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New grocer plans to make a big splash in 2010

BY ALESHIA HOWE
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Move over North Texas grocers; there's a new game in town – at least there will be in 2010. After years of success along the East Coast, discount grocer ALDI Inc. has purchased 11 locations in Tarrant County and plans to open at least 25 stores in Dallas-Fort Worth in the coming years as part of its corporate growth strategy.

Martha Swaney, spokesperson for ALDI, confirmed the grocer's expansion plans and said several North Texas locations will likely launch within weeks of each other in Spring 2010.

Swaney said population growth in the Metroplex attracted the discount grocer.

"Certainly in the Metroplex we've seen a lot of growth and it's a competitive market place," she said. "We're typically very successful in a competitive market place."

ALDI currently operates more than 1,000 stores in 29 states in the Mid-West and eastern United States. Touted as a store that likes to compete with Wal-Mart prices, a typical ALDI location is 17,000 square feet and is situated on about 2.5 acres.

The difference in an ALDI store can be found in its products, which include about 1,400 different labels per store and are about 95 percent private, store-brand labels.



ALDI Inc. is moving into North Texas.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALDI INC.

Swaney said ALDI products range from 16 percent to 24 percent less than its big box competitors like Wal-Mart and about 40 percent less than private, or name brand, labels. ALDI tests each of its products at least six times a year to ensure quality.

"[Consumers] may try us for the prices, but they stay for the quality," Swaney said.

Each North Texas store will employ 10 to 15 people, with only three operating the store at any given time; and employees working 20 hours a week or more will receive full medical and dental coverage as well as a 401K.

ALDI consumers bring their own bags and pay 25 cents for a shopping cart, which is refundable once the cart is returned – a method that has proven successful and allows the store to maintain a rock-bottom overhead.

"There are some unique elements that may appear new to people, but they help us cut out the hidden costs you might find around our competition," Swaney said, adding the cart deposits "save us from having an employee running around the parking lot, chasing carts."

These North Texas locations are currently under construction or renovation:

- Pantego: Bowen Road and Park Row Drive (existing building)
- Garland: Northwest Highway and Jackson Drive (new construction)
- Garland: Buckingham Road and N. Garland Road (existing building)
- Richardson: E. Belt Line Road and Plano Road (new construction)
- Dallas: Forest Lane and Audelia Road (existing building)
- Dallas: 4100 block of Gaston Road and Haskell Avenue (new construction)
- Rowlett: Rowlett Road and Highway 66 (existing building)
- Plano: Park and Avenue K (existing building)

ALDI, based in Germany, opened its first location in Southeastern Iowa in 1976 with about 500 labels per store and its U.S. headquarter is in Batavia, Ill. The company currently serves more than 15 million customers each month and opened more than 100 stores in 2008.

Jim Makens of The Makens Co. said the Tarrant County locations include new builds as well as converting existing space. Makens said store officials prefer to buy existing space, and because of the company's aggressive expansion plans, he said vacancies might spell out too good of deals for ALDI to pass up.

"They might be looking at a few other areas; it depends on how good some of the deals are," Makens said. ■

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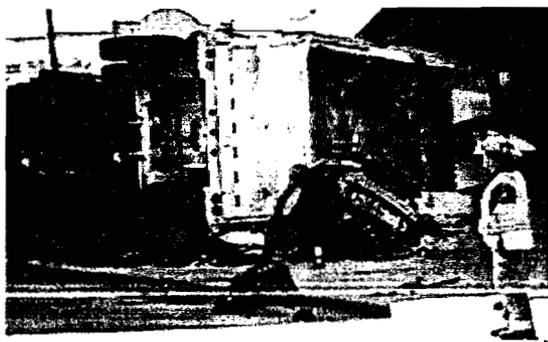
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Police identify Hurst woman killed after truck rolled onto vehicle in Euless

05:55 PM CST on Tuesday, February 3, 2009

BY BLANCA CANTÚ / The Dallas Morning News
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A Hurst woman was killed instantly Tuesday morning when a sand truck making a left turn in Euless hit her vehicle and rolled on top of it, crushing her inside the car, police said.



RICKY MOON/Special Contributor
Debbie Kaye was killed Tuesday when a sand truck rolled over and crushed her car near the intersection of State Highway 183 and Industrial Boulevard in Euless.

Police identified the 40-year-old victim as Debbie Kaye.

