

Lutherville-TimoniumPatch

New ShopRite Store to Open Ahead of Schedule

Company donates \$10,000 to Maryland Food Bank.

By Nick DiMarco and Bruce Vail July 26, 2011

OThe shelves are in place, just waiting to be stocked.

ShopRite representatives offered a sneak peak into the new store, opening Thursday—ahead of schedule—at the the old Superfresh location.

Employees and vendors have been busy readying the supermarket—stocking shelves, setting up registers and affixing signs.

The company gave an overview Tuesday of the ShopRite business, stressing the family-run nature of the co-operative, Wakefern Food Corp.



The new 57,000 square foot supermarket, located at 37 W. Aylesbury Rd., will be the first of two stores owned by the Sumas family of New Jersey to open in Maryland.

Bill Sumas, vice chairman of Village Super Market Inc., spoke Tuesday afternoon of his excitement in bringing ShopRite to Timonium.

“We kind of ran out of land in New Jersey,” he began jokingly. “I think our biggest advantage is our family. We are a symphony of solace ... we bring our passion to work every day.

The family-run business was started by Sumas’ father and uncle who opened a mom-and-pop shop in New Jersey in the 1930s. They now operate stores in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland.

In addition to showcasing the store during Tuesday’s luncheon, ShopRite community relations manager Christine Magyarits presented a \$10,000 check to the Maryland Food Bank as part of the company’s Partners in Caring program.

“Without their support we could not do what we do,” said Lisa Scott, a Maryland Food Bank representative.

The Partners in Caring program, “a year-round, community based hunger fighting initiative,” began in 1999, according to a press release. The program currently supports 23 regional food banks and more than 1,700 charities.

Greater Timonium Community Council President Eric Rockel was impressed most by the emphasis on family during Tuesday's meeting.

"It's nice to be able to make a connection with the family than an amorphous corporate entity," he said.

Bill Sumas and his children were welcomed to Timonium by local dignitaries included Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz and Michael Baker, a representative from U.S. Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger's office.

"We want you to be more successful here in Maryland than you are in New Jersey," Kamenetz said. "You'll find that the Timonium community is a great group of people."

Charlotte Gordon and her husband Mike were delighted to hear that the ShopRite store would be opening Thursday. The couple, originally from Long Island, NY, say they miss their ShopRite and now travel miles out of their way to Klein's, another store under the Wakefern umbrella.

"There is no place like ShopRite," Charlotte said. "We have found that they have the best prices by far. ... For us it's like a taste of home."

Sumas will also be opening a ShopRite store in White Oak, MD, also on Thursday.

One expert on grocery marketing in the mid-Atlantic region said that ShopRite's expansion into Maryland has been an important development on the Baltimore-area retail scene.

"ShopRite is pretty new to the Maryland marketplace," said Robert Gorland, vice president of consulting firm Matthew P. Casey & Associates. "But they have a stellar reputation for their operations in eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York City metro areas."

"They are often feared by many competitors," because of sharply competitive pricing and other effective marketing strategies, Gorland said.

ShopRite began to emerge as an important player in the greater Baltimore market about two years ago, Gorland said, when the Harford County grocery chain Klein's joined the Wakefern co-operative.

Since then, the Klein family has been gradually converting its eight stores to ShopRite locations, including a supermarket in the Baltimore County community of Jacksonville.

ShopRite attracted further attention with the recent conversion of a former K Mart store in Glen Burnie in Anne Arundel County, he said.

Also under development is a ShopRite store on Liberty Heights Avenue at the west end of Baltimore City, which is expected to open next year, Gorland said.

Including the two new Sumas-family stores opening this week in Maryland, ShopRite will have established a dozen locations in the state just in the last two years, Gorland said.

"That's a significant move," Gorland said.