

# Redamak's re-opening a ritual

**By Sharon Dettmer**

News staff writer

**NEW BUFFALO** — It's almost as exciting as attending the season-opener at Chicago's Wrigley Field, but some might say the food is better.

Folks flocked to Redamak's on Monday, March 1, to enjoy home-style hamburgers on the New Buffalo restaurant's opening day. No offense to chicken nuggets, but burgers scored big hits with patrons on Monday afternoon.

Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, Swiss burgers topped with a plethora of tasty morsels such as imported sliced mushrooms, were lined up on the tabletops.

Redamak's General Manager Chuck Maroney said that they'd probably serve close to 2,000 hamburgers on opening day.

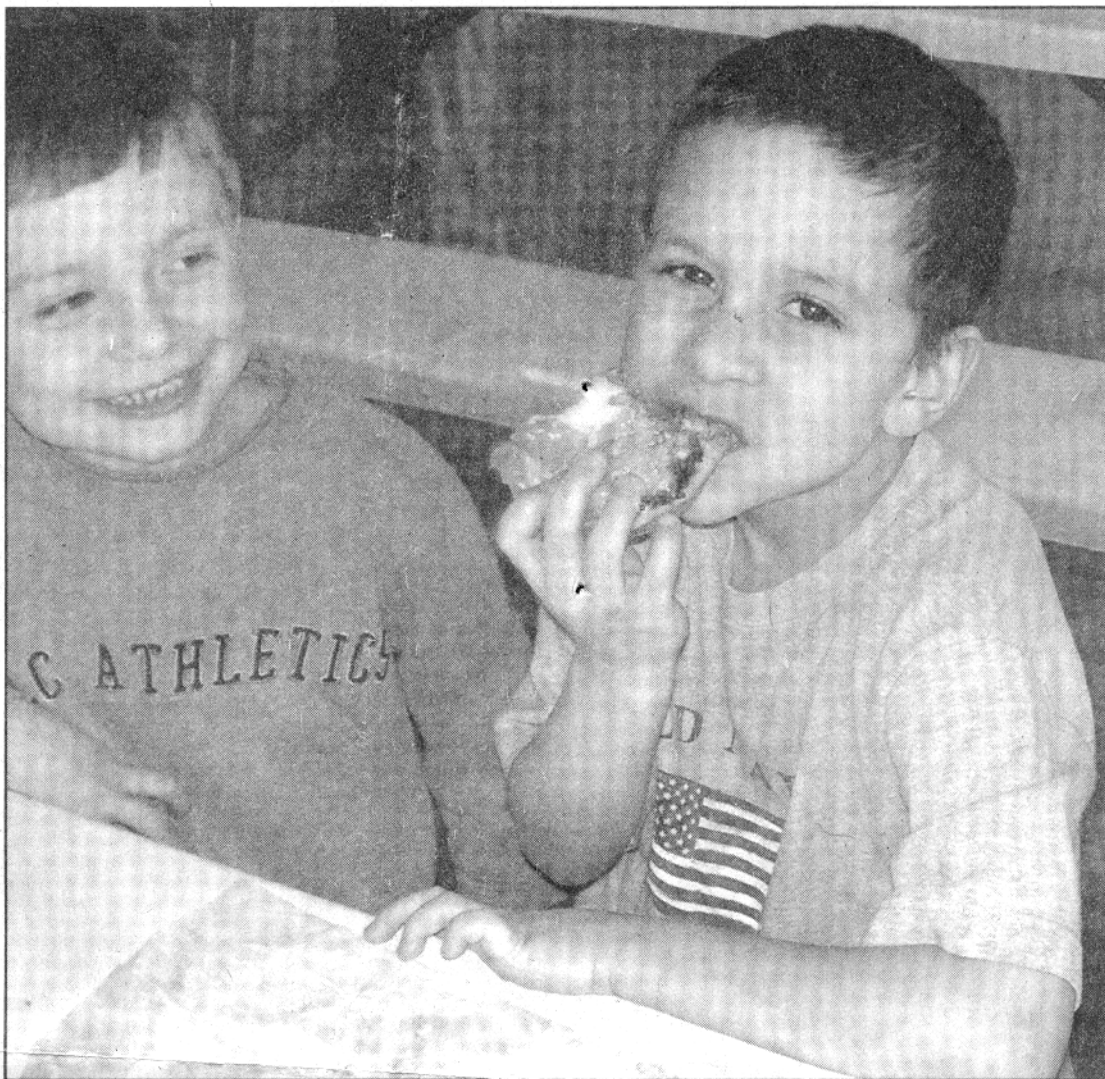
"It'll be close," he said, smiling.

