

BACK MOUNTAIN BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: FINO'S PHARMACY

Family of pharmacists remembers 50 years of service in Dallas

CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK
Dallas Post Correspondent

The early 1960s were notable years for Dominic Fino - his father died, he got married and, in 1963, he bought an historic building in the center of Dallas that has been the site of his family's business for the last 50 years.

Looking out the second floor window of the building re-built in 1894 after a fire, Fino tells the story.

"I remember my mother wanted to drive around with me to see the building because she had worked for Col. Reynolds. She lived in Wilkes-Barre and would take the train to Dallas center where the Reynolds (family) would pick her up at this store."

But Fino, 78, whose father Pasquale (Patrick) Fino owned a thriving family pharmacy on Main Street in Pittston (still operated by his nephew Vincent Fino), was not impressed as he drove around the area.

"It was all farmland," Fino recalled. "There was nothing here until you came to Dallas. I wondered where all the business was going to come from and where all the people were. I was not sure. I wanted to branch out

on my own."

He put aside some of his fear when an area drug supplier from Scranton offered to show him past stores receipts for drug supplies in Dallas and gave him backing in the form of credit toward drugs and supplies.

The building Fino chose in the center of Dallas had been operating as a drug store since before 1913 and was owned by the Kuehn family, which lived on nearby on Church Street. Fino bought the building from the Kuehns.

Other early pharmacists in Dallas that Fino mentions were C.H Hall, Walter Harter, George Norton and a man named Roberts. These names, along with Fino's, also appear in the D.A. Waters, "History of Dallas."

Fino bought the two-story structure that Toby's Creek runs under and continued to accommodate meetings of the local chapter of the Odd Fellows International on the second floor. The meetings are still held there today.

And so for the past 50 years, Fino, with help from Bob Wilson, Polly Bobersky and Sister Erzam Shavanel, a Sister of Mercy, his family and many others from the

community, the Finos have dispensed drugs and, at one time, ran a soda fountain in the building.

"In those days, every pharmacy had a soda fountain," mentions Fino.

The soda fountain is gone, some of the antiques remain, but the competition is fierce in an industry that, while still growing under the weight of the baby boomer generation, has seen four or five new super drug stores open in the Back Mountain. Yet, Fino's continues to deliver prescriptions to homes and offers an in-store credit line to customers.

Dominic Sr. is now semi-retired and his sons, Michael and Dominic Jr., help with the family business. His granddaughter, Sarah Brassinger, also works there. Fino also has a daughter, Lee Anne.

Michael Fino, 40, who grew up washing 5-gallon glass bottles that held cough syrup and tonics for the stomach, is the third generation of Fino men to have graduated from the PA College of Pharmacy and Science in Philadelphia. (now called the University of the Sciences). The first was his grandfather,

Pasquale (Patrick) Fino, who was originally from Philadelphia.

"My father and I went to my father's 50th reunion - there were only two women in that class - and my 15th reunion. We had some of the same teachers, including the man who invented Trident gum," says the younger Fino.

Michael Fino met his wife Mary Beth while in pharmacy school and they have three children, Ava, Mia and Michael.

He tells the story of the man who came in the pharmacy, put his hat on the counter and asked for a prescription for pink-eye. "I gave him something for it but he said, 'No, this isn't for me, it's for my cow.' I told him it would take a while to figure that one out."

Serving the community for all these years, the younger Fino says. "It's been humbling - the community has been good to us and we really appreciate it."

A member of Gate of Heaven Church and resident of Dallas and married to Ruth Fino, Dom Fino advises, "Don't look back over your shoulder, do the right thing, just do what you think is right."

That's been his mantra through life. It seems to have worked.



Submitted photo
Dominic Fino, pictured here in 1967, has owned and operated his family pharmacy in the center of Dallas for 50 years.



Semi-retired pharmacist and local business owner Dominic Fino sits in the second floor building of an historic building he bought 50 years ago and recalls his career in Dallas.

Photos by CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK | FOR THE DALLAS POST

Walking in memory of Corey for a good cause

Participants in the Second Annual Corey Ehret Walk walked in memory of Corey who lost his life shortly after graduating from Dallas High School, for the Mini Thon 4 Diamond Fund and for the Corey Ehret Student of the Quarter Scholarship. The event,



Photos by BILL TARUTIS | FOR THE DALLAS POST
Participants in the Corey Ehret Walk make their way to the stands at Mountaineer Field.



ABOVE: Dallas Mini Thon member Ashley Strazdus lights a paper lantern on the track at Mountaineer Field before the start of the Second Annual Corey Ehret Walk.

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sponsored by the Dallas High School Mini Thon Club, allowed participants to purchase and launch lanterns, along with luminary candles, in memory of loved ones currently suffering or who have suffered with cancer.



A photograph of Corey Ehret is displayed on a table as Dallas Mini Thon members sell paper lanterns.

Back Mountain Police Association will collect coats

SUSAN DENNEY
Dallas Post Correspondent

Have the kids outgrown last year's coats? Or do you have a closetful of hats and gloves you don't wear?

The Back Mountain Police Association wants your items. The group, which is celebrating its 55th anniversary, is looking for donations to its annual Warm Coats for Kids Drive.

The event will be held from noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 10 at the Back Mountain Shopping Center in Shavertown.

According to David Dembowski, public relations representative for the BMPA, the group has collected and given away over 1,000 coats

since beginning the project in 2009. Dembowski said that coats, gloves, scarves and hats are acceptable if they are lightly used.

The Back Mountain Police Association includes representatives from not only local police departments but also from the state game commission, the fishing and boating commission and the state police. Since 2008, the group has added community outreach programs to its activities.

The group hasn't decided yet which charitable organization will receive the goods once they are sorted. Dembowski said that different charities have benefited in the past.

Dembowski said that, in spite of the recent nice weather, there will soon be a need for warm coats. This program will get coats to those who need them.

"There is poverty on this side of the river, too," Dembowski added.

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