

Mexican restaurant moving in

Country Kitchen closed doors in January, El Agave Azul will soon serve customers

BY JARED YOUNG
Staff Reporter

Country Kitchen is out, and a Mexican restaurant by the name of El Agave Azul soon will replace it.

The building formerly home to Country Kitchen remained vacant until recently when the Garcia family purchased it.

The Garcias started cleaning the building more than a week ago. Efrain Garcia, owner of El Agave Azul, said he has high hopes for the outcome of his family's investment.

"We're hoping to remodel and rebuild the booths because they are torn apart," Garcia said. "We are still working on the budget."

New additions to the building will include a service bar where drinks will be served, which should be completed this week. The walls of the building also are newly painted to match the Mexican theme.

The exterior of the building will receive a face lift as well, which includes new signs in place of the old Country Kitchen logos.

Garcia plans to have the restaurant completed and ready for customers by March 15.

"It might be too much to ask for," Garcia said. "But we need to pay the bills, and we need some money to pay the bills."

Garcia not only is concerned with the appearance and functionality of the building, but also with the driveway leading to the parking lot. It is riddled with cracks and potholes, which he plans to have repaired. The location of the driveway also is out of sight of the main roads.

"We'll just have to put enough signs up to direct people," Garcia said. "[Business 63] is a pretty good entrance. The old gas station confuses people."

Garcia said he remains optimistic for a mid-March opening.

"We've got a lot of cleaning to do," Garcia said. "Hopefully we are halfway done. We hope to have this place ready in two weeks to call the inspectors. There's always something we miss."

While bringing the building up to code, Garcia also is sending future employees



Mayank Dhungana/Index

Country Kitchen closed because of low customer traffic. The driveway leading up to the restaurant inconvenienced customers, former manager Kevin Thompson said.

to get Servsafe Certifications. Half of the employees at any restaurant are required to be certified. Training for employees lasts three days, and managers take a four-day training session.

Garcia said his family decided to open a Mexican restaurant in Kirksville because of two business closings — Country Kitchen and El Vaquero. Although the business is family owned, Garcia said he is looking to hire half of its employees from Kirksville and the surrounding area.

Senior Cara Graziano said she is looking forward to the new Mexican restaurant in Kirksville because other restau-

rants have closed.

"I was really sad because El Vaquero's closed," she said. "That was my favorite restaurant. I don't feel like the other choices we have are of good quality."

Kevin Thompson, former manager of Country Kitchen, said the reason for his restaurant closing had nothing to do with the performance of the restaurant, but simply the amount of business it was receiving.

"The driveway was the biggest part of the reason," Thompson said. "People coming from the south would pass the building before realizing the drive was back up the road."

Crime statistics show increase in reported rapes

Rise in statistics might be due to a recent change in the reporting process

BY BLAISE HART-SCHMIDT
Staff Reporter

The numbers are in for the 2008 Kirksville crime reports, and while most categories of crimes have decreased, the number of reported rapes has increased.

Fourteen rapes were reported in 2008, up from 11 in 2007, according to a press release issued by the Kirksville Police Department on Feb. 10. Since 2004, the number of reported rapes has increased every year.

Jim Hughes, Kirksville Chief of Police, said it is unclear as to whether the actual number of rapes has increased or if the statistics reflect a change in the reporting process.

"One thing we talk about with Victim Support Services is the fact that this increase could in fact be an increase in the comfort level of the victims and Victim Services reporting these violations to the police," Hughes said.

Hughes said the Kirksville Police Department looks closely at the numbers each year.

"There is no identifiable pattern to account for the increase — for example, there's no evidence that there's a serial rapist," Hughes said.

The police department works to promote safety in the community, Hughes said.

"We make ourselves available to talk to groups, large and small, be it students or full-time residents," Hughes said. "We work closely with victim support services, in an attempt to get a handle on these crimes as much as possible."

Angela Carter, director of the Women's Resource Center, said rape victims have several options.

"They can file a report with DPS and decide later whether they want to press charges or not," Carter said. "They should not shower and go to the hospital to make sure they get the medical attention they need and make connection with [University Counseling Services]."

Carter said she agreed with Hughes' theory that the increase represents a higher reporting rate of rapes.

Kim LeBaron, executive director of Victim Support Services said she agrees that an increase in rape reports might reflect a positive view of the justice system. "There's been a couple of things that

have come into place: one, we have a prosecutor who's willing to prosecute these cases, and two, we have a police department that aggressively investigates these cases," LeBaron said. "So lots of people understand now that if they come forward and report that this has happened that there will be a criminal investigation."

Victim Support Services, a private non-profit organization that serves all victims of violent crimes including domestic and sexual abuse, also had an increase in rape reports in 2008, LeBaron said.

