

Business Roundtable

Continued from page 4B

When Lively & Ferguson Drug Store closed, the principals came to work at Crouch's.

In 1977, Whit built McMinnville Drug Center and operated it along with Crouch's. Charles Marsh graduated from pharmacy school in 1972 and worked at City Drug Store for 10 years. In 1985, he bought into McMinnville Drug Center and did become a full partner to Whit. Whit fully retired in 2012. Charles is now partially retired and intends full retirement in 2019.

Both Lea and Margaret worked in MDC while growing up and in college. Lea went to MTSU for undergrad (bachelor's degree) and then earned a doctorate of pharmacy degree from UT-Memphis in 2004 and has been at MDC since.

Margaret earned her bachelor's degree from UT-Knoxville and a doctorate of pharmacy degree from the Virginia Medical College (now VCU) in 2007. Lea and Margaret will become full partners in MDC.

Lea and her husband have a 9-year-old daughter, while Margaret has three children ages 9, 7, and 4. Lea's husband is the finance manager at Kidd Ford while Margaret's husband is a partner at McMinnville Physical Therapy. Both Lea and Margaret are golfers, carrying on that tradition from Whit and Charles.

Lea is a member of Noon Rotary and the Ladies Golf Association at McMinnville Country Club. Margaret is an associate member of Junior Auxiliary and a member of the new McMinnville Young Professionals Club. Lea attends First United Methodist Church and Margaret goes to St. Matthew's Episcopal Church.

I asked Lea and Margaret what makes MDC different and why should people do business there. The highlight response is "we care." MDC is operated as a very personal business where customers and employees are on a first-name basis.

Lea and Margaret call themselves "doers." They

will go to lengths to serve customers with their own brand of personal accommodation. They will take the time to render a variety of services, which will be noted below. They will offer medical and drug advisories to guide customers.

They will act as an intermediary between customers and doctors. They will help address high co-pays to benefit their customers. Working with doctors, they will try to change meds to lower co-pays, change the type of medicine (i.e. pill to liquid, etc.), change the quantities, and even lower the price if need be. They will advise customers if it will save money to purchase drugs with cash rather than run orders through customer insurance.

Eighty-five to 90 percent of their prescriptions are with generic drugs vs. brand names. Lea and Margaret noted they live in Warren County and know their customers.

Unique services offered by McMinnville Drug Center include the following:

1. Specialty compounding (and/ or mixing/ blending) their own prescription drugs; this allows for the meds to be "fine tuned" to whatever a customer best needs including whether in pill form or liquid, etc. This works well for hormones and is well suited for animal medicines.

2. MDC offers a dietary program which caters to customers who are diabetic.

3. MDC offers a bubble packing service which can contain up to 31 days of specific customer drugs to be taken over that period of time whereby the drugs are labeled for when to take them. This can even be broken down to a.m., p.m., and mid-day doses for a given day. This service is offered at no charge and is particularly well suited for seniors. This can be for one pill a day or many.

4. MDC offers free delivery during a work day within the city of McMinnville for any of its customers. Staff also makes after-hour deliveries within Warren County "on their way home."

5. MDC has an auto-

mated drug dispensing and labeling machine with 120 canisters that can process a popular prescription in seconds. Aside from this machine, the average time to fill a prescription at MDC is 10 to 15 minutes for someone walking in. MDC is fully staffed to render fast customer service.

6. MDC is involved in a pilot program with Medicare and Medicaid customers whereby they telephone 25 people every day to discuss their meds, health concerns, vital signs, drug usage, vaccinations, any concerns, etc. The objective of this service is to reduce the need for hospital stays over the longer term.

7. Every fall (September), MDC has a Medicare specialist come to the store to discuss options with their customers with Medicare. This has been very popular to clear up confusion that can occur with Medicare.

8. MDC offers full service with vaccinations including shots for flu, shingles, pneumonia, tetanus and even travel vaccines for people going

overseas. MDC does over 1,000 plus flu shots each flu season and will come to a customer's place of business for flu clinics.

9. MDC specialty services include DME billing, wheel chairs, vitamins, ostomy supplies, compression stockings, mastectomy supplies, prostheses and supplies, shower chairs, nebulizers, suture kits, etc.

Interwoven with all these services is the personal attention Lea and Margaret identify as their company strengths. MDC currently serves medication for other facilities in Warren County.

Operating hours at McMinnville Drug Center are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The website is www.mcminnville-drugcenter.com.

Business Roundtable congratulates the new second-generation owners of McMinnville Drug Center. Their commitment to excellence in customer service is duly noted. Best wishes for much success to Lea Street and Margaret Sutton.

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