

Saturday, June 07, 2008, 3:00 AM

# WCCU kicks off new beginning

**By Laura Keeter | Staff Writer**

A crowd celebrated the grand opening of the Wilson Community Credit Union Tuesday under a white tent eating Parker's Barbecue.

City, Chamber, WCCU, and Self-Help representatives cut the ribbon to the new facility, valued at about \$1 million, on an existing lot at the corner of Westwood Avenue and Madison Drive.

The credit union had operated at that site for 10 years in a modular unit that's now been moved off-site. Only additional parking lot work remains at the modular unit's former site, which is now a large area of dirt.

"We want to do a lot for the Wilson community," said Jim McLean, senior executive and supervisor of retail operations with Self-Help Credit Union in Raleigh.

The grand opening was to celebrate the credit union's change of name, brand new building, and the addition of the credit union's first ATM, which is a drive-up unit.

"We consider this a new beginning for us," McLean said.

WCCU began as the Firestone Credit Union in 1975, and served the plant's employees.

In 2000, the credit union received its community charter and with it the ability to take more members -- people who live, work, worship or attend school in Wilson County are qualified for membership.

In April 2004, Firestone Credit Union merged with Self-Help Credit Union, and is now a division of that credit union.

In 2006, the City of Wilson Employees' Credit Union merged with the business, further expanding its customer base. The city employee credit union had formerly been at the City Operations Center.

"Certainly they've got a lot of our city employees, and that's important,"  
said Mayor Bruce Rose.

Last year, the credit union changed names to WCCU because many people thought membership was still exclusive to Bridgestone Firestone employees, said Dawn Worrell, director of the credit union.

WCCU has about 4,200 members and about \$15 million in assets. The credit union employs seven full-time employees.

"We expect a big increase in membership in upcoming months," McLean said.

The credit union offers savings, checking, money market accounts, certificates of deposit, individual retirement accounts, home loans, home equity loans and lines of credit, mortgage loans, small business loans, auto and other vehicle loans, personal loans, credit cards, and financial counseling.

Wilson Community Credit Union is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on weekends and most holidays. For more information, call 291-9977.

[keeter@wilsontimes.com](mailto:keeter@wilsontimes.com) | 265-7817