

# Shop Smart's facelift boosts morale

Annette McGee Rasch  
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

A major remodeling project that began in mid-May has given Cave Junction's Shop Smart a whole new look. The new flooring, updated coolers, exterior and interior painting, new displays and overall reorganization have brought the Valley's largest grocery store into the 21st century.

"We also added more than 4,000 new items, including lots of organic and natural items, and the only way to do all of that was to reformat the entire store," said store manager Jessica Clark. "We had to get everything in line with similar items. Once people get used to the new format, they'll find that shopping will be easier. We also installed new energy efficient doors on our coolers with LED lighting. Basically, everything has been modernized.

"Our company [C&K Market] budgets a certain amount of money each year to put back into our stores, and luckily, this year, our store was chosen," Clark added. "The company president walked through the store and said, 'Hey your store needs a facelift - let's get it done.' Our company is doing good and was very happy to put some money into our store and invest in the community."

Clark said C&K Markets "has some good people on board who really know what they're doing, and the guy in charge of this remodel did an awesome job."

Valley resident and frequent Shop Smart shopper Laurie Hernandez said, "I used to be kind of embarrassed to bring my out-of-town company into the store, but now, we're stylin'. This kind of a major improvement boosts morale and even helps boost our real estate values. I'm really grateful about this."

"It's a great change," agreed Shop Smart co-manager Sonny Hughey. "And we needed a change in the Valley. The store was looking really old, so this is good for the community overall. We're moving up in the world."

From May 17, straight through to the store's grand-reopening June 25, people worked on the project around the clock. Shop Smart's grocery warehouse, SuperValu Inc., took the lead on the remodel and brought in dozens



(Courtesy photo for The Illinois Valley News)

Sonny Hughey, co-manager and Kacie Benschopf, cake decorator, doing the big wheel spin during the Saturday, June 25 grand opening.

of professionals from several other companies to get the job done. With assistance from Shop Smart's own crew, the group of SuperValu vendors rebuilt the shelving, section-by-section.

"I really want to give a big shoutout of thanks to the community for putting up with everything through the remodel," said Clark, who has worked for Shop Smart for 25 years. "Sometimes it was very difficult for customers to find items. Sometimes items were boxed up. We try as hard as we can to please our customers all the time, but there were times when people couldn't find items. "Now, we have just a few tasks to finish up, a few tweaks," Clark said. "It was a lot of work, but we really needed it. The last update in the store was in 1992."

Customers are buzzing about some new features, like the Asian Hot Bar, which Clark said "is doing really well. People are really taking advantage of that." Customers can choose whatever items they want and the \$7.99 price-per-pound stays the same. The food is prepared fresh each day in Shop Smart's deli and includes egg rolls, spring rolls, wontons, rice dishes and chicken prepared several different ways.

Wine lovers are enjoying the new "Wines of the World" section. "There's a ton of new wine selections - I'm not ever sure how many new different varieties

we brought in, but it's a lot. We have wines from Australia, New Zealand, South America, different types of Saki, and of course, our whole local selection of wines is very complete."

Clark said all the improvements create a nicer atmosphere for shoppers to enjoy and that overall, "gives a better impression and helps the town pull together." She also said the new paint job outside, "a nice cool tan color," really adds a lot in the aesthetics department.

"There's some really nice buildings in this town and quite a few other businesses have done nice paint jobs," Clark said. "So now our store isn't an eye sore and instead enhances the community."

Shop Smart's June 25 festive grand-reopening featured "lots of give-aways: including a bike, a few refrigerators, some \$250 gift cards and lots of meat," Hughey said. "We had a big wheel and everyone that spun it won something. We had a cake walk and people were winning cakes. We like giving back to the community."

"It was a really good day," added Tyler Clark, a store supervisor. "We gave away tons of prizes, coca cola glasses, drinks and other items. Everyone had a lot of fun. Morale was great - overall, a fantastic day!"



