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Uncovering the hidden China

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By **MEGAN COOPER**

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It's no secret that Jim Trippon, CPA, has a passion for helping people get rich.

As CEO of J.M. Trippon & Co., the largest equity investment firm in mainland China, he has been a financial advisor to some of the world's most wealthy investors.

Trippon, a Hunters Creek resident, founded Bretton Woods Press in 1996 with a goal to provide financial resources to the public, and has since founded a top-rated financial newsletter. He is currently writing his third book about how to become a millionaire.



Far from Hunters Creek, on the job in China.

He spends countless hours writing articles for top financial magazines and journals, and is a frequent contributor to several major broadcast media outlets. Trippon is recognized by Dow Jones as America's foremost expert on China's stock market.

Nine months ago, he started his latest project with similar goals in mind.

As executive producer and host of "The Hidden China," a documentary, Trippon set out to raise awareness about the vast economic progress China has made in recent years and to teach Americans how to benefit from it.

The film will be showcased tonight at 7 during Movie Night at the Houston Racquet Club, 10709 Memorial Dr.

"The Hidden China" takes viewers inside the country's thriving economy to booming cities like Hong Kong, Macau, Shenzhen, X'ian, Shanghai and Beijing.

One of Trippon's main objectives in creating the film was to reveal a side of China that most Americans don't know exist — a China filled with economic opportunity and investment potential.

"I think most Americans still view China like it was in the '50s or '60s," he said. "It's a totally different country now, and I don't think they get a clear picture of what's going on over there from our media."

Trippon said China will surpass the U.S. economy within 5 years. Currently, China has a \$10 trillion economy and the U.S. has a \$13 trillion economy. While China is growing at a rate of 10-12 percent per year, Trippon said, the U.S. is at flat, if not negative, growth — the definition of a recession.

"That's a big deal — it's a big deal politically, it's a big deal economically, it's a big deal socially," he said. "And I think it's something that people need to know about."

The film features candid interviews with top Chinese government officials, people at the different stock exchanges, and Chinese business owners.

"They talk about China's issues in a pretty honest way," Trippon said. "They say things you won't hear on CNN."

The film was shot in October 2007 during his annual China Investment Fieldtrip, a 14-day trip featuring an inside look at some of China's most economically prosperous cities.

"I was so surprised at the Chinese economy and the amount of infrastructure being built," said Richard Taylor, an investor who attended last year's trip and is interviewed in the documentary. "I expected a third-world country and found it to be truly state-of-the-art."

One of Taylor's favorite stops was Macau, the only city in China where casino gambling is legal.

"It's absolutely amazing how fast the area has been built up," he said.

In 2007, Macau surpassed Las Vegas in total gaming revenues, Trippon said, and the city is only one-third built out.

Anyone is eligible to sign up for the trip. It mostly attracts big-time investors and business owners who want to start doing business in China, Trippon said, but it also attracts people who are just curious about China and want to experience something other than the traditional tourist vacation.

"We go see all the major tourist sites. We'll go to the Great Wall and the floating harbor in Hong Kong," he said. "And we also get to see things that tourists are not allowed to see. We get a private tour of the stock exchange and container ports, and we get to tour the factories and see the living quarters in the factories."

This year's trip, scheduled for October 8 – 21, includes visits to Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Macau, Shanghai, Beijing, and Hang Zhou.

Trippon clearly spends a lot of time in China. When it's all said and done, he spends about four months in China each year. When he comes home to Hunters Creek, he manages to stay busy. In particular, he spends a lot of time writing.

He frequently writes articles for various financial magazines and journals, such as Oil & Gas Financial and Stock Futures & Options Magazine.

In 2006 he began publishing his own newsletter, China Stock Digest, to provide his clients with China stock market research to identify the best investment opportunities in the China economy.

In 2007, China Stock Digest was named America's No. 1 performing pure China Stock investment newsletter in total return and the No. 2 performing investment newsletter in total return among all categories by Hulbert Financial Digest, an independent watchdog of the financial newsletter industry.

Trippon has written two books: "Becoming Your Own China Stock Guru: The Ultimate Investor's Guide to Profiting from China's Economic Boom," and "How Millionaires Stay Rich Forever: Retirement Planning Secrets of Millionaires and How They Can Work For You," which made Amazon's Best-Seller list.

His next book, "Millionaire by 50," is scheduled for release in 2010 and is geared toward the children of his clients.

"It tells someone who is just getting out of high school or college what they need to do to become a millionaire by the time they are 50," Trippon said. "It's a recipe, step-by-step, exactly what they need to do."

So, as previously stated, Jim Trippon's mission in life is to help people make millions. And he's good at it.

"It's what I do," he said.

But family will always be first on his list of priorities. He may spend four months out of the year

abroad, but he doesn't let distance affect his relationship with his wife, Kim, and two children, Alexis and David.

"Just because I'm out of town doesn't mean I'm out of touch," Trippon said. "I get to see my kids twice a day."

All of the hotels and business centers in China are equipped with high-speed Internet connections.

"All I have to do is plug in my lap top and turn on my web cam, and we have video conferences," he said. "When we had to just do telephone calls it was pretty tough on the kids, but now that they get to see me twice-a-day it's great."

And when he's home he spends a lot of time catching up, taking his kids to soccer games and little league, and just spending as much time with his family as he can.

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