

# The Stone County SHOPPER



## END OF AN ERA

Branson West barber hangs up his clippers

By John Robinson  
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It was 57 years ago in California when Johnny Hermoso decided he had enough of cutting sheet metal and decided to enroll in a barber college. It was a decision – driven in part by a desire to work in doors and out of the cold – that resulted in a career that has lasted more than half a century. Eighteen of those years have been



photos by John Robinson • jrobinson@bransontrilakesnews.com  
Johnny Hermoso, left, cuts the hair of Bernie Castillo. Hermoso is closing down Johnny's Barber Shop in Branson west after a 57-year career of cutting hair.

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spent in Branson West where he has cut hair every Monday through Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

On Halloween, that 57-year career came to an end as Hermoso hung up the clippers for good, and Johnny's

Barber Shop closed its doors for the last time.

"It's gonna be great," Hermoso said with a laugh on that final day. "I'm not going to have to get up."

It's a career that took him across the country and into the Tri-Lakes

Area. In the beginning, Hermoso said there were some tough days at the shop.

"There's days I didn't have one customer," Hermoso said. "So it's something I had to build up for 18 years.

"It's all been word of mouth, and that's a killer, because it can damage ya. But it can also be a great thing. Back in Nevada City I had the same customers for 28 years. I saw them grow up from a baby to an adult."

Soon enough however, Hermoso said, he started to get his first customers, many of whom have gone onto become good friends.

"I like working with people," Hermoso said. "I've been here 18 years and I've met a lot of good people. The people around here are just great, and I couldn't hit them all but I did the best I can and that's all I could've done."

Bernie Castillo, of Kimberling City, is one of those customer. Castillo said he's been a regular at Johnny's Barber Shop since day one.

"He's fast, and he's cheap," Castillo said, adding that his wife cut his hair previously. "I like a fast haircut."

Hermoso's personality is also similar to his own, Castillo said, and makes for good conversations and a reason to return.

"He swears a lot, but so do I," Castillo said with a laugh.

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