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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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River District welcomes Golden Leaf Bistro as newest addition

Danville city officials joined other area leaders and citizens Thursday afternoon in welcoming Golden Leaf Bistro as the newest addition to the River District. The fine-dining restaurant is located at 215 Craghead Street at the intersection with Loyal Street.

Vice Mayor Gary Miller said the restaurant would serve as another drawing card to the River District.

"That's what places like this do," Miller said. "They attract people to come and visit, and when they do, they spread out and spend money shopping at the nearby shops. William (William Gentry, owner of the restaurant), I want to thank you for having confidence in downtown."

The River District consists of the central business district and historic tobacco warehouse district. Some of Danville's most architecturally attractive and significant buildings are found in the district. With an aggressive, public-private preservation and rehabilitation strategy, the district's historic buildings and warehouses now have new life as restaurants, retail shops, a branch university campus, apartments and condominiums, and places of work.

The River District has attracted \$78 million in private investment in the last five years.

Gentry said the district needed another dining option.

"We needed a really good, fine-dining restaurant," Gentry said. "We've been working on this building for about six months. We are really ready to open it."

The restaurant has seating for 127 people inside and 64 people on a back deck. It also provides private dining rooms that can accommodate up to 16 people. The décor includes themes marking the building's tobacco history.

MORE

At the entrance is a bar made of walnut wood that Gentry found at a barn in Efland, N.C.

Dinner service begins at 4 p.m., with the restaurant open until 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Executive Chef Chris King created a dinner menu that features steak, seafood and pasta selections.

Reservations are recommended.

Lunch service will become available beginning Aug. 5. The restaurant then will open at 11 a.m. Monday-Friday. The restaurant will not provide lunch service on Saturdays.

The restaurant is closed on Sundays.

In addition to the opening of the restaurant, more developments are on the way in the district.

The Danville Science Center, located on Craghead Street a few blocks away from the restaurant, is constructing a 44-foot dome theater to screen educational shows and movies, seating 100 people. The dome is scheduled for completion this fall.

Also a short distance away from the restaurant, the YMCA is constructing a new facility on the north bank of the river. When finished in the summer of 2014, every program space in the new facility will be more than 30 percent larger than the current building.

The city also is busy with two phases of streetscape improvements near the restaurant.

The first phase involves Main Street, where funds are being used to widen existing sidewalks, install brick pavers, create more visible and safer pedestrian crossings, and provide amenities such as outdoor café space, trees, benches and new lighting. Weather permitting, the completion date is October.

The second phase of streetscape improvements calls for a plaza at the head of Main Street, where it connects to the bridge that serves as a gateway into the River District. The plaza will feature a multi-stage fountain and a promenade, and it will provide a second trailhead for the Riverwalk Trail. This phase began in April and is scheduled for completion in February 2014.

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