

## Couple Opens Second Checkers Restaurant in Lake Orion

Valerie Keyes' and Mark Latshaw's second drive-through franchise is located at 717 Brown Road.

By [Leslie Ellis](#)



A second [Checkers](#) location opened recently in Lake Orion, thanks to a pair of residents' love for their hometown.

Valerie Keyes and Mark Latshaw opened the Checkers restaurant on Lapeer Road in June, 2011, and their success with that location inspired them to open a second franchise Feb. 28 at 717 Brown Road.

"It was really a good opening," Keyes said Thursday of the Brown Road location. "We've had very strong sales. It's been great."

She said launching the laid-back Lapeer Road restaurant near the lake and [Lake Orion High School](#) was good preparation for what the couple expects will be a faster pace at its new double drive-through restaurant, which will create jobs for 30 to 40 people.

"We were rookie of the year for Checkers last year," she said. "It was a very big learning experience for us."

Michigan is one of the top markets in the United States for the burger chain, which has 53 locations throughout the state, according to spokeswoman Carly Levinson.

For Keyes and Latshaw, operating a business in Lake Orion is personal.

"Between the two of us, we have six kids, so we have a lot going on with the school system. If we're not there cheering on our kids, we're supporting the boosters," Keyes said of their commitment to the community. "It's kind of like a hometown thing for us."