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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2011

Philly furniture dealer Mealey's grows as nationals shrink

Kevin and Dan Mealey's Mealey's Furniture chain plans to open its fifth showroom Saturday in a 66,000-sq ft store at 260 Swedesford Rd, near the Valley Forge exit from US 202.

Mealey's, which employs 250 at its stores and warehouses moving brand-name furniture, targets middle-market customers -- includes sofas from \$600 up toward \$1,400, with a best-price refund guarantee. "We're meat-and-potatoes. Our mantra is the middle," president Ed Darcy told me.

Why a new store now? Lane, Furniture a North Carolina-based chain, closed a dozen stores in the area, and Oscar Huber also shut stores in the market during the recession. The Valley Forge store is a former Oscar Huber store.

"We don't want to see anybody close. We are happy to be able to offer jobs" to some former Lane and Huber workers, Darcy said.

But the closings have meant opportunity for Mealey's. "We opened Warminster in 2008 in the middle of the recession, and it's been a great success. We think we're ready to add another one." He said the company has added a second warehouse near its existing distribution center in Morrisville, near Trenton.

Darcy also said Mealey's will donate part of the opening-day proceeds to the Philadelphia-area chapter of the American Red Cross to help local flood victims from this summer's storms, and other charities.

ABOUT JOSEPH N. DISTEFANO



Joseph N. DiStefano writes this blog to feed his PhillyDeals column in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Joe has been a member of Bloomberg LP's New York Finance Team, wrote the book "Comcasted," taught writing at St. Joseph's University, and studied economics and history at Penn. He and his wife have six kids. Reach Joe at 215-854-5194 and JoeD@phillynews.com

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