

TOP 40 UNDER 40: THOMAS C. JOYCE JR., RETAIL SPECIALISTS INC.

Thomas C. Joyce Jr.

Joyce, 39, has made a big difference in just a few years at his commercial real estate company. Since joining Retail Specialists Inc. in 2006 as director of property management, he has quickly grown the company's property management division to more than 1.5 million square feet of managed space.

Title: Director of property management

Company: Retail Specialists Inc.

Type of company: Commercial real estate

Education: B.S., commerce and business administration, University of Alabama.

City of residence: Mountain Brook

Family: Wife, Tracy; children, Chambers and Marilyn.

What was your first job? My first job as a teenager during the summers was as a warehouse employee at my uncle's business, R.D. Burnett Cigar Co. My first real job was with Southpace Properties as the property manager for the Brown-Marx Tower in downtown Birmingham.

What's been your career track? After graduating from Alabama, I have worked for some of Birmingham's most respected commercial real estate companies. I started out as an assistant on-site property manager and leasing agent in 1993 and have worked my way up through the ranks until my current position as director of property management.

What's been your most notable career achievement? My move to Retail Specialists, where I started the property management division and have taken a portfolio of 20,000 square feet and increased it to over 1.7 million square feet (and growing) in just three years.

What's your ultimate career goal? To continue helping to position Retail Specialists as a leading regional commercial real estate firm and to acquire, develop and own enough income producing retail real estate to live comfortably.

In 10 years you'll be: Spending more time on a cool mountain stream or a warm salt flat with my fly fishing rod in my hand.

What's your yardstick of success? Gaining the respect of my clients and peers in my industry.

How do you keep your competitive edge? Work hard and always strive to exceed my client's expectations.

Who has been your most influential mentor in your career? Two great influences that I have worked for over the years that have provided me with valuable knowledge are Carey Gilbert at J.H. Berry & Gilbert and Marc Eason at Eason, Graham & Sandner.

What's the most important lesson you've learned? Never give up and don't be afraid to take risks.

What's your dream job? Fly fishing guide.

What one word would you say best describes you? Dedicated

What's the first Web site you check in the morning? bbj.com is my home page – no kidding.

How many hours do you work in a week? Quite a few!

If you could have dinner with three people (living or dead), who would you choose? My grandfather, Ernest Hemingway and Jerry Garcia.

Last book you read? "A Man in Full" by Tom Wolfe

What's your favorite quote? "Every person who invests in well-selected real estate in a growing section of a prosperous community adopts the surest and safest method of becoming independent, for real estate is the basis of wealth." - Theodore Roosevelt

What's your favorite movie? Fletch and The Hangover

What's your favorite local restaurant? Jinsei

What's your favorite vacation spot? Carmel, Calif.

Who would you want to play you in a movie? Jeremy Piven

Do you have any hobbies? Fly fishing, collecting live music, coaching my children's athletic teams. Alabama, Auburn or someone else? Roll Tide!

What civic organizations are you involved with? Independent Presbyterian Church, past vice president & president and current board member of the Birmingham Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA), also serve on the state executive committee of the CCA.

