



(Michael E. Palmer/Tuscaloosa News) Staff photo | Michael E. Palmer A Bojangles' restaurant is being constructed in Northport.

Bojangles' to open in Northport

By Patrick Rupinski Staff Writer

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Bojangles', a fast-food restaurant specializing in chicken and homemade biscuits, will open its first restaurant in Tuscaloosa County in late spring. The restaurant is now under construction on McFarland Boulevard in Northport, across the road from the post office.

Bojangles' is the second fast-food restaurant specializing in chicken to move into Northport this year. Last month, Chick-fil-A announced plans to open a restaurant at the site of the former Blockbuster Entertainment store in the K-Mart shopping center on McFarland.

The new Bojangles' is part of the privately owned chain's expansion plan for Alabama, said Eric Newman, Bojangles' executive vice president. In addition to Northport, the Charlotte, N.C.-based company is opening restaurants this year in Clanton and Pelham and has plans for restaurants in Huntsville, Childersburg and Cullman.

He said Bojangles' will open at least three more restaurants in Alabama in 2010 and could open up to six, depending on the sale of franchises.

The Northport Bojangles' will be company-owned and will have 50 full- and part-time employees, Newman said.

"If you look at Bojangles', it is put together a little differently," he said. "Up to 40 percent of our business is done by 11 a.m.; 40 percent is for breakfast, and we serve our breakfast menu throughout the day."

At lunch and dinner times, it also offers its seasoned chicken, and side orders, including dirty rice, Cajun pintos and seasoned fries.

The recession has not curbed Bojangles' expansion appetite. The economic downturn has hurt the mid-to-fine dining and casual dining restaurants, Newman said.

"We see this as a time to carefully expand our business," he said. "People are trickling down when they eat out because they are looking for value" but still want something they can't make at home.

Bojangles' at a glance

Here's a quick look at Bojangles'

Founded: 1977 in Charlotte, N.C.

Number of restaurants: 280 franchised restaurants and 150 company-owned restaurants in 11 states and Honduras.

Menu: Specialties include chicken and made-from-scratch biscuits, including dessert biscuits and breakfast biscuits.