



# The Village Toy Chest

June 18 2012 10:41 AM

A locally owned toy store is a rare gem amongst today's one-stop-shops. The Village Toy Chest in Gillespie didn't start out with entirely toys, but owner Bill Toprani felt a natural transition occur. Earlier this year, Toprani decided to phase out all giftware and go all toys with Melissa and Doug being their primary line of educational toys. The store's consumer fireworks and pyro novelties were kept in the conversion and have been a great product line for Toprani even before his brick in mortar location at 106 S. Macoupin.

Owner Bill Toprani and his daughter Carman outside The Village Toy Chest located at 106 S. Macoupin St., Gillespie.

Get all your novelty fireworks at The Village Toy Chest this Fourth of July.

The Village Toy Chest's resident toy tester, Carman, making sure all the puppets are looking their best.

Toprani Sales Company Inc., now d.b.a. The Village Toy Chest first opened its doors in 2006. It initially carried a wide variety of bath & body products, licensed sports products, figurines and seasonal decor with less than 15% of inventory dedicated to toys.

"Some of our plans for later this year include expanding our toy line to include a series of science and lab type kits," said Toprani. "We will also continue to use eBay to sell our confetti line. Shoppers can also preview some of our products on ShopBenGil.com."

The paper confetti and streamer cannons come in various color combinations and launch anywhere from 3 to 25 feet. Another unique item is their 'Sky Lantern' a mini hot air balloon. With an Asian influence, the lanterns are usually purchased to commemorate anniversaries, weddings, or any celebratory event.

"Come in and check out our full stock of craft kits, wooden toys, activity pads and so much more," said Toprani. "Ask for our rewards card and receive 10% off all qualifying

purchases and receive \$20 in store credit when your card is filled up, excludes all fireworks.”

The Village Toy Chest store hours are Tuesday to Friday 10am-6pm and Saturdays from 9am-3pm. Watch for extended hours as fireworks season approaches. Follow The Village Toy Chest on Facebook for the latest in store news and information.