



Despite the fact that work is still underway, some shops have already opened at Deer Park Center.

## First shops open doors at Deer Park

The oft-postponed opening of the Deer Park Shopping Center is now set for next March, but there will be stores open for business before then. In fact, there are five shops open now, a liquor store about to be and the grocery and pharmacy hoping to be ready for business by year's end or soon thereafter.

With workmen still swarming over the nearly-completed center, the shopowners opened their businesses this week to take advantage of the Christmas trade. Located on the upper level of the center is Gloria Moore's Accents, a shop selling linens, towels "and other decorative accents for the home." Mrs. Moore said she was up all night getting her shop ready for the Thursday opening. She came to Deer Park from Rancho del Mar Shopping Center where she was associated with The Golden Dolphin.

Nearby is the Keepers Two, a shop operated by two Watsonville women, Susan Ducasse and Joan Bassmann. In this shop one can buy housewares of all kinds, fancy kitchen utensils, crystal and other household items.

Also open are the Scarlet Fox, a women's apparel shop operated by Holly Eilers; Free Style, a retail sports store run by Thomas R. Swanson; and the Leather Loft where furs and leather goods can be purchased from Joaquina Marinovich. The liquor store is to open before Christmas. It will be run by Richard Alward.

Tom Biagini, who has been named by the new owner of Deer Park to manage the center, says that DeLuxe Foods will open a full service market "before the first of the year, or soon after." Employees are now stocking the shelves at the market which will also have an "old-fashioned, service-type meat counter," Biagini says, as well as a delicatessen and bakery.

Opening at about the same time will be Kamian's Pharmacy, and the Bank of America expects to have its branch open by Jan. 21.

Biagini said that joining these businesses by the time the center opens in March will be Eureka Federal Savings and Loan "and 20 other stores and services, ranging from apparel to antiques, and even a couple of restaurants."

He said that Deer Park Tavern will be reopened next spring, but he said he didn't know who will be running it.

The five shops that are open now can hardly be accused of "jumping the gun." They had been promised the center would be open by Nov. 21, the latest in a series of "target dates" set for opening the center. Now the target date is March.

With only five stores open, the parking lots at the center appear full, but these are the cars of the workmen still working on buildings.

Interior work is now underway on the Bank of America building, and the Eureka Federal Savings and Loan building has yet to be completed. Some roofing has yet to be done, as do the interiors of several of the shops. Workmen are also busy completing the covered pedestrian ramp and finishing the concrete work on the fountains. The old barn has been razed, but will be rebuilt as a community center. Biagini said he "couldn't be specific" as to what form that building will take.

"It will all be extensively landscaped," he said of the center, "with a long, flowing ramp from the parking to the second-level stores. There will be several fountains, a pedestrian mall, an elevator and lots of parking — 378 stalls."

Carl Swenson Jr., in charge of construction at the site, said Tuesday that material shortages are causing some problems. Insulation is hard to get, and a shortage of cement "has made it very difficult. With cement, you have to call every day to see what's available."

Progress toward opening day has been slow, with the "target dates" having been moved from last fall to this spring, to this fall and now to next spring. Work on the project was shut down briefly last summer after the project was brought into the coastal zone due to changes in the law, and the coastal commission said work could not go on until the permits had been obtained.

In October, James Sims, director of development for Swenson, told the members of the Rio del Mar Improvement Assn. that the buildings would be "available to the tenants on Nov. 21," giving the merchants a chance to compete for the Christmas business. In announcing that the tenants had been notified of the new opening date, Sims also announced the center has a new owner.

He is Dr. David Rosehill, of Newport Beach and Hawaii, who bought it from Swenson for an undisclosed amount. Sims said that Swenson had put \$4 million into the project at that time, "and we are not selling it for as much as it cost us."

Completion of the sale is contingent upon the finish of construction and the center being fully leased.

REFERENCE

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