

51 Years in Pharmacy

Al Kolodiej

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Doug Lemmon reached out and asked me to write reflecting on my career in pharmacy after I graduated from Purdue.

My life in pharmacy actually started before Purdue when I applied and received my Pharmacy Apprentice license when I was 18. My family was farm oriented, and when my grandfather heard I wanted to be a pharmacist, his response was, "good, you will be warm in winter and cool in summer." Got it.

After graduating from Purdue in 1976, I went to work as a retail pharmacist for an independent pharmacy in LaPorte County. I also met the love of my life, Barbara, and we raised a family of three kids.

But chain stores were getting big and expanding back in the 80s. I went with Walgreen, and the rest is history. Ultimately, I worked 46 years with the Walgreen Co.

Pharmacy like every other industry has been dramatically impacted by the internet, government and insurance companies. There were no computer systems involved in filling prescriptions when I started. Yes, the pharmacist did compound medications and sold what they made to the public.

Now the pharmacy world is paperless and regulated from many directions. The marketing of pharmaceutical care has changed with telehealth, vaccines and family planning being new developments.

I retired the end of January 2022. Looking back like any other endeavor it had its ups and downs, hilarious and somber moments. I gave my family a good life growing up. My three children all graduated from Purdue and are doing well. That is what is important to me.

I always enjoyed going to work. People needed care on many levels. The pace and intensity of healthcare today affects all patients and providers. I always prayed that I had a positive effect on the people I encountered in a day.

I'm looking forward to answering the question, what is next after my pharmacy career? The possibilities are many. But I'm confident that I will continue to be "warm in winter, and cool in summer."

I hope our travels cross and best regards to the Stellar Brother Family.

The Brother from another mother

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Thank You Purdue & Stellar Brothers!



A Proud Purdue Moment

*My wife, daughters and son-in-law at our youngest daughter's graduation from Purdue.
All 3 of my daughters are proud Purdue graduates.*



CUBS WIN!!! CUBS WIN!!! CUBS WIN!!!

With my 3 daughters at Wrigley Field