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Veteran national executive Keith E. Sirois appointed CEO of Big Boy Restaurants

WARREN, Mich. (Jan. 26, 2009) – Keith E. Sirois, a food service industry leader with 35 years of experience, was selected as chief executive officer of Big Boy Restaurants International, LLC. Sirois, 57, begins his new role Monday, Jan. 26, at company headquarters in Warren, Mich.

The appointment, announced today by chairman Robert Liggett Jr., completes a national search and four-month transition while board member Jim Jensen served as interim CEO.

Big Boy strategic planning and operating responsibilities now will be overseen by a business veteran whose career spans multiple restaurant concepts – including family dining and QSR. His most recent positions were at Checkers Drive-In Restaurants, where Sirois was president and CEO of the publicly owned franchisor and owner-operator of an 800-store dual brand system.

"We're very fortunate to add Keith Sirois, a seasoned, successful restaurant chief executive to our leadership," Liggett says. "He brings hands-on knowledge of franchise and company-owned restaurants, as well as a strategic vision and leadership for continuing our growth initiatives at Big Boy. Keith has an impressive record of sales growth, franchise development and team-building."

Big Boy is an enduring icon of Americana with a widely recognized brand symbol holding a double-decker cheeseburger. The company is pursuing aggressive growth in new and existing markets. In California, where the first Bob's Big Boy opened in 1936, a location with a drive-through lane is planned in the Los Angeles suburb of Downey – a prototype for a new customer service option.

"This solid, competitive brand presents exciting opportunities for innovation and expansion," says Sirois, whose name is pronounced sa-ROY. "I look forward to working with Big Boy management, employees and franchisees to support the momentum underway – and extend it. This is like joining a classic American family, represented by a welcoming young man whose smile and spirit are contagious."

The new CEO, who rose at Checkers from franchising consultant to CEO in seven years, brings extensive experience with drive-up food service. That company, which also operates Rally's restaurants, is the nation's largest double drive-through chain – with a choice of driver-side or passenger-side service.

Sirois' management experience at Checkers includes successful turnaround tactics, service as director of company operations and four years as vice-president of franchise operations.

Achievements include increasing same-store sales during 15 of the 16 quarters when he was president and CEO. He also oversaw technology advances to raise store-level productivity, as well as incentive and training programs to enhance guest experiences.

Before leadership positions at Checkers, Sirois was vice president of operations for four years at Heartwise Express, a fast-casual startup group in Chicago. He also held management roles at Old Country Buffet, Mrs. Fields Cookies and Taco Bell. His career began as a management trainee at Denny's Restaurants, where he advanced in nine years to regional manager for seven Midwestern states.

Sirois is a veteran of the U.S. Naval Security Group and served as an advisory board member at the University of South Florida's Center for Entrepreneurship.

He and his wife, Kimberly, are relocating from Tampa to the Metro Detroit area – a homecoming for Sirois, who grew up in suburban Wyandotte and has family members in the area.

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Big Boy Restaurants International, LLC is the exclusive worldwide franchiser of Big Boy Restaurants in the United States and Japan. Learn more at www.bigboy.com.

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