

Renaissance in DeSoto

Renasant Bank beefs up focus in DeSoto County

BY CHRISTOPHER SHEFFIELD

Renasant Bank is taking a different tact in DeSoto County under new leadership and a streamlined management philosophy.

Former Commercial Bank & Trust lender Shawn Clayton is Renasant's new division president.

Shane McLarty joined in the newly created No. 2 position of senior vice president/corporate relationship officer, coming from BancorpSouth Bank in Southaven. Both worked together previously as commercial lenders during Clayton's six-year stint at BancorpSouth before Clayton went to CB&T to open its loan production office. CB&T closed that office this summer after three years.

The changes at Renasant come after former DeSoto County market president Ken Purvis and its senior commercial lender Jack Talbert left for Sycamore Bank as market president and vice president, respectively.

The changes at Renasant are just the latest in a tumultuous period in DeSoto County banking, with some created directly by economic factors — such as halting new retail branch construction and complete exits from the market by lenders — and others more indirectly, like a jostling for experienced talent who know the market.

McLarty and Clayton, both 36, fit that mold.

McLarty, an Olive Branch native who played football at Olive Branch High School, will be responsible for marketing Renasant's four DeSoto County branches as well as building relationships with existing bank customers and developing new corporate business. Clayton will be tasked with growing the bank's footprint and deposit market share, which grew to 10.23 percent in 2009 with \$191.8 million in deposits, up from 4.26 percent in 2008 with \$71.4 million in deposits.

As of late September, deposits were running around \$193 million. Renasant moved to No. 4 in deposit market share from No. 8, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

A big part of Clayton's and Renasant's new DeSoto County strategy will be to market the bank as one entity and not individual branches that end up competing against each other, he says.



CHRISTOPHER SHEFFIELD | MBJ
Shane McLarty and Shawn Clayton plan to uniformly market Renasant Bank in DeSoto County where Renasant has four retail bank branches.

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Shawn Clayton
Renasant Bank

"My philosophy is it's one county," Clayton says. "That's the one core thread I want to promote: We're one."

McLarty says there will also be a shift away from relying solely on real estate to drive lending because first, it's a market that's currently not strong and, secondly, it's a crowded area.

"That's the elephant everyone was hunting," he says.

Instead, Renasant is going to diversify its lending tactics, branching into a more private banking approach by courting the medical community and small businesses, areas Clayton says he honed while at Commercial Bank & Trust.

"We want to make sure we're more relationship-driven than transactions," McLarty says.

Doug Davis, assistant vice presi-

dent at First Security Bank in Hernando, and one of the county's two state senators, agrees DeSoto County banking has been fast changing, but that's not unexpected.

"Prior to 2008 there was so much potential here. We were very fortunate," Davis says. "Banking stood to gain the most so when the housing market stopped we stood to lose the most."

All of the market shuffling of talent and holding onto capital are simply steps to prepare for when the economy rebounds, Davis says. When that happens, DeSoto County will explode once again.

Clayton agrees. "As the economy rebounds, I think DeSoto County will see a quicker rebound than others," he says.

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Radiant inks large lease at Lakecrest

Memphis office may become prototype for all U.S. offices

BY ANDY ASHBY

Radiant Systems Inc. signed a long-term 10,000-square-foot lease at Lakecrest III which could serve as a model for future offices for the Alpharetta, Ga.-based technology company.

Radiant Systems focuses on software and hardware for retailers, from restaurants to sporting venues, including point-of-sale systems.

It bought local technology company Synchronics Inc. for \$27.5 million in 2006, establishing Memphis as its specialty retail division.

Founded in 1980, Synchronics developed software programs for the retail industry.

"It was a good fit," says Phyllis Gay, operations manager of Radiant's Memphis office who worked at Synchronics. "We brought our specialized retail software and they brought their hardware."

The Memphis office, which employs 40 people, is currently located in a 21,000-square-foot building at 1727 Kirby Pkwy.

"We had far more space than we actually needed at this juncture," Gay says. "While it's a nice space and a good location, the lease is up this year, and we just felt like this would be a good time to do something new, to move into a new space where we could be closer together."

The new space at Lakecrest III, a 131,528-square-foot building at 6060 Primacy Pkwy, will have a more open layout with floor-to-ceiling windows and meeting spaces scattered throughout.

"We're trying to foster more collaboration," Gay says. "I think there will be more energy in the space."

Radiant Systems will consider what works and what doesn't work in the new space, according to Gay. This could help shape future offices throughout its system.

Pat Gamble, senior vice president of CB Richard Ellis Memphis' tenant advisory group, represented Radiant Systems with CB Richard Ellis' Atlanta office. Phil Dagastino Jr., senior leasing associate with Commercial Alliance Management LLC, represented the landlord, HRPT Properties Trust.

Gamble says more open layouts gained popularity in the 1990s with dot-com companies.

"It seems like it's become more in favor again," Gamble says. "It encourages communication and collaboration."

Wiener Realty is now marketing the Kirby Parkway building for sale at \$2.8 million.

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COURTESY RADIANT SYSTEMS, INC.

Radiant Systems' point-of-sale software and hardware in use at a Minnesota retailer. The company has signed a long-term lease at Lakecrest III.