

## **Supervalu Inc. has sold nine Shop 'n Save stores in Allegheny County this week**

### **Grocers take stock of themselves**

**By C.M. Mortimer**  
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Increasing competition from Wal-Mart Inc. and Target is forcing a series of ownership changes among local franchised supermarkets.

Supervalu Inc. has sold nine Shop 'n Save stores in Allegheny County this week and is in various stages of negotiations for the sale of seven remaining stores, officials said.

On Friday, Giant Eagle Inc. disclosed a series of changes at area franchised stores.

Giant Eagle said a supermarket at Olympia Village in McKeesport will close May 3. The store was independently owned and operated by Bob Budd, who could not be reached for comment. Giant Eagle said about 60 workers there would be offered jobs at other area Giant Eagle supermarkets.

In addition, a Shop 'n Save supermarket at Oak Park Mall in White Oak - about 2.5 miles from the Giant Eagle store in Olympia Village - will be converted to a full-service Giant Eagle. The store will be owned and operated by Scozio Supermarket Group.

Giant Eagle also plans to convert a Festival Foods Store in Penn Township, Westmoreland County, to a Giant Eagle by May 4. The store, which employs about 150 workers, will continue to be owned and operated by the Scozio group.

"There's a lot of change happening. Everybody's trying to re-position themselves because of the competition. We think the Giant Eagle banner is a better fit for us," said Mark Scozio, president of Scozio Supermarket Group.

This week, Shop 'n Save stores in Bethel Park, Heidelberg, Kenmawr Plaza in Kennedy and Wilkins were sold to James Sorbara, a veteran Pittsburgh supermarket operator, said David Pearson, president of Supervalu's Central Region in Xenia, Ohio. Sorbara previously owned two of the stores in Bethel Park and Kennedy -- which he sold to Supervalu in 1998.

"Those stores will be in transition over a four-week period. It takes a lot to get these things done," said Pearson.

Sorbara could not be reached for comment.

Supervalu also said it has sold its store in Lawrenceville to Tom Jamieson, a businessman who operates several Shop 'n Save and Save-A-Lot stores in Fayette County and West Virginia. Jamieson could not be reached for comment.

Supervalu announced plans in September to sell 20 corporately owned Shop 'n Save stores in the Pittsburgh region to independent supermarket owners, who now operate about 55 stores under the brand in the Pittsburgh area.

Pearson also said Shop 'n Save stores in Castle Shannon, Century Square in West Mifflin, Imperial and at 2103 Noblestown Road in Westwood also have been sold recently. He did not disclose the buyers. Sorbara also previously owned the store in Castle Shannon.

Pearson said seven stores remain in various stages of negotiations and could be closed if not sold. He did not disclose their locations or potential buyers.

"There is interest in all of them, and closing is not the only option. Our intention is not to close any," Pearson said.

Last month, Supervalu closed its store behind Westmoreland Mall in Hempfield - a move that idled 66 workers.

Supervalu in January sold stores on McKnight Road in Ross and in Cranberry, Butler County, to Kuhn's Quality Food - a Ross-based grocery chain. In October, Supervalu closed its Shop 'n Save at Chippewa Center in Beaver County.