

# Buffalo Rock adds Dothan franchise to growing list

By **Howard Shatz**  
News staff writer

Having barely digested its latest purchases, Buffalo Rock Co. on Monday swallowed yet another company — the Dothan Pepsi-Cola franchise.

The purchase gives Buffalo Rock its 10th Pepsi franchise and its fourth new one since the end of November, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer James C. Lee Jr. said.

The company also has just started a \$3 million expansion at its headquarters, 111 Oxmoor Road, constructing a 72,000-square-foot warehouse addition and a 13,000- to 14,000-square-foot sales complex, Lee said.

The contractor, Brice Building Co., started work last week, he said.

The largest private Pepsi-bottling company in the United States, Buffalo Rock has a service area which includes three million people. In October,

before it started the first of its most recent purchases, the company had a service area which included two million people, Lee said.

Buffalo Rock, owned by the Lee family, now has Pepsi franchises in Birmingham, Huntsville, Tuscumbia, Gadsden, Mobile and Dothan; Newnan, Columbus and Albany, Ga.; and Pensacola, Fla.

Lee said company officials are not looking for any more franchises to buy yet.

"Not right now," he said. "We've got our hands full."

The Dothan purchase capped about four months of talks with the eight different owners of Coastal Beverages Inc., the Dothan franchise owner.

"This was one of the most complicated" purchases, Lee said. He declined to say the purchase price.

The new territory includes Dothan, Eufaula and Ozark; Marianna, Fla.; and Fort Gaines, Ga.

Jimmy Harris, formerly food services manager

for Buffalo Rock in Birmingham, will be the new general manager of the Dothan franchise.

Buffalo Rock's most recent flurry of purchases started in November when the company bought the Pensacola Pepsi franchise. At the end of December it bought Columbus and Albany, Ga., franchises.

Last Friday, it bought the Mobile and Pensacola 7-UP franchises from Gulf Coast Dr Pepper Bottlers, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Dr Pepper Co. of Dallas, Texas. Buffalo Rock already had the Pepsi and Sunkist franchises in those two areas.

The company also just finished enlarging its production facility, and now employs more than 1,000 people, Lee said.

Buffalo Rock bottles Grapico, Buffalo Rock Ginger Ale, Pepsi and Pepsi diet drinks, Mountain Dew, Dr Pepper and Dr Pepper diet drinks, and 7-UP and 7-UP diet drinks.