

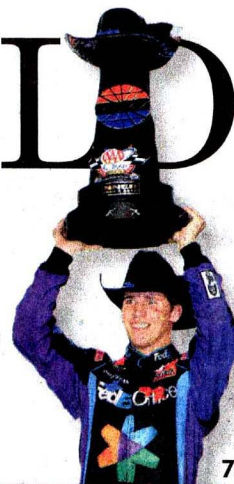
# PANAMA CITY NEWS HERALD



**LOCAL**  
Airport  
sees record  
passengers  
**B1**

**BUSINESS**  
Spotlight: Flip Flop Shops  
in Pier Park  
**A7**

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Hamlin wins  
in Texas, takes  
Chase lead  
**C1**



75 cents

MONDAY November 8, 2010

## FLIPPING OUT

Store has seen growth since opening

By **CHRIS SEGAL**

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**PANAMA CITY BEACH** — Women's on the left and men's on the right, that's the setup and the display mantra for Flip Flop Shops.

Philip Breeze, a software programmer by trade and Bay County native, bought into the franchise in late August 2009 and he spent

almost a year getting prepared and searching for locations for his new businesses. The Flip Flop Shops opened in Pier Park on

June 8, and the business continues to expand.

During the first few months of operation the store traffic mostly consisted of tourists, about 600 people a day walked through the doors, Breeze said.

The flip flops range from \$20 for a pair to upward of \$100, which is shocking for some people who expected to see inexpensive throw away flip flops. The largest demographic for flip flops are women 19 to 35.

Breeze recounted an encounter with a male customer who was shocked by the \$120 price tag for a pair of the open-toed shoes. The customer was wearing a pair of expensive cowboy boots at the time.

"You'll wear flip flops more often than \$600 cowboy boots," Breeze told the

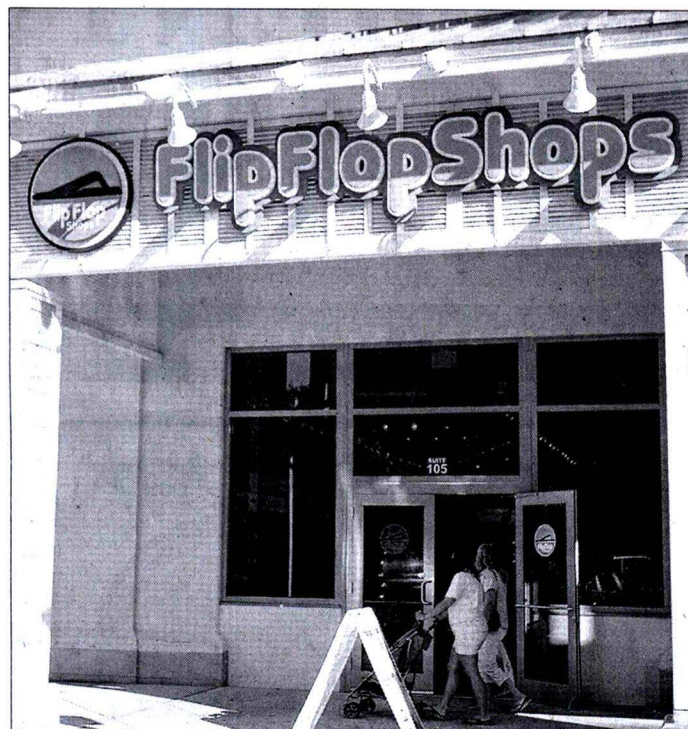
## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

### FLIP FLOP SHOPS

Pier Park  
201 Bluefish Drive  
Panama City Beach, FL 32413  
850-233-3547



Flip Flop Shops carries 2,000 flip flops and is now stocking some with more "bling" attached.



Photos by **TERRY BARNER** | The News Herald

Flip Flop Shops is in Pier Park in Panama City Beach.

customer, who ended up buying the pair.

Being a seasonal market, the bulk of sales are shifting from tourists to locals. Breeze was warned by the retailer that the winter months are tough for flip flop sales, so to deal with that expected decline in business the store owner has started stocking closed toe shoes and more fashionable and dress flip flops for women, or as Breeze referred to them, shoes with bling.

#### First foray into retail

"I couldn't find what I wanted," Breeze said. "Everyone seemed to have the same product. I just thought what a great idea to have a one-stop shop."

Breeze searched the Internet using the search term flip flop shop, only to

realize there already was a retailer catering to that market that had franchise opportunities available.

Flip Flop Shops is the first national retailer of just flip flops, Breeze said.

"I purchased the franchise because I was frustrated with trying to buy flip flops this time of year," Breeze said. "There is no one else that does just flip flops."

There are Flip Flop Shops in Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa and a store coming soon to Gainesville. The Panama City Beach location is the smallest market for the retailer but has one of the larger stores operating in 800 square feet of retail space.

Breeze, an avid wearer of flip flops, said he wanted

to give back to local schools where his children attend so he worked with Springfield Elementary School and Mowat Middle School to offer flip flop days. The students paid \$1 on Sept. 24 to wear their flip flops to school and Breeze matched the \$1, he said.

The fundraiser generated more than \$600 between the two schools.

The store carries 11 brands of flip flops including Vans, OluKai, Reef, Flojos, Gravis and Rainbow Sandals and has an inventory of more than 2,000 pairs of flip flops.

Breeze has also purchased the rights to opening a franchise in Destin; he is currently in the process of scouting out some new locations and is leaning toward the Destin Commons.