

# **Roca Bar to open Highland Pointe location in June**

## **Pizza restaurant will be chain's fourth in region**

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The Kentucky 54 dining scene continues to explode.

Lowell Maloney, a Morganfield businessman, said Thursday that he hopes to open a Roca Bar in Highland Pointe in June.

The 8,250-square-foot restaurant, designed to seat up to 300 people, will be just west of the 3,951-square-foot Culver's Frozen Custard and ButterBurger now under construction at 3020 Highland Pointe.

That's the development at Kentucky 54 and the Wendell H. Ford Expressway.

Maloney said he's been looking at the Kentucky 54 area since October.

"There's been a lot of growth out there," he said. "I want to be in Owensboro because there aren't any large pizza restaurants there."

The Highland Pointe location will be the region's fourth Roca Bar.

John Rogers and Earl Carter -- the "Ro" and "ca" in the name -- started the original Roca Bar Tavern in Evansville at 1618 S. Kentucky Ave. in 1943.

The restaurant -- now known for its "Around the World" pizza and Italian salad -- is believed to have been the first in Evansville to add pizza to its menu in the early 1950s.

The current owners have also licensed new restaurants in Mount Vernon and Newburgh, Ind., in recent years.

Maloney said the Owensboro restaurant will have a sports bar on one side and family dining on the other. A door will separate the two.

A video game room is also planned, he said, along with a meeting room that will seat 60.

Although pizza will be the restaurant's signature dish, Maloney said he will also offer steak, grilled chicken sandwiches, wings, salad and other menu items.

Roca Bar will employ approximately 60 people, he said.

Highland Pointe is a project of Gulfstream Development, which is also building Woodlands Plaza a few blocks east on Kentucky 54.

Salsarita's Fresh Cantina and Quizno's are both building restaurants inside a 46,000-square-foot strip center just east of Kohl's in Woodlands Plaza.

Brad Anderson, managing partner in the development, said other restaurants are looking at Kentucky 54 and he expects more announcements by spring.