Euless police said the truck driver, Dallas resident Freddie Richardson, 46, was attempting to turn left onto Industrial Boulevard from the westbound service road of State Highway 183 at about 11 a.m. when the truck struck Kaye's small blue car in the intersection.

Richardson and a passenger in the truck were treated at a nearby hospital for minor injuries.

Witnesses said the woman had a green light, said Euless police Lt. John Williams. The accident remains under investigation.

Staff writer Dan X. McGraw contributed to this report.

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EULESS

Mother of 3 killed when truck flips over onto car

A friend says she was on the phone with the Hurst woman before the crash occurred.

By MITCH MITCHELL and DOMINGO RAMIREZ JR.
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EULESS — On Tuesday afternoon, a friend told Debbie Kaye's boyfriend that she had been talking to Kaye, who was on her cellphone, when she heard a loud noise.

And then she heard nothing.

At the time, about 11 a.m., Kaye was driving south on Industrial Boulevard. Witnesses told police that she had a green light at the intersection with the service road on the north side of Airport Freeway.

A rock hauler loaded with sand that was westbound on the service road tried to turn left onto southbound Industrial Boulevard, police said.

The truck, which weighed about 80,000 pounds, hit Kaye's car and then rolled over, landing on it, police said.

It took emergency crews more than two hours to remove Kaye's body.

"Her best friend must have been on the phone with her just before the crash," Kaye's boyfriend, Tommy Edmonds, said Tuesday night. "She told me that she and Debbie were talking, then she heard a loud noise, and then they were cut off.

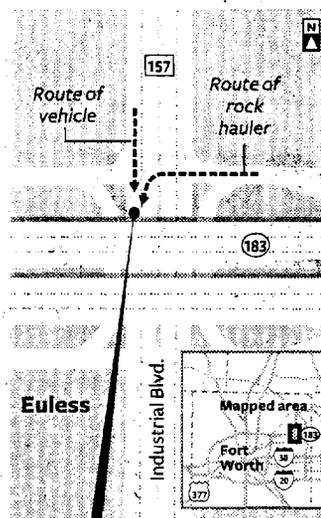
"There will be some hard days ahead, some difficult decisions to make."

Couldn't be reached

Kaye, 40, and Edmonds had a lunch date for 11:30, Edmonds said.

He tried to get Kaye on her

Driver crushed in traffic accident



A woman was killed Tuesday at a Euleless intersection when her car was crushed by a rig hauling sand that flipped on top of her vehicle.

STAR-TELEGRAM/TIM BEDISON

cellphone when she did not show up. He called Kaye's eldest daughter, Brittany Dearmore, 19. She, too, had been unable to reach her mother, who operated a housecleaning business.

"It just wasn't like her to turn her telephone off," Edmonds said.

Edmonds left work and was met at Kaye's front door by three Euleless police officers.

Pulling together

Brittany Dearmore said Tuesday night that she hoped to care for her sisters, Tiffany Dearmore, 14, and Kierrany Johnson, 9.

But Kaye's sister, Claudia Yellott, said that burden will not fall on Brittany's shoulders alone.

"Debbie wanted Brittany to go to college, and we're going to make that happen," Yellott



Debbie Kaye, 40, had three children, ages 19, 14, and 9, and operated a housecleaning business.

FAMILY PHOTO

said. "She's not going to have to do all this by herself."

The father of Kaye's two oldest daughters died after a heart attack three years ago, relatives said.

Brakes mentioned

The 46-year-old truck driver and his 39-year-old female passenger were taken to Texas Health Hurst-Euleless-Bedford hospital for treatment of minor injuries, police said.

