

## Farmers Market set to open new state-of-the-art kitchen

By Jeremy Carroll, C & G Staff Writer

ROYAL OAK — When she was hired as the market master for the Royal Oak Farmers Market in 1999, Gwen Ross took a look at the kitchen, and knew it would become her goal to replace it.

“I said, ‘That’s disgusting and has to go,’” she said.

The new and improved kitchen, more than 10 years in the making, will be open to the public Feb. 6. The market spent \$125,000 to upgrade the facility with industrial stainless steel equipment. The money all came from user fees; no city money was spent to improve the facility.



Tom Jankowski of Quality Stainless shows Shelly Mazur with the Farmers Market the new stove installed in the market's kitchen, while contractor John Spudich, far left, looks on.

Photo by Jeremy Carroll

“The (market) committee did a really good job of spending our money wisely, and what we have is a kitchen that is going to last for years and years to come,” Ross said.

The Market Café, which has become a popular venue for market attendees to have breakfast and chat during regular hours, will debut the kitchen on Feb. 6 and will continue to sell its normal breakfast menu, but may have other items added, Ross said.

The improvements were partially aimed at helping make the facility a more marketable facility for rentals, which includes various shows and even weddings.

“We keep getting more and more calls,” Ross said about rentals, which included a Metro Times party Jan. 29. “And there are four weddings planned for this year.”

The kitchen will only enhance the facility to potential renters, she said.

Former City Commissioner and past member of the Farmers Market Committee Gary Lelito said he was extremely happy with the way the kitchen came together in the end.

“It turned out very nice,” he said. “It took some pushing, but we got through it. After 10 years, we got it finished.”

The actual construction took less than two months to complete, and no market days were missed, Ross said.

“I’m delighted that it’s done and I’m thrilled that we got it done for the amount of money we did,” said Committee member Berry Schulman. “It’s great that it didn’t cost the city any money.”

Committee member Tom Wurdock said the group came to an immediate consensus after seeing the plans.

“I think it looks better than some commercial restaurants in downtown Royal Oak,” he said.

Ross said a point of pride was that all the work was done by Michigan companies, with local building materials used on the facility as well.

For more information on the market, call them at (248) 246-3276.

You can reach Staff Writer Jeremy Carroll at [jcarroll@candqnews.com](mailto:jcarroll@candqnews.com) or at (586) 279-1110.