

Georgia Pharmacy

October/November 2020

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Inside:

2020 AWARDS

**VIRTUAL
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Georgia Pharmacy

October/November 2020

Inside:

2020 AWARDS

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CONTENTS

- 2**
Prescript
The Rest of the Story
- 3**
New Members
Welcome and thank you for your support.
- 4**
What's Happening at GPhA
We celebrate Pharmacy Techs.
- 5**
Keep in Touch!
Who does what at GPhA — and how to reach us.
- 6**
PharmPAC
Investing in PharmPAC is investing in your practice.
- 8**
VIRCON2020
We present a photographic story of the virtual convention.
- 10**
2020 Georgia Pharmacy Association Awards
Congratulations to our award recipients.
- 12**
BTS VIRCON
Take a peek behind the scenes at the convention.
- 14**
Despite the Law, PBM Steering Continues
Practical advice on what to do about it.
- 16**
Back to School
Student POV: Rotations.
- 17**
Covid-19 Testing During the Pandemic
Savannah Cunningham, student Pharmacist at Mercer, shares what it's like.
- 18**
Ready. Aim. Phire! Was a Blast!
Pun intended - It really was a blast!
- 20**
Obituary
GPhA Mourns the Passing of Jim Bartling.
- 21**
Ruth Fuller
The First Female Pharmacist in Carroll County.
- 24**
Postscript
The 2020 GPhA Convention... a Virtual Reality

THANK YOU TO OUR CONVENTION SPONSORS!



Georgia Pharmacy

The Journal of the Georgia Pharmacy Association

Georgia Pharmacy magazine is the official publication of the Georgia Pharmacy Association.

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Georgia Pharmacy is distributed as a regular membership service, paid for with membership dues. Single issues are \$10 per issue domestic and \$20 international.

POSTAL

Georgia Pharmacy (ISSN 1075-6965) is published bi-monthly by GPhA, 6065 Barfield Road NE, Suite 100 Sandy Springs, GA, 30328. Periodicals postage paid at Atlanta, GA and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Georgia Pharmacy magazine, 6065 Barfield Road NE, Suite 100, Sandy Springs, GA 30328.



From the CEO

The Rest of the Story



BOB COLEMAN

Unless your head has been buried in the sand, even as a busy pharmacist, you've likely been hearing a lot of information related to the Covid-19 vaccine. No, I'm not talking about when it's going to be available, because somehow, along with masks, availability has become a political

topic subject to the whims of the media and politicians. What I'm referring to is what some have been calling the other half of the equation, that is, the distribution of the vaccine, which is often being left out of the conversation.

In a recent New York Times article, J. Stephen Morrison, Senior Vice President of the Center for Strategic and International Studies said [vaccines] "...have stark temperature demands that will constrain access and delivery." Tinglong Dai, a professor of operations management, in an article in USA today stated, "It's just incredible. I think the vaccine supply chain is one of the most mind-boggling complex supply chains ever built."

As of this writing (which means there is at least a 50% chance it will have changed by the time you're reading this!), the Covid-19 vaccination program will start with the