

COMMUNITY PHARMACY FOR THE FUTURE

Bemis Drug Pharmacy

Although his dad Walt tried to steer him to a different career - he's a pharmacist himself - Mike Bemis really likes being a pharmacist. "He really tried to talk us all out of it," said Bemis, whose younger brother Kirk and a sister also became pharmacists.

A Colorado native, Mike's parents bought a motel in Kimball, NE., in 1976 and the seeds of today's Bemis Drug were probably planted then in the small western Nebraska community just a few miles from the Wyoming border and not much further from the Colorado line.

Bemis, who describes his teenage relationship with his now best friend brother as tumultuous, ("Mom and Dad actually moved me into a room in the motel in my senior year because we couldn't get along in the same house") headed to Laramie and ultimately the University of Wyoming pharmacy program. The journey for a 17-year-old was much closer than the 450 mile trek east to Nebraska's pharmacy college and more affordable.

Graduating in 1991, Bemis spent his last semester rotation in Casper, Wyo., where he stayed for a while and went to work for Kmart.

Then there was that day - marked forever in his mind. It started like many others. But 12 hours and 400 filled prescriptions later - "it was just me, a tech and a clerk" - Mike Bemis decided the life of a chain store pharmacist was not his forte.

He headed to Lusk and spent three years working for the independent there. He and his brother - "he is 10 months younger, but looks older" Bemis slips in - worked together in the Wheatland pharmacy. At that point, Bemis knew he was an entrepreneur at heart and that his future was in community pharmacy.

When his parents needed more help, he returned to Kimball, working for one of the two independent pharmacies where his father had worked in the intervening years. Bemis opened his own home oxygen durable medical equipment business in the same building. When one pharmacy owner decided to sell, Bemis made an offer and it was accepted. But the other pharmacy owner said he "didn't want to compete against me."



"In a 30 day period I owned two pharmacies," Bemis said. In April this year he merged both pharmacies into one. Both owners ended up working part-time for Bemis, who welcomes the help as he settles the role of owner.

"It's a challenge everyday," Bemis said. "I'm very customer-service oriented and I enjoy taking care of people."

Brother Kirk owns Rawhide Drug in Lusk where both once worked together and also is an RxPlus member. Bemis cites RxPlus as a valuable "source of information and networking," values the wholesale contract and lists its strong political involvement as important to his business.

Bemis is undaunted by the prospect of community pharmacy's future, although he knows "accreditation is coming. In some states you already have to be accredited just to do Medicaid prescriptions."

Accrediting his DME business, however, gives him perspective on the issue and "I can do everything from that business," he said. Sometimes he's frustrated by the changes and new regulations and being an owner involves more paperwork. "But it's just one more challenge."

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RxPlus Mission

RxPlus Pharmacies, Inc. exists for the economic, professional, and political benefit of community pharmacy and the health and well being of the community

If you find any errors or omissions, or if you have any comments regarding the Website, you can fill out the email form following the "Contact Info" button of the homepage!



President's Message

"There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction." - John F. Kennedy

How true this statement is for each of our businesses, yet how many times do we think we should do something as the days, weeks, and months go by while we sit passively and our competitors come at us? We have so many opportunities to take advantage of at RxPlus. Learn immunizations, sell diabetic shoes, participate in the "Rx Advantage Discount" program, try suggestions in the Profit Minute, get involved in governmental affairs, use the RxPlus vendors and most importantly use the vast knowledge of the RxPlus office.

If you have not already committed to attending the RxPlus Annual Meeting in August, I would like to encourage you to do so. As I have said before, the ideas you pick up from your peers will more than pay for the cost of attendance. Also attending the meeting will give you insight to what the Board of Directors have been working on this past year. Our organization is as strong as the unity of the members. If our membership fragments, our organization and influence fails. I urge you to take action and participate in the programs that RxPlus has developed as they fit into your business model. I wish you continued success and look forward to seeing you in August!

Executive Director's Message

It's hard to believe that our annual meeting will be in two weeks. Where does the time go? We have a full schedule that will provide you with ten hours of Continuing Education. For those who are planning on getting into immunizations, we are providing a certification class that will give you 20.5 hours of CE. We are pleased to again have participation of students from NCPA Chapters of the University of Colorado and University of Wyoming. This is a great opportunity to show-case independent community pharmacy. They are very excited to be able to attend our meeting and look forward to meeting RxPlus members. The students will be helping run our silent auction, our fun raiser for our scholarship foundation, as well as helping the staff throughout the meeting.

We will start the weekend with our annual golf tournament at Coal Creek golf course in Louisville, just down the road from the Westin in Westminster where the RxPlus meeting will be held. This is always a good time. We have a great mix of golfers, from beginners to the more experienced. Either way, we all have fun! After the golf tournament we will return to the hotel for the cocktail reception and vendor exhibits. This is a great opportunity to see what our vendors have to offer and to thank them for their support. Without their support our annual meeting would not be possible. Following the cocktail hour and exhibit show will be dinner, followed by casino/bingo night.

The next morning starts at 7:30 AM with breakfast and registration, followed by five hours of CE. We will have a working lunch with the DEA discussing issues and updates for a full hour and CE. Our annual membership meeting will be next on the agenda, where we will vote on the new board of director positions and discuss everything from our financials to goals and objectives for the upcoming year. We will end the meeting with presentations from our wholesale partners. Following the presentations will be our cocktail reception and vendor exhibits, providing an opportunity for some quality networking. During dinner we will have a live auction and announce the winners of the silent auction. Last year we were able to raise over \$12,000 for our scholarship foundation. With your help, we are hoping to exceed that number this year. Our vendors have provided some excellent prizes for the auction. The finale will be Eric Kand, a hypnotist, that astounded the audience two years ago. You have to see it to believe it.

