

N O R T H W E S T A R K A N S A S

BUSINESS JOURNAL

Vol. 15, No. 17 October 31, 2011

www.nwabusinessjournal.com \$2.00

RESTAURANTS

Joneses Take Subs to Fort Smith

The father-son team of **Cliff and Carson Jones** has opened a second **Charley's Grilled Subs** location, this one in Fort Smith's **Central Mall**.

The Joneses opened their first store — at **McCain Mall** in North Little Rock — in September 2009, after setbacks in their previous careers. Cliff Jones said he “knew the company I was working for was going to go out of business, and it eventually did.”

“I also knew I was too old to be hired by another company, but too young to retire.”

Carson Jones, meanwhile, was working in the corporate accounting industry in Dallas, but was a victim of downsizing.



Carson Jones, left, and his father, Cliff, recently opened their second Charley's Grilled Subs store.

When Cliff Jones heard of Charley's interest in opening a store in McCain Mall, he investigated the opportunity and then asked his son to join him in the venture.

“Two weeks after that conversation, we were training in Columbus, Ohio,” Jones said.

Charley's franchise fee for a first store is \$25,000, with each subsequent store requiring an additional \$15,000. The Fort Smith store opened on Sept. 30.

“It's a risk, especially in this economy, but it definitely motivates you to work hard every day,” Jones said. “Charley's has a great system ... one that if you follow it, it greatly reduces your chances of failure.”

The stores have a manager and about 10 employees each. During Christmas shopping season, the employee total jumps to about 15. That's a change from the first six months after opening the first store, when Cliff Jones typically opened the store and his son closed it.

These days, Jones said he mostly handles the “back end” duties, while Carson Jones deals with marketing and “revenue-generating.”

— Rob Keys