For New Buffalo High School students like 17-year-old Bridget Idkowiak, an afternoon visit to Redamak's has become a yearly ritual. That's because opening day has always fallen on a half-day of school (teacher's in-service day) at her school.

Whether you are young or old, it's just like celebrating a holiday.

"I've been standing in line here when the restaurant opens in the spring every year since I was in seventh grade," Idkowiak said. "I'm getting a cheeseburger," she related with a slight sense of urgency in her voice. "The cheeseburgers are so juicy, big and delicious. They're good."

Raminta Bukeleviciute's family emigrated to the United States from Lithuania two years ago, so the burger experience at Redamak's is relatively



Photo/Sharon Dettmer

**Rylee Fournier of New Buffalo (right) bites into a "legend" during opening day at Redamak's, while Garrett Mullen of Three Oaks looks on.**

new to her. The New Buffalo High sophomore thinks burger munching is a neat experience, at least at Redamak's, that is.

"My friends dragged me along, and I'm glad. Hamburgers aren't a traditional food in Lithuania," she said.

Seventeen-year-old Morgan Lijewski was glad that Monday was a only half-day of school. That way students didn't have to skip class to enjoy their long-awaited lunches (not that she

actually would skip, Morgan quickly added).

For some, opening day is a great way to see friendly and familiar faces.

Jim Maroney, who has owned the restaurant for 29 years, along with his wife, Angie, chatted with others to catch up on what everyone's been doing all winter long.

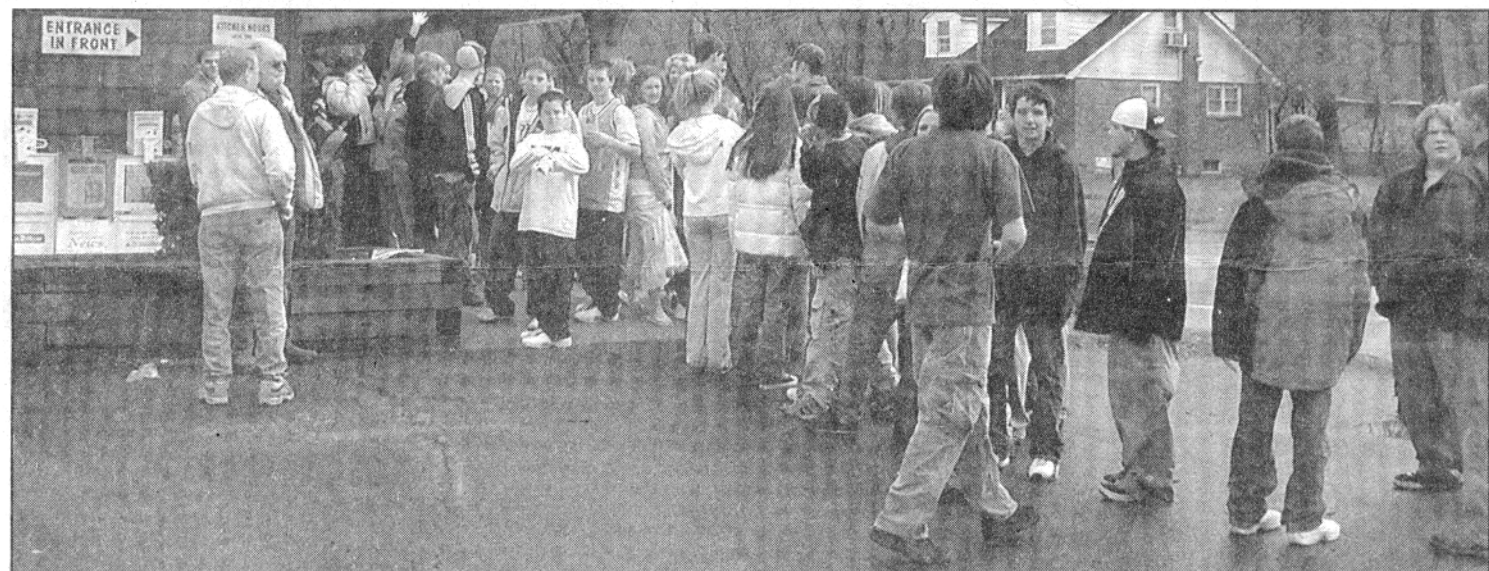
Some where there for the spuds, though.

Whether you prefer your

French fries curly or crinkled, Redamak's is the place to order those golden spuds.

Little Addie Woodham, 3, of Michigan City, Ind., is a veteran visitor at the restaurant. And it was clear that Addie likes her French fries served crinkle-style.

"She's been here lots of times," said her mother, Sarah Woodham, as her daughter dipped her fries in cheese sauce.



Photo/David Johnson

**New Buffalo High School students, out of class early due to a half-day, make up a large part of Monday's opening-day line at Redamak's.**