

Maxwell's is the newest place to hang in Newpark

Deejays, jazz and blues bands are pied pipers for pizza lounge

By **GREG MARSHALL**

Of the Record staff

No one comes to town asking for tourist traps. Instead, visitors want to eat, dance and drink wherever the locals go, says Steven Maxwell, the owner of Maxwell's East Coast Eatery. One of the brains behind Fat Kid Pizza, Maxwell said the secret to success for any nightclub or bar is to cater, quite literally, to locals.

"You have to take care of the people who take care of you," he said. "If you take care of the people who take care of you, everyone else will follow."

Maxwell's, open for nearly two months, has enjoyed status early on as a Newpark hotspot for locals who don't want to commute six miles into Main Street. The casual diner serves pizza and wings for lunch. The lights dim for dinner and by eight at night, the restaurant has morphed into a lounge that plays live music three nights a week.

Before opening his own establishment, Maxwell managed Main Street hotspots like The Spur and The Sidecar, which may help

explain Maxwell's penchant for live performers. "I love going to see live music," he said. "I love watching people play. You get the visual and the soul."

On Thursdays, a deejay accompanies a live saxophone player or other instrumentalist. Friday and Saturday takes on an acoustic air with live music. Radius, a familiar jazz band on the local circuit, takes the stage Friday at 8 p.m. Tony Oros plays Saturday. Matt Wink is another regular performer here, and Maxwell's recently hosted Slightly Stupid, a perennial jam band that boasts a national following.

The restaurant, populated with bar stool and booths, stretches 4,000 square feet with a patio of equal size ready for spring soirees once the weather warms. Maxwell's also has 12 high definition flat-screen televisions, a source of pride for the owner. "It's really rewarding to own my own place," Maxwell said. "It's really been going great."

Just the facts

Feb. 5 Fat-N-Jazzy with DJ Lux and Friends
Feb. 6 Radius-original jazz and funk
Feb. 7 Tony Oros-Plays Well with Others



DAVID RYDER/PARK RECORD

Unmarked in Newpark: Maxwell's East Coast Eatery isn't a hole in the wall, exactly, but it does pride itself on delivering live music to locals near Kimball Junction. The pizzeria and lounge opened less than two months ago.