Sunday is our final hours of continuing education. We hope to see you at our meeting. It really is a great opportunity to get the CE you need and have fun doing it.

Thanks to the support of our vendors, we can offer all of this at no charge to our members.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS REPORT

Federal Issues:

On July 14, House Democrat leaders introduced the America's Affordable Health Choices Act 2009. Pharmacy language was included in the bill to exclude diabetic testing supplies, canes and crutches from DMEPOS accreditation requirement for Medicare Part B, waived the surety bond requirement, and set the federal upper limit for generics at 130% of AMP. AMP has been defined to exclude rebates, discounts, or other price concessions to pharmacies. It also excludes pricing for PBMs, HMOs insurers, or mail order pharmacies not opened to all members of the public NCPA is lobbying to get the payment to a rate higher than 130%. The Senate version has yet to be introduced at the time of printing.

Colorado Interim Activities:

The legislative session is over, but that does not mean legislators aren't busy. Thirteen committees have been established to investigate a wide range of issues. We are in discussions with the chairs of two committees, the Health Care Task Force (HCTF), and the Pinnacle Assurance Committee (workers compensation provider of last resort in Colorado) about PBM transparency and possible legislation for the next session.

The Department of Health Care Policy and Finance informed the HCTF that Governor Ritter has asked all state departments to submit plans for cutting spending for the current budget year by 10%. We have no doubt that additional cuts will be proposed for all providers, including pharmacy.

Wyoming:

The coalition for Wyoming Insurance Solutions for Health C-WISH is a citizen organization that is looking for ways to improve health insurance for the citizens of the state. One of the issues they are looking at is PBM regulation. RxPlus board member Jim Massengill suggested that C-WISH member Greta Morrow contact Governmental Affairs Director Brad Young at RxPlus about PBM legislation. Brad attended a C-WISH meeting on June 17th at the Cheyenne public library. Those attending the meeting watched a DVD video entitled: "Myths, Lies, and Deception: The Truth Behind The High Cost Of Prescription Drugs" presented by Dr. Mark Riley, a nationally recognized PBM expert. Also in attendance were lobbyists from PBMs and PhRMA. The PBMs are fighting back, as we expected. They presented their side to C-WISH on July 15th. We are in the process of helping C-WISH build a case for PBM legislation in Wyoming. Pharmacists in Wyoming have an ally with the C-WISH organization, and RxPlus plans to play a strong role in helping organize the legislative effort. It will take a strong push, not just by pharmacists, but also your patients and the business community.

Remember to stop by the Governmental Affairs table to talk with Brad Young. Legislative affairs and politics have an ever-increasing impact on our business, and Brad is our contact with legislators and agencies. Contributions to our political committee help maintain our strength at the Capitol, so please contribute!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

RxPlus Pharmacies, Inc.

3660 Wadsworth Blvd.
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
Phone 303-463-4875
Fax 303-463-4880

RxPlus Pharmacies, Inc. exists for the economic, professional, and political benefit of community pharmacy and the health and well being of the community

Staff

Grant Kinn
Executive Director

Kathy Muller
Director of Operations

Cathie Clemons
Accounting Manager

Mike Mitchell
Director of Business Development

Brad Young
Director of Government Affairs

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Abt's Pharmacy - Julesburg, CO - new owners
Melissa and Travis Bumgardner
Antonito Pharmacy - Antonito, CO
Beatties's Healthmart Pharmacy - Erie, CO
Coe Pharmacy - Cody, WY
Palace Pharmacy - Lander, WY

CLASSIFIEDS (ALSO SEE WWW.RXPLUS.COM)

Full Time Pharmacist

Needed for long term care in Loveland, CO Must possess current state license, strong mgmt. & leadership skills and the desire to offer superior customer service. Previous experience in long term care a plus.

2 Pharmacy Technicians

Looking for 2 Pharmacy Technicians. Looking for 1 tech. to float between our 10 stores and 1 tech. for our retail store in Johnstown. Both positions are full-time (40hrs) with benefits, competitive pay and an excellent working environment. CPhT is preferred but not required. Previous Exp. & superior customer service required.

To apply for above 2 ads, send a resume and cover letter to:
lcalkins@gooddaypharmacy.com

Or Fax to (970)461-4042

Pharmacy for Sale

Well established full service Pharmacy, Sporting Goods, & Liquor Store. Enjoy great outdoors, close to excellent hunting/fishing. Located in Casper WY.
Contact Floyd Harnigal
(307) 205-1917

Compounding Tech

Good Day Pharmacy in Fort Collins, CO has an opportunity for an experienced compounding technician. Contact Vicki @

(970) 461-1975

Full or P/T Pharmacist

Salary and benefits are negotiable.

B&B Pharmacy, Brush CO.

Contact Dave Brunner
(970)842-2416

F/T or P/T Pharmacists

Pharmacy located in Monte Vista, Co. Is looking for a pharmacist to work 20 to 40 hours per week. Competitive

salary with benefits. Great hunting, fishing and skiing less than 1 hour away.

Contact Bryan Salazar @
(719) 852-9894.



