dining is not haute cuisine. It's burdened with limited expectations, for food and airplanes are not a natural pairing.

Almost all food is less flavorful at 35,000 feet, because a passenger's ability



Juan Raphael, executive chef at LSG Sky Chefs, pours sauce on pumpkin seed encrusted chicken breast.

CHARLES FOX - PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/MCT

to taste suffers from the reduced cabin air pressure and, especially, the low humidity. It's like eating with a cold.

To make matters worse, airline food must be bland enough for a million palates, cheap enough for a mi-

ser's budget, and durable enough to survive precooking, chilling or freezing, and reheating.

It's also made in mass quantities and served in tight quarters.

"I don't view it as a meal, but as a miracle of biblical

proportions," said Hector Adler, US Airways' vice president for in-flight services.

Unsurprisingly, the bar for success is not set too high.

"The key to being successful," Adler said, "is whether it's moist and has a discernible taste."

Earlier this month, chefs for US Airways - Philadelphia International Airport's dominant carrier - gave flight attendants and airport employees a taste of what's ahead, unveiling the season's new trans-Atlantic menus and dishing up samples of the first-class meals.

There was, as always, a steak.

The airline's signature meal is steak, appealing to American travelers' sense of familiarity and to foreign travelers' sense of real American food. All that ever changes is the sauce and accompanying vegetables.

"Passengers always tell us in surveys, 'We want healthy food,' but it seems they always go for steak and ice cream," said Timothy Donnally, the airline's manager of menu planning and galley design.

There was, as always, a chicken dish (pumpkin-seed-encrusted for May outbound passengers), a

seafood dish (pesto grilled mahi mahi with cherry tomato sauce), and a vegetarian dish (wild rice-stuffed portobello with roasted pepper sauce).

Like its competitors, US Airways lavishes its culinary attention on the front of the plane, where the most profitable seats are. For the 85 percent of the Europe-bound passengers flying coach, May's selections are orange chipotle chicken or penne with Sicilian tomato sauce. Because of price (the airline says each coach meal costs it about \$6), beef is offered only in June (stroganoff, if you're planning ahead).

The guiding principles of coach food: sauces to keep it moist, and salt to boost flavor. In first class, meat is often encrusted to keep it moist.

"We work a lot with herbs, and you have to have a little more salt upstairs than on the ground," said chef Jimmy Clack, the airline's senior specialist for menu design and development. "It needs to be full of flavor, but not overspiced."

Despite all the planning and testing and tasting, some meals are flops. Last year, a chicken entree was too salty. And the penne ar-

biata was too spicy, especially for young fliers and their parents.

"Don't worry," said Donnally. "The passengers let us know."

Only one food, insisted Adler, is unchanged in taste or popularity by taking flight: "Ice cream is the only food that tastes the same at 35,000 feet. And everyone loves it."

The complex business of provisioning planes with beverages, snacks and meals involves massive catering kitchens, warehouses, and a parade of supply trucks, operating with militarylike precision and often with militarylike results.

LSG Sky Chefs, the catering conglomerate that handles food preparation for US Airways and other airlines at Philadelphia International, last year prepared nearly 500 million meals for 300 airlines in 52 countries.

In a commissary, 210 US Airways employees work two shifts a day, stocking carts that serve 30,000 passengers a day. They are required to put every Coke, every ginger ale, every Bud Light in exactly the same place in every compartment to make it easy for a flight attendant to locate in a dim cabin.

Some items should always be purchased at a discounted rate

Here are 7 everyday items never to be bought at full price

DEAL DIVA
TARA MCALISTER



I believe in clipping coupons for most products, but here are seven items no one should ever buy without a coupon:

■ Shaving supplies: This is the time of year that razor manufacturers ramp up the marketing on their latest and greatest razors and that means lots of coupons. Always buy razors at the drugstore because drugstores offer special rewards.

■ Toothbrushes and toothpaste: With abundant coupons on everything from toothpaste, toothbrushes and floss, you should be able to cover most of your tooth care needs for less than a dollar, and perhaps even for free.

■ Spaghetti sauce, salad dressing and condiments: In January and the spring months, salad dressing is at its cheapest. Right now, almost every manufacturer of barbecue sauce, ketchup and mustard has coupons available in Sunday's newspaper.

■ Oil change: If you need an oil change, check first for coupons on the websites of popular oil change chains, such as Jiffy Lube, or head over to retailme not.com. Be sure to find loyalty programs that re-



2006 GETTY FILE PHOTO

Don't forget the coupons when purchasing many household goods.

ward consumers with free services after a certain number of services.

■ Baby items: Not only are these coupons easy to find in your Sunday newspaper, but new parents also should register for baby clubs and popular manufacturer websites.

■ Craft items: Two of the largest craft retailers - Jo-Ann Fabrics and Michaels - consistently offer coupons in their weekly inserts. They also post printable coupons on retailme not.com.

■ Cereal: Typically cheapest during September and January, there are always great coupons offered in the Sunday inserts and on the manufacturer's website (think Kellogg's and General Mills). Most often the best cereal deals can be found at your local drugstore.

Visit the Deal Diva on Facebook and email questions or comments to thedealdiva@bellsouth.net.

NODA

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"We're big fans of all the new doors opening for local businesses. It's very exciting," said Hollis Nixon, president of the NoDa Neighborhood Association, which includes residents and businesses.

The economy remains challenging. Consumer confidence overall has risen, but people remain worried about the economy. Unemployment is falling but is still near record highs.

NoDa's renaissance stems, in part, from what makes it unique - the availability of large, older warehouse and industrial space, relatively cheap rent and local landlords willing to take a chance on startups, real estate professionals say.

