

Local Jo-Ann Fabrics draws national focus

By **ANDREA GLOVER** Free Press Staff Writer | Monday, October 10, 2011

ELKO — The Elko location of Jo-Ann Fabrics and Crafts made waves across the nation following its Sept. 9 grand opening.

The grand opening of Jo-Ann Fabric and Crafts in Elko corresponded with the grand opening of four other locations. Each of the stores in Cheyenne, Wyo., Denver, Chicago and New York City are twice the size of Elko's 15,000 square foot location. Yet, after the consecutive grand opening of the five stores, Elko's had the largest sales volume of the group, according to Gary Pinkston, owner of the Elko Junction Shopping Center and founder of Meridian Pacific Ltd., a real estate development company.

"They were very impressed," said Pinkston.

He attended an international council of shopping centers meeting in San Diego the Wednesday following the grand openings and the sales volume of Jo-Ann Fabrics in Elko was frequently talked about.

He mentioned how important this is, both for the company and for drawing other businesses to the area.

"There's great demand per retail in Elko," said Pinkston. "The center came out nice and everything is working well."

The stores for Famous Footwear and Rue21 have been turned over to their respective companies. The unofficial grand opening for Rue21 will be Nov. 2, followed a week later by the unofficial grand opening of Famous Footwear on Nov. 9. Managers have been hired for the locations, and the stores are in the process of hiring the remainder of their staff, Pinkston said.

Ross Dress for Less is a very structured tenant, Pinkston said, and they're in the process of scheduling the turnover of the building. Pinkston anticipated having a grand opening date for Ross soon.

"We're just getting all the pieces together. It's been very helpful that everybody has worked so diligently within the city," said Pinkston.