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A Treasured Tradition Returns to West Covina As Bob's Big Boy Expands in California

WARREN, Mich. (Jan. 22, 2009) – The Bob's Big Boy restaurant group continues expanding in the state where it began. California's 12th location recently opened in West Covina, a Los Angeles suburb.

The iconic Big Boy figure holding a double-decker cheeseburger now stands at Westfield Shopping Plaza, a major regional mall near the city's Civic Center in "the Heart of the San Gabriel Valley," as West Covina calls itself. The 5,000-square-foot Bob's Big Boy was remodeled from a previous restaurant. The menu's enduring appeal was confirmed immediately, with sales setting a first-week record for the brand's U.S. locations.

An earlier Bob's Big Boy at another shopping center three miles away closed in 1994. Jim Louder, who opened his first Bob's franchise four years ago in Torrance, Calif., recognized the demand in West Covina. "After listening to people, I realized, 'Gosh, people really want this back,' " he says. "Bob's is a special destination for many folks. It's a family tradition, a valued part of Americana."

His 170-seat restaurant serves customers from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily and offers Wi-Fi Internet access. The bright red, blue and yellow décor reinforces the classic atmosphere, as do booths and an ice cream counter. Louder hopes to host summertime car shows in his parking lot at the mall, which has nearly 200 stores and is 20 miles east of downtown Los Angeles.

The owner also plans a third franchise in Downey, Calif., this time with drive-through service. More than a dozen other sites are in development in a state where the enterprise began. Bob Wian opened a 10-seat Glendale diner in 1936 that featured Bob's Big Boy burgers. The Bob's in Burbank, which opened in 1949, is the oldest still operating and is designated as a state historical site.

"We're delighted that committed owners such as Jim Louder support our continuing growth in California," says Robert Liggett, Jr., owner of Big Boy Restaurants International LLC. "It's great to see the passion people there have for the meals, desserts and excitement at Bob's locations."

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