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Super opening Walmart welcomes first customers to new store

STAFF REPORT
The Lebanon Reporter

LEBANON — Early on, everything was working smoothly at the Walmart Supercenter, which opened Wednesday at 2440 N. Lebanon St.

"It's gone well," store manager Rachel Stenson said in late morning.

The only backup facing visitors was negotiating the temporary drive to the new store.

Inside, spacious aisles made maneuvering easy. There are no merchandise displays in the aisles, Stenson said.

"All the customers have been excited," she said.

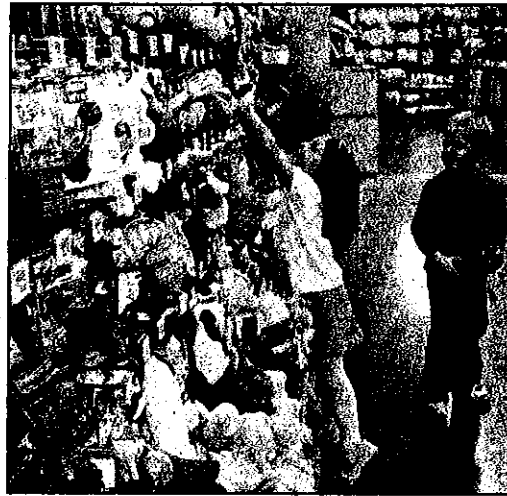
"Some customers were even straightening up the shelves," Stenson said.

Audra Wetzel, Lebanon, was one of the early customers. She and her daughter, Adeline, 1, were at Angie Beltran's checkout station.

"We were after bananas," Wetzel said. They are Adeline's favorite food. "She eats bananas like it's her job," Wetzel said. "She kept saying 'nana, nana' while Wetzel was going through the selection."

The store's size — it covers more than 209,000 square feet — was a surprise. "It's huge," Wetzel said. "I wasn't expecting that."

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REPORTER PHOTO BY ROD ROSE

Hanna Smith and Elijah Whittinghill, both 5 and of Thorntown, discuss which pet toys they'd like to buy during the Walmart Supercenter grand opening Wednesday.

Walmart

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Casey and Anisha Joyce, from Crawfordsville, were picking up infant supplies for their daughter, Piersyn, before visiting a pediatrician at Witham Health Services.

"This is very nice," Anisha Joyce said. "A lot better than the other one."

Piersyn, 9-1/2 months, enjoyed toddling along the

aisles, when not peering curiously at merchandise on lower shelves.

At the ribbon-cutting, Stenson, on behalf of the Walmart Foundation, presented \$1,000 checks to the Lebanon Boys & Girls Club, Boone County Senior Services, Inc., The Caring Center and the Boone Family YMCA.

About 300 persons will work at the store, which is to be open 24 hours a day.