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**Southwest Valley**

## **Buckeye getting locally owned bank**

by **Rebekah L. Sanders** - Apr. 4, 2008 06:14 AM  
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The first locally owned commercial bank in the West Valley will open a branch in Buckeye soon, catering to small- and mid-size businesses.

West Valley National Bank is preparing to open a branch this month, in Buckeye's downtown business district. It will be the bank's second location.

The bank, started by West Valley business leaders, launched its first location in 2006 in Avondale. Now the company is hoping to lure customers doing business in commercial real estate, development and construction in Buckeye to choose its services.

"Buckeye has been particularly hard hit during this economic downturn, and we are anxious to provide working capital to the business community," President and CEO Candace Wiest said.

The community bank also offers personal banking and has experience serving non-profit organizations, physicians, dentists, attorneys, real estate agents and accountants.

West Valley National is trying to expand its reach throughout the West Valley, said Laurie Kyro, vice president of marketing.

Buckeye was the logical next place to go, Kyro said, because of the town's projected rapid growth.

The focus on commercial banking could be an asset for local merchants, said Buckeye Valley Chamber of Commerce President Deanna Kupcik.

Candidates during the recent Town Council and mayoral election campaigns stressed the need to invigorate business along main street.

"West Valley National Bank is a business bank, not a neighborhood bank," Kupcik said. "That's something different that we've never had before. I think it's a good thing for us."

The branch will have to compete with established banks right down the street.

Chase Bank and National Bank of Arizona serve many downtown businesses.

"I'm a new business owner, so it's whatever's close and handy," said Carol Gable, owner of Buckeye Flower Pot, a floral and gift store along downtown's main drag.

Gable said she has used both Chase and National Bank of Arizona for merchant services, credit card processing and credit lines.

Chase was the only option for business owners when Buckeye Health Mart Pharmacy was established many years ago, said pharmacist Rita Brooke.

"We feel comfortable with them," Brooke said. "It's convenience mainly and I guess loyalty."

West Valley National will kick off programs to attract business customers soon, Kyro said.