"Things keep opening up in NoDa," said David Tschirhart, a commercial real estate broker with Legacy Real Estate Advisors who runs the website Restauranttraffic.com. "Landlords there are more agreeable to take chances. The neighborhood is definitely coming out of (the recession) great."

Hit by the downturn

Once a textile center and mill community, the neighborhood was reborn as an arts district in the 1970s and 1980s as dancers, musicians, actors and artists moved in and restored blighted houses and opened businesses. Art galleries became a backbone of the neighborhood.

But many businesses couldn't stand the crush of the recent recession. Beet Contemporary Crafts and Functional Art gallery closed in 2010.

That same year, the founder of Salvador Deli & Market, a popular free-concert venue, died days before a deadline to get caught up on his rent or be shut down.

Some people wondered how the arts district would survive.

In response, the neighborhood created a grass-roots, community-driven outdoor arts venue called the NoDa Public Gallery.

On Saturday, the community planned to celebrate the unveiling of the Matheson Bridge Mural, a public-private collaboration where residents provided art for a public overpass.

"We evolved with the times," Nixon said. "We're having to reinvent the



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Highland Mill resident Amanda Malujin walks her dogs at Highland Mill Thursday morning. Highland Mill loft properties are 98 percent occupied.

wheel here. But it worked out. (The area is) going to constantly evolve and change."

Bob Silverman of Winter Properties in Atlanta, which renovated Highland Park Mill No. 3 into the Highland Mill Lofts and commercial space, says the project went through "a very difficult time" over the last couple of years. But conditions have improved, and the future holds great promise, such as the proposed northeast extension of the Lynx light rail line, which would run behind Highland Mill. The train would have a stop in NoDa.

He said the commercial property is also fully leased with Heist, the apartment leasing office and a new veterinary practice.

"We believe in urban villages, places where you can walk to galleries, restaurants and shops," Silverman said. "People are starting to see that NoDa's going to be a very important node for Charlotte."

Highland Mill Loft property manager Kelly Thomason said the loft apartments are 98 percent leased, a welcome change from two to three years ago when occupancy dipped to around 88 percent.

"Last year has been wonderful," she said. "We haven't had to do rent concessions or specials."

Many tenants moved to Charlotte from New York and Chicago, she said. Tenants include some cast and crew who are in town filming the Show-

time spy thriller series "Homeland."

"It's booming," Thomason said.

From mill to brewery

At Highland Mill, workers scurry to finish renovations on the nearly 7,000 square feet that will house Heist.

Breweries need large spaces, and NoDa's historic mills provide a perfect home, said Tschirhart, the broker. Rents are also among the city's cheapest, averaging \$12 a square foot to \$15 a square foot, about half what other areas such as South Park might command.

Hogan, who said banks "wouldn't touch me," is financing the brew pub with help from friends, family and other investors. He's assembled a team, hiring brew master Zach Hart and chef Rob Masone from Mash House Brewery and Chophouse in Fayetteville.

Hogan feels Heist fits into NoDa's culture perfectly because of its emphasis on handcrafted details, from the beer to the custom-designed granite dishes they will use to the 4½-by-8-foot-deep, hand-built brick oven.

"It's an artsy boutique community, and it just resonates with me," Hogan said. "And everything that has to do with Heist is artistic. I couldn't see any better spot than an arts district to incorporate a brew pub."

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INCUBATOR

[from ID]

involved previously with tech startups. "Charlotte really needs this in a great way, in my opinion."

San Diego, Houston, San Francisco, Seattle and New York all have energy incubators. Now a Silicon Valley-like ethos of collaboration and informal partnerships - "coopetition," it's called - is blossoming in Charlotte.

"Our pitch is that we're creating a high-quality energy company pipeline," Watkins said. "If we're serious about being an energy hub, we've got to open our arms to entrepreneurs."

Entrepreneurs are necessary

Packard Place co-founder Dan



CLT Joules logo

Roselli, who offered space to CLT Joules, is a former bank executive who owns the marketing firm Red

F and other companies. Roselli says Charlotte's staid business leadership has begun to embrace entrepreneurs in the past couple of years.

Prompted by the economic downturn and a Charlotte Chamber trip last year to coffee-fueled Seattle, he said, leaders are more attuned to the collaborative, bottom-up bubbling of fresh ideas. They're as likely to come from former bankers as fresh-eyed college graduates.

"Charlotte has been a net importer of intellectual capital for decades," Roselli said, "and now it needs to start capitalizing on that."

Employers say the region's 20,000 energy jobs, the presence of major energy companies and

the research hub of UNC Charlotte draw young grads to the city.

Smart-grid technology firm Nexgrid, now located in South End, is 3 years old and has 20 employees. The company will be an affiliate of CLT Joules and likes the incubator's proximity to young talent and potential partners, as well as to prospective clients such as Duke Energy.

"Just being able to walk into that whole ecosystem is very attractive to us," said chief operating officer John Espey.

Some companies will come to CLT Joules as mentors.

Lime Energy, which moved to Huntersville from Chicago last year, has 350 employees and a deep knowledge base from past acquisitions. Lime designs and in-

stalls energy-saving technology for businesses and government.

"We know a lot of the best practices and the 'gotchas' and we're all very entrepreneurial - a lot of us have started companies in the past," said marketing vice president Chad Solomonson.

But Lime also sees business opportunities.

"There's a lot of innovation happening," Solomonson said. "Our role is as an integrator - we don't have a product per se, but put the best possible solutions before customers. Technologies are being vetted and proven that we want to be around. We can channel new innovations."

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