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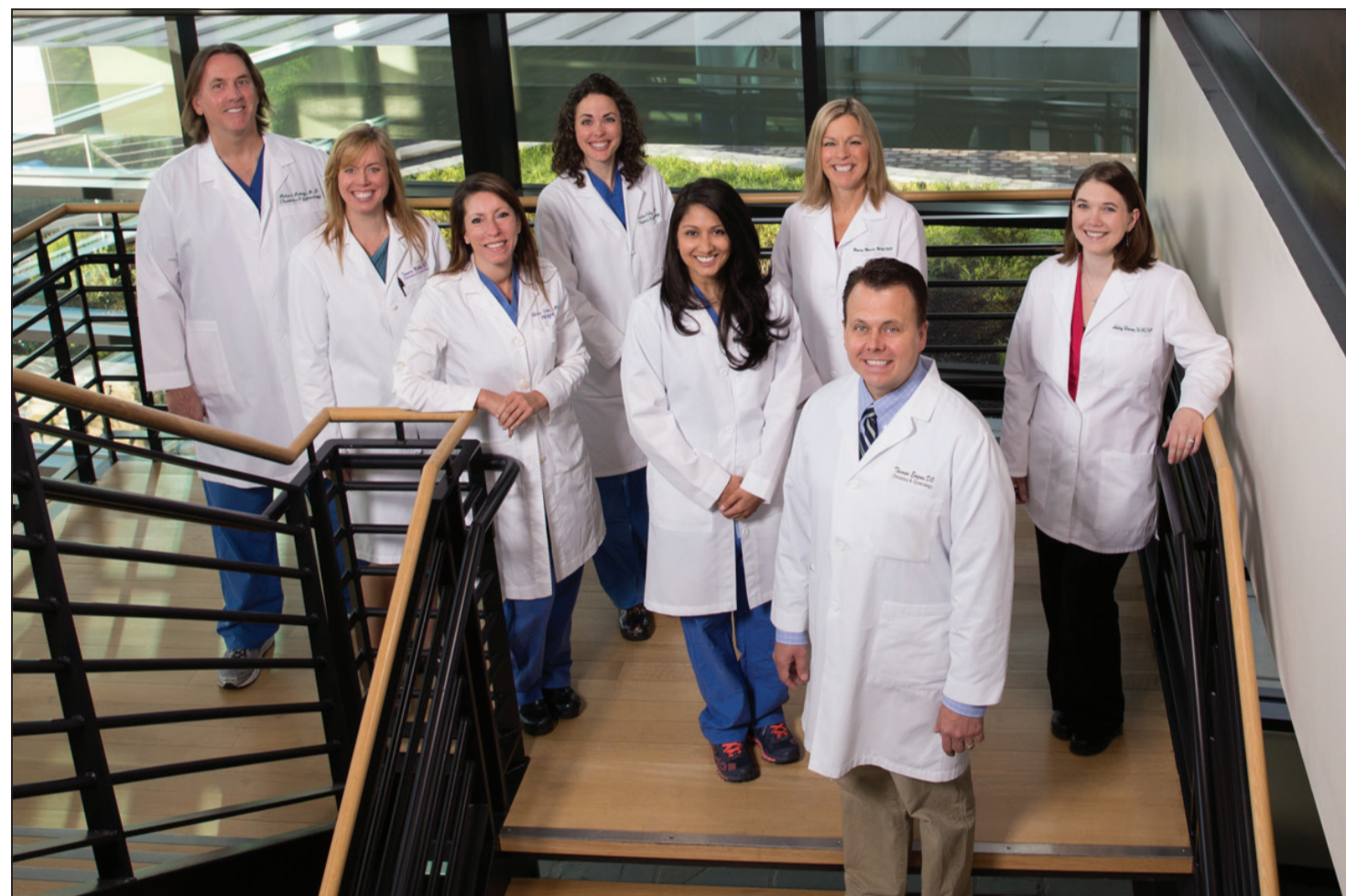
Cave Junction

	<b>Thursday, July 14</b> Sunny High -- 91 Low -- 53
	<b>Friday, July 15</b> Mostly Sunny High -- 89 Low -- 51
	<b>Saturday, July 16</b> Mostly Cloudy High -- 86 Low -- 50
	<b>Sunday, July 17</b> Partly Cloudy High -- 83 Low -- 49
	<b>Monday, July 18</b> Mostly Sunny High -- 80 Low -- 49
	<b>Tuesday, July 19</b> Sunny High -- 82 Low -- 49
	<b>Wednesday, July 20</b> Sunny High -- 83 Low -- 49

Following are the high & low temperatures, and rainfall recorded at The End of the Road in O'Brien by Cheryl & Harry Johnson:

July	High	Low
1	89.7	59.5
2	94.2	51.0
3	93.6	57.3
4	87.8	53.9
5	86.6	52.4
6	88.0	49.8
7	86.9	48.0

July Rain: .00" YTD Rain: 88.67  
Average Yearly Rain Total: 72.00"



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