

Chamber News

Castroville Area Chamber of Commerce

By Ashlee Tondre Bates

This April marks the 50th anniversary of Castroville State Bank and to commemorate this momentous occasion they will be holding a celebration mixer on Thursday, April 2nd beginning at 5 p.m., at the Bank. The event is free to all and a meal will be served at 6 p.m. There will be live entertainment, door prizes and a drawing for 5-\$100 savings accounts. Bank President Jim Tondre was excited to share some information with me about the beginning of the bank. In early 1958, the Castroville Chamber of Commerce and a group of local citizens recognized the need for a banking facility in Castroville. They began working on the project and in July of that same year, a delegation led by Dr. Robert R. Eckert traveled to Austin to apply with the Texas Banking Commission for a State Bank Charter. Along with Dr. Eckert, the delegation group included Mayor Frank Ducos, City Attorney Joe E. Briscoe, Frank J. Keller, Louis E. Hart, Sr., and Bernard Fitzsimon. It was no easy task to get this bank started and in January of 1959 the group was given the green light on their application for a bank charter. They quickly began getting together a group of men that would serve as the founding directors of Castroville State Bank. These were Bernard Fitzsimon, President; Walter A. Ulbricht, Executive Vice President and cashier; Ralph L. Tschirhart, Vice President; and Mayor Frank Ducos, Dr. Robert R. Eckert, M.D., Louis E. Hart, Sr., Herbert A. Tondre, Raymond Schuchart and Joe Briscoe, board of directors. Joe Briscoe also served as the attorney for the bank.

At that time, preliminary architect's plans were already drawn up to remodel the old Hagan Place building. The bank opened for business on April 2, 1959 and had assets of just \$100,000, which was a substantial amount of money at that time. The bank has continued to serve the Medina Valley and surrounding areas with their financial products and services but more importantly with hometown, friendly and helpful service. The one thing they try not to change is knowing their customers. If they are in the office, they will answer the phone if they can!! So come help us celebrate fifty wonderful years at the mixer on Thursday April 2nd at Castroville State Bank, located at 502 Paris Street. For more information, please call 830-931-2201.

It's been a little over 3 weeks since the new Dairy Queen opened in Castroville and I decided it was time to check it out. I wanted to wait for all the hype to calm down, but it still seems to be a hopping place. I was pleasantly surprised when I walked in to find beautiful tile floors and tile details on the walls. The space was much larger and housed many built in booths and large tables. I was quickly greeted by one of the friendly staff members who took my order and directed me to the drink station where I found many different Coke products and fresh brewed tea. On my way to the drinks, I also passed by the salsa bar, which I later learned held their fresh salsa which is made daily in the restaurant. The booth was very comfy and each table had its own ketchup and Louisiana hot sauce. After I enjoyed my lunch, I looked around a bit more discovered that they also offer outdoor dining which is great on a day like today. Before I left, I spoke with co-owner David West who told me he couldn't be happier with the new Dairy Queen Restaurant and the way things have been running. He said business has been consistently steady and even busier than he thought. He explained how he likes to build his Dairy Queens bigger, so the Castroville location is about 1,000 square feet larger than the typical Dairy Queen. He also mentioned that he built it with a "pleasing interior package which gives them a chance to be different." You can still get your favorite DQ

treats and eats, but now you can enjoy them in a more restaurant style atmosphere. My favorite feature is the new cold kitchen which is where all the ice cream and other frozen treats are kept. So stop by the new Dairy Queen and find out why David's motto is "give them more and they will come back." Have a great week everyone!