"We work with seven counties, much more than just Kirksville," LeBaron said. "I do believe that part of that is just more of an understanding of the victims that there's help in the system."

Tom Johnson, director of the Department of Public Safety, said that although reporting a rape is important, safety should be the victim's number one priority.

"The most important thing to do is to be safe," Johnson said. "If you need any medical attention, take care of that first."

Though reported rapes have increased, seven out of the nine crime categories decreased in 2008 — burglaries, aggravated assault, property crimes, thefts, simple assaults, accidents and injury accidents. The increase of domestic assault was not statistically significant, according to the press release.

The police department clears 41 percent of the major crimes reported to it, which is double the national average, according to the press release.

"The most important thing to do is to be safe. If you need any medical attention, take care of that first."

Tom Johnson
Director of the Department of Public Safety

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NEWS | In Brief

Three men jailed after weekend drug bust

The Adair County Sheriff's Department, Missouri State Highway Patrol and North Missouri Drug Task Force discovered an active meth lab at a home on North Osteopathy Friday. Kirksville residents Jamie Potter, 29, Jairo Lopez, 20, and Seth Rodriguez, 20, were arrested and charged with manufacturing of a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance. All currently are being held in Adair County Jail, each under a \$100,000 cash-only bond.

Former restaurant owner pleads guilty

Former Kitigawa Sushi Restaurant owner Alexander Brooks, 32, plead guilty to felony charges of forgery. Adair County prosecutor Mark Williams requested Brooks receive 15 years in prison, but he was sentenced to 120 days of shock incarceration, a short-term prison program run like military basic training. Following his incarceration, Brooks faces possible probation for the remainder of his five-year sentence. Brooks' girlfriend Kimberlee Smock, 30, faces three felony charges and has plead not guilty to all three. Her trial is scheduled to take place next month in Adair County Circuit Court. She currently is out on bond.

Informational meeting to take place

There will be an informational meeting at 5 p.m. Monday, March 2 in Violette Hall 1300 for students who will be taking the spring interim class ED 393, Clinical Experiences in Teaching. During the meeting students will complete background screening forms and provide suggested grade levels for the field component of the course.

Meeting times for the course include two mandatory Saturday sessions March 28 and April 25 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days. The course will meet May 11 to 22 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Students should sign up for the course in the Education Department office VH 2310. People with questions or concerns should contact Professor Sheila Berkowitz at sberko@truman.edu or Peter Kelly at pkelly@truman.edu.

Annual piano festival to take place

The Department of Music will host the 26th Annual Piano Festival Feb. 20 to 21. High school pianists will audition for cash prizes and scholarships, including the full-package Truman Piano Fellowship Award. Competing pianists already have submitted a recorded performance of their repertoire and have received invitations from faculty to compete on campus. The final round of competition will begin at 10:30 a.m. Saturday morning in the Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall. All events are open to the public and are free of charge. For more information about the Truman Piano Festival contact Yukari Yano at yyano@truman.edu or David McKamie at dmckamie@truman.edu.

Bike Co-op to host workshops

The Bike Co-op will offer two classes on bike maintenance. Brakes and Cables, from Feb. 16-26, teaches participants how to use the proper tools for tricky bike repairs to save time and maintain bike safety. Chains and Gears, from March 2-16 will demonstrate how to keep a bike in good condition. Bike Co-op will host the workshops Mondays and Tuesdays from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. For more information, check out <http://bikeco-op.truman.edu>.

Student Senate | In Brief

- Senate heard a request for funding from Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority to bring author and speaker Omar Tyree to campus.

- Senate discussed the curriculum commission.

- Senate discussed proposed changes to the University's portfolio requirements.

- Senate had a first reading of a resolution in support of Nixon's level funding proposal.

- Senate passed a money motion in the amount of \$1,100 for Storm the Capitol, bringing the total amount allotted to \$2,450.

DPS | Reports

- 2/16 A bicycle was reported stolen outside of Missouri Hall.
- 2/15 A bicycle was reported stolen outside of Ophelia Parrish.
- 2/13 A bicycle was reported stolen outside of the Student Union Building.
- 2/13 Freshman Garrick D. Old, 18, was issued a Missouri Uniform Complaint and Summons for minor in possession of intoxicants.
- 2/11 A bicycle was reported stolen outside of Centennial Hall.

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Tickets are available. Free tickets for Truman students with a Truman ID will be available in the Student Activities Board Office. Free tickets for faculty and staff with a Truman ID will be available at the information desk. Both are located in the Student Union Building.

General Admission tickets may be purchased at Edna Campbell's on the Kirksville Square and at the Truman Cashier Window in McClain Hall.

For more information, call 785.4016 or visit the Lyceum website at <http://lyceum.truman.edu>.