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Jack's begins construction on new restaurant

by David Atchison

Dec 09, 2010 | 1200 views | 0 | 6 | |



Construction of the new Jack's Family Restaurant is moving forward. The new restaurant should open in March where the former Miller-Sutherlin Auto Mall once stood. Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

While the restaurant with the famous jingle, "You'll go back, back, back to Jack, Jack, Jack's, for more, more, more," celebrates its 50th year anniversary, construction on a new Jack's family restaurant is under way.

"We're having some dirt issues," said Wayne Reaves, who owns nine Jack's in East Alabama, including the restaurant in Pell City, with his wife, Katie. "But they are getting ready to pour the slab."

The Reaves own the only Jack's franchise in East Alabama, and the couple have stores in Pell City, Talladega, Oxford, Lenlock, Sylacauga, Heflin and Munford.

Reaves said people will start seeing the new Pell City Jack's restaurant materialize within the coming months.

"Maybe by the time the artic winter is over, we'll be ready to go," Reaves joked.

Actually, he expects the restaurant to open in March.

"They said 11 weeks (to complete the construction) but because of the dirt issue it's probably going to be 12 weeks," Reaves said.

He said the builder has constructed other Jack's restaurants for him, including the one in Talladega, which was built in just nine weeks.

"That's one reason I think it will get done fast," Reaves said.

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The new Pell City Jack's will seat about 100 people.

"It's going to be the largest Jack's we've ever built," Reaves said. "It's going to seat more people than any of my other stores."

He said the Jack's Family Restaurant in Pell City, at 305 Martin St., will remain open until the new store is built.

"We actually like this location," Reaves said. "We didn't have a choice. We had cars backing up out into the street."

He said that is the major problem with the current restaurant site.

Customers waiting in the drive-thru line were backed up all the way out to U.S. 231. There is plenty of parking area for customers who eat inside the updated, modern restaurant being built.

Reaves said they will have an overflow parking area for large tractor-trailers, campers and anglers towing their bass boats to the lake.

He said they plan to sell or lease the old Jack's restaurant building or site.

"We'll closed the old store one night and open the new store the next morning," said Reaves, who first began working with Jack's Hamburgers while in high school.

When he attended high school in Anniston, and worked full time as an assistant manager at Jack's, he never dreamed he would eventually own nine of the restaurants.

"We've been blessed," he said.

Reaves and his wife, who is originally from Pell City, have lived in Cropwell since 1983.

He said the new Pell City Jack's store will have a fireplace, and a 55-inch flat screen television for customers to relax and enjoy.

The restaurant will have round tables that seat six to eight people.

"The store will be large and open," Reaves said. "It will be very cozy."

He said the Pell City restaurant will also increase the number of employees by about 25 percent and will be something the community will be proud of.

Reaves said the current Pell City Jack's store is almost 30 years old.

"So we've just about worn it out," he said.

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