

Pharmacy revives charm of profession

Wellness Rx answers village's medical needs



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TANNERSVILLE — After more than a decade — likely to have felt like an eternity for some — a deep-rooted need for a pharmacy has been fulfilled on the mountaintop. The new shop Wellness Rx, located within the historic Astor House on Main Street, brings back the old charm of the profession.

The pharmacy is unique in its offerings of clinical services and introducing evidence-based medicine to a wide spectrum of holistic products.

Contrary to the corporate approach, Ed Ullmann, the pharmacy's owner and manager, will engage patient-centered care and acknowledge customers' needs individually. Ullmann said the pharmacy is a step forward in localizing the amenities necessary to keep families on the mountaintop, instead of traveling to locations as far as Catskill for pharmaceutical items.

Since the advent of this project, Ullmann said the intent has been to bridge a relationship with local doctors in the area. An interesting challenge that lies ahead will be catering to the vast array of demographics brought to the Town of Hunter, Ullmann said, ranging from locals to tourists. "We want this to be a tourist attraction for anyone who is coming to the Catskills and to Tannersville," Ullmann said. The holistic side of the venue features vast collections of local lotions, soaps, oils and, moreover, honey made from local apiaries.

"I'm a huge supporter of raw honey," Ullmann said. "I could give three hours worth of lectures on what I've seen from the success of raw honey."

The history of pharmacy, Ullmann said, started off more natural than today's version. The pharmacy's integrative health layout provides a little something for everyone. Prior to cutting the taut, green ribbon Saturday, Ullmann thanked those who made the pharmacy's construction a catalytic process including Hunter Foundation Executive Director Anne Jakubowski.

"We want to have people come here and say, 'wow, I was treated right and with respect and knowledge.' The Hunter Foundation a non-profit, in which its mission is to bring economic stability to the mountaintop. The organization has played a key role in rehabilitating over 100 homes and 35 businesses in Hunter and its surrounding areas. After the years of town residents traveling for pharmaceuticals, Jakubowski said the store is a big deal for the area. "We want to keep people in the community," Jakubowski said. "We're absolutely serving a need for locals as well as tourists, which is important." Since the store opened, a coexistence has already been established with Ullmann and Robert Schneider, a doctor on the mountaintop, Jakubowski said.

Ullmann and his wife Patty have lived outside Phoenicia since 1973. He worked at the old Tannersville Pharmacy while attending graduate school and currently serves on the Dean's Advisory Council at Albany College of Pharmacy. Looking forward, Ullmann hopes to expand the pharmacy into a training center for pharmacy students, work with the college on research projects and provide a community space for educational programs. "We have big plans here. There's an elegance and we're going to increase that," Ullmann said. "It's our goal to be looked upon as a national model for how pharmacies can have a different face in the changing world."

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