



Wordsmiths Books owner Zachary Steele stands in the old vault of SunTrust Bank that is now his store. Photo by Andy Phelan

Treasures to be discovered at Wordsmiths on Square

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It's amazing what a one-block move can do for a business. Wordsmiths Books, which moved from the old post office building on East Trinity Place, is banking on its new location to propel it into the future. In fact, one could say it just might help it vault the competition.

As occupants of the old SunTrust bank building on North McDonough on the Decatur Square, Wordsmiths owner **Zachary Steele** has already seen a jump in business.

"This is where I always wanted to be," said Steele. "We've already seen more foot traffic, and revenue is showing an increase."

And it's a good time to be on the square in the post-MARTA renovation era.

Wordsmiths, which just began also selling used books, is the largest independent bookstore in the state of Georgia.

The 3,000-square-foot store has an event stage, free wi-fi and now an old bank vault full of a different kind of treasure—books.

Know wonder Steele bills Wordsmiths as "more than a bookstore—it's a place to spend the day."

For more information, log onto www.wordsmithsbooks.com or call 404-378-7166.

'This is where I always wanted to be.'

-Zachary Steele

Jaime Salvat joins Toni's Casa Napoli in Dunwoody

Toni's Casa Napoli, a traditional Italian family-owned and operated restaurant in Dunwoody for 23 years, recently announced that **Jaime A. Salvat** is the operating partner and general manager.

Salvat's experience in Atlanta's fine dining scene goes back to 1970, when he was food and beverage manager for Dunfy Family Hotels. Afterwards, he spent nine years working under master restaurateur **Hank Soloff** at The Coach and Six. The past 17 years were spent working directly with **Panos Karatassos** of the Buckhead Life Group, first at The Atlanta Fish Market, 103 West, Panos & Paul's and the last seven years managing Chops & the Lobster Bar.

Salvat said he rises to a new challenge. "I have always wanted to open a fine dining Italian restaurant, and after experiencing many years working for others and developing my skills, the time was right to venture out on my own. The original plan was to open a new restaurant, but my sister **Martha** invited me to join Toni's Casa Napoli, which she opened in 1985. I am thrilled to lend my knowledge and expertise to Toni's, and invite my friends from Buckhead to take a short jaunt outside the Perimeter and dine with us in Dunwoody."

Toni's Casa Napoli is located at 2486 Mount Vernon Road, Dunwoody. For more information, call (770) 394-9359 or visit toniscasapnapoli.com.

Real estate organization says it's a good time to buy a home

The DeKalb Association of REALTORS® recently reported that home sales units decreased by 21 percent from 751 units sold in March 2007 to 593 units sold in March 2008. March's average sale price for single family homes decreased by 7.5 percent to \$211,206 from \$228,379 in March 2007. The median sales price, the price at which half the homes sold above and below, dropped by 15.5 percent from March 2007's \$174,500 to \$147,500 in March 2008. The average sales price for condo/town homes was \$132,457 in March 2008 compared to \$153,454 in March 2007, a 13.7 percent decrease. The median sales price fell by 12.7 percent from \$136,265 in March 2007 to \$119,000 in March 2008.

Average days on market for single family homes increased from 106 days in March 2007 to 128 days in March 2008 and condo/town homes increased from 135 days in March 2007 to 163 days in March 2008. Pending sales (those transactions subject to contract but not yet closed) decreased by 79.2 percent from 909 in March 2007 to 189 in March 2008. The 2,013 listings added during March 2008 decreased by 21.3 percent from 2,557 added in March 2007. Total active listings for single family, condos and town homes are up only by 2.1 percent when compared to the same month in 2007, from 10,082 in March 2007 to 10,293 in March 2008.

"The March 2008 DeKalb County residential home sales statistics indicate that we still have a sluggish housing market as compared to the housing market from last March. We have seen a 21.8 percent decrease in closed sales through the end of the first quarter of 2008, 1,599 units, versus the first quarter of 2007, 2,045 units. There has been a 7.5 percent decrease in the aver-

age sales price of single family homes compared to the same month last year," said **Barbara Campbell**, president of the DeKalb Association of REALTORS®.

"With prices relatively stable and interest rates currently in the 5.75 to 6.0 percent range for a 30 year fixed rate mortgage it is an excellent time to explore purchasing a home," concluded Campbell.



The DeKalb Chamber of Commerce celebrating 70 years of service.

EVENTS

APRIL 28TH - Beyond the Basics with Constant Contact - Time: 8:30 am - 11:00 am. **COST:** No Cost to attend, his interactive workshop saves you time by allowing you to quickly and easily master the entire Constant Contact Email Marketing system. **RSVP to:** www.constantcontact.com/georgia. **Location:** The University of Phoenix DeKalb Campus - 2600 Century Parkway, NE, Atlanta, GA 30345.

MAY 5TH - First Monday Lunch - Topic: "Women in Leadership and their Impact on the Workplace". Mary Welch, Editor of Atlanta Woman magazine. **Time:** 11:30 am - 1:30 pm. **Location:** Hilton Garden Inn Stonecrest - 7890 Mall Ring Road, Lithonia, GA 30038 - 678-526-1000. **Call** The DeKalb Chamber for cost to attend.

MAY 7TH - Network DeKalb Leads Group - **LOCATION:** Holiday Inn / Northlake (Tucker Location) - 2158 Ranchwood Drive, Atlanta, GA 770-934-6000. **COST:** \$10.00 for Members in advance / \$15.00 Members at the door and **\$20.00** Non-members. To attend contact the Chamber.

For more information on DeKalb Chamber related events or to sign up for email updates, visit our website at www.dekalbchamber.org - 404-378-8000