

Metro Business

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2005 ...

SECTION D



DON LONG/TIMES-DISPATCH

Michael and Babz Barnett, owners of Romp n' Roll, started the business because it provides one place where young children can participate in gym, art and music. The facility is located in Westpark Shopping Center off West Broad Street.

Romp n' Roll facility has three facets for children

The idea sparked around the kitchen table in late 2003. Michael and Babz Barnett discussed how they wanted to find one place in the Richmond area where their young children could participate in gym, art and music. "Places either had programs for one concept such as gym or

just art, but not one facility to do it all," Michael Barnett said.



GREGORY J. GILLIGAN

But their Romp n' Roll concept, which opened last fall in the Westpark Shopping Center off West Broad Street, pulls all three programs together, he said.

Romp n' Roll developed curriculum for gym and music classes starting for infants age 3 months to 5 years old. The art program is for 2-year-olds to those in the third grade.

The concept has taken off to the point that the Barnetts expect to open a second Romp n' Roll location in the Richmond area by summer and another one in 2006. Michael Barnett, who worked for a local marketing firm, also is starting the long legal process to eventually franchise the concept.

Romp n' Roll has about 34 classes a week during the winter session, which ends Saturday. The eight-week spring session, which will begin April 4, will have 42 classes.

There are about 12 children per class.

The morning and evening classes are generally sessions for younger children that require a

parent to attend. The afternoon classes are for the children 3 to 5 years old.

Open gym, reserved for weekend afternoons and Friday evenings, gives children an additional time to play with parent-only supervision.

Romp n' Roll also offers birthday parties, which are generally scheduled for the weekends.