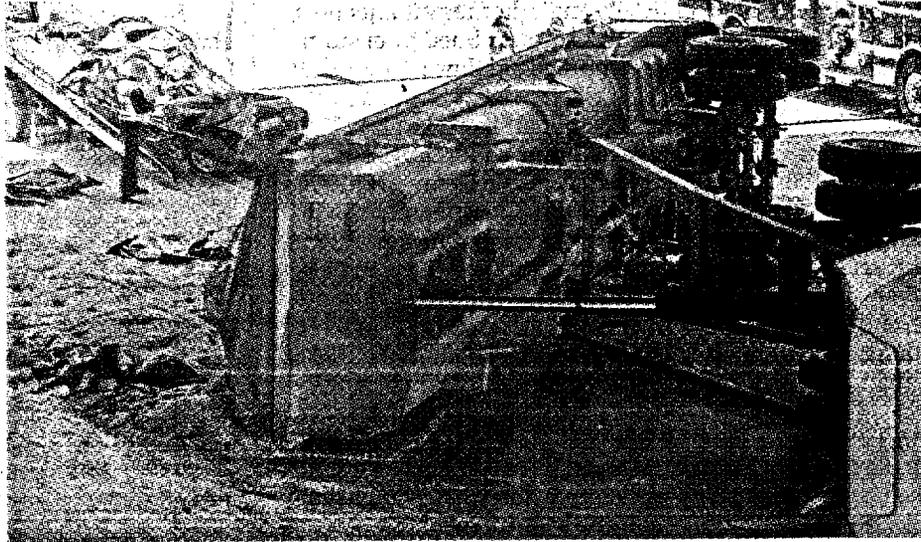
The driver told police that there might have been a problem with his truck's brakes. "That may or may not be a factor," said Lt. John Williams, a police spokesman. "The investigation will have to be completed before we can determine the cause of the accident."

The hospital would not release any information about whether the driver or the passenger had been admitted for treatment.

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A truck loaded with sand tipped over while turning underneath Airport Freeway onto Industrial Boulevard in Euless on Tuesday, crushing a vehicle and killing the driver, a Hurst mother of three.

STAR-TELEGRAM/KELLEY CHINN

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RETAIL | TEXAS STORES

99 Cents Only calls off full withdrawal

By **SANDRA BAKER**
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Saying the recession is helping sales, 99 Cents Only Stores has decided not to pull out of Texas altogether and will close only a third of its stores in the state for the time being.

In September, the California discount retailer said it would close all 46 Texas stores, including 13 in the Metroplex, because of poor performance. This week, though, its board voted to suspend the exit plan for at least six months while it reviews sales, which it says have "significantly improved."

It will close only about 15 stores in Texas before March 28, the end of its fiscal year, the company said. It will also keep its Houston-area distribution center open.

Executives told analysts in a conference call Wednesday that they are still determining which locations to close.

In Tarrant County, 99

Cents Only has stores at 6732 Camp Bowie Blvd. in Fort Worth, 6246 Rufe Snow Drive in North Richland Hills, 3901 Colleyville Blvd. in Colleyville and 1200 N. Main St. in Euless. It also has four stores in Dallas, two in Garland and one each in Lewisville, Irving and Plano.

The company said its same-store sales — those for stores open at least a year, an industry benchmark — increased 8.6 percent in January in Texas. That compares with an increase of less than 1 percent in the five weeks that ended Dec. 27.

On Saturday, the retailer's board rejected an offer from Chairman Dave Gold to buy the Texas operations.

The retailer released its quarterly earnings Wednesday, registering sales of \$341 million in the third quarter of fiscal 2009 ending Dec. 27, up 8.4 percent from the same period a year ago.

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EULESS WRECK

Investigators are looking at records in fatal crash

A Hurst mother of three was killed, and the 46-year-old truck driver told police that there might have been problems with his brakes.

By DOMINGO RAMIREZ JR.
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EULESS — Investigators will look into the driving record of a trucker and the maintenance records of the rock hauler he was driving Tuesday when the truck fell onto a car and killed a Hurst mother of three, authorities said Wednesday.



Kaye

Police also plan to inspect the brakes and steering column of the rig that killed Debbie Kaye, 40, at Industrial Boulevard and the Airport Freeway service

road in Eules.

"We've just started gathering the evidence," Eules police Lt. John Williams said. "It could take several weeks before we'll know what happened and if anyone is charged in this case."

The 46-year-old truck driver told police that there might have been problems with the brakes. He and his 39-year-old passenger were taken to Texas Health Hurst-Eules-Bedford hospital for treatment of minor injuries, police said.

The wreck occurred shortly after 11 a.m.

Amy Powell of Eules said she was driving behind Kaye's Chevrolet Cavalier.

"It all happened so fast," Powell said Wednesday. "I saw the truck hit the car, and then it began to turn. I knew that it was going to flip over because it had been going so fast."

Within a second, the truck, loaded with sand, fell onto Kaye's car, Powell said.

Tommy Edmonds, Kaye's boyfriend, has said that Kaye had been on a cellphone talking to a friend when the phone went dead.

Witnesses told police that Kaye, a single mother of three girls, had a green light at the intersection.

Plans for a fund to help the daughters were not complete Wednesday afternoon, friends said.