

Ashley Furniture stores going out of business

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From Mirror staff and wire reports

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The Ashley Furniture stores in the Logan Town Centre and on Galleria Drive, Johnstown, will soon hold going-out-of-business sales after a court decision Tuesday in Allegheny County Court.

The stores' owner, Roomful Express, was placed in receivership under pressure from lenders owed millions, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported on its website.

The company's 13 stores in Pennsylvania and Ohio are affected.

Compass Advisory Partners, a Pittsburgh-based management consulting firm, is the court-appointed receiver, and Gordon Brothers Retail Partners Group will assist with the closeout sales.

The company has said that it employs about 340 people. Many will keep their jobs during going-out-of-business sales, which could last several months, the Post-Gazette reported.

Robert Varner, vice president of real estate and brokerage for Pennswood Commercial Realty LLC, which holds the leasing contract for Logan Town Centre, said Tuesday that he was unaware of the court decision or the forthcoming going-out-of-business sale at Ashley Furniture.

Roomful Express last week announced that it was negotiating with its senior lenders to work out possible remedies to the judgment filed against it for a debt payment of about \$18 million.

Furniture store retail sales in the United States, including at Roomful Express, have suffered double-digit revenue declines this year compared to a year ago, the company said in its statement last week.

Lower housing starts and a poor credit card environment have been significant factors in the decline of consumer confidence when it comes to purchasing furniture and larger ticket household items.

Those with questions have been directed to contact their local store or to call 412-444-2300, ext. 280, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.