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Fast food fans check out Rothschild's Checkers Drive In

New Rothschild business has strong opening in former Hardee's building

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Checkers franchise owner Scott Geurink, right, shakes hands with customer Bruce Bartus of Rib Mountain at the new Checkers restaurant in Rothschild Thursday. / Dan Young/Daily Herald Media

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ZOOM

Cashier Xamong Lor offers a customer a special at the new Checkers restaurant in Rothschild Thursday. / Dan Young/Daily Herald Media

ROTHSCHILD — The village’s newest restaurant is open for business, and locals are [checking](#) it out in droves.

Checkers Drive In opened Thursday in the old Hardee’s building and Checkers Executive Vice President of Franchise Development Jennifer Durham said opening sales were very [strong](#).

Scott Geurink and his wife, Lori Geurink, purchased the building in October after it had sat unused and empty for nearly four years in the Shopko Plaza at 1027 E. Grand Ave.

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The Wausau-area couple, who also own Cellular Central in Rothschild, said they knew they wanted to open a fast food burger joint and researched for months to determine which would be the best for the area. They chose Checkers from a list of about 15 contenders because they appreciated its [quality](#) [and](#) fair prices, Lori Geurink said.

“We’re really interested with this love affair with fast food in America,” she said. “We understood the gap when Hardee’s left, and we’re really excited to bring this chain to the community.”

Checkers offers a wide variety of menu items. Among the most popular are the Big Buford, a double cheeseburger, and the Baconzilla!, a double cheeseburger with four slices of bacon. The fast food stop also includes chicken wings, hot dogs and potato skins. Most combo meals with a burger, fries and a drink cost from \$5 to \$7, and customers also can choose from items on a dollar menu.

Checkers typically doesn’t have interior seating, just double-lane drive-thrus, but the Geurinks said they felt it necessary to include seating for their customers. They now own the Checkers with the largest interior seating section.

Tony Koeller, 45, of Wausau, said he wanted to try the new place and see what it's like. Koeller uses the Highway 29 exit in Rothschild twice a day to get to and from his job in Mosinee. He said Checkers fills a void left when Hardee's closed, and he's glad to see the beginnings of redeveloping the area.

"I've been driving past the building for months now waiting to see what will come in, and I hope this stays," he said. "I'll be back for sure."

Helene Goebel, 61, of Weston, said she thinks the restaurant will do well in the area because of the variety of its menu and location.

"This is great for the area," she said. "It's definitely better than an empty building sitting here. We need more restaurants in the south metro area so we don't have to drive to Wausau."

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