

??Terry Mountney finishes mountainous career



By Sarah Sobanski

Terry Mountney is retiring as one of the last of his breed ? a 43-year veteran of the grocery industry. Not only has Mountney spent four decades helping sell dairy, groceries ?and common goods to the area, he's done it as ?one of the best workers? No Frills owners Beth and Claude Pepin have ever seen.

?He goes 100 miles per hour,? says Beth, shaking her head at Mountney with a smile on his last day Aug. 30 at the store.

Mountney, bright-eyed with only hours until his retirement, shrugs. He says, ?It's just the way I've always been, I don't know why.? He laughs and notes he isn't like that when he gets home.

At 17, Mountney got his first job at Bancroft's IGA. When his cousin asked him to come work with him full-time at the Red and White in 1973, he dropped out of school.

Mountney saw the store change into a Freshmart, then a Valu-mart.

The Pepins met him in 2004 when they took over the Valu-mart. A year later it would close and Mountney and the Pepins would move to Bancroft's No Frills. The Valu-mart is now Bancroft's Red Apple.

?When I started 43 years ago we used to sort out the pop bottles,? Mountney remembers. ?They used to come with wooden cases and the glass Coke bottles of Pepsi and ginger ale, we had to sort them all out and load them back on the trucks. They were worth 10 cents apiece. We'd sort them out and send them back.?

Times have changed, according to the store manager.

?We had to price everything with a gun, one of those little stamps. Put the ink on the pad and stamp everything. Then if you did the wrong price you had to go around with a little, what we called a skidoo,? said Mountney making a jutting hand motion and an erasing noise.

?Is that what you used?? asks Claude. ?We used to have to use hairspray.?

?Then we went to the stickers,? laughs Mountney.

Now, everything in the store comes with a barcode. Mountney says he's also watched the public change. He's seen generations of families in and out of the store. First people come in with their children, then their children come in with their children or they work at the store.

?It's a good, clean job. You're inside where it's warm in the winter and in where it's cool in the summer.?

Mountney is planning to spend his retirement with his wife at their home in Bird's Creek. There will be lots of fishing, hunting and relaxing as far as he's concerned.

?We're going to miss him,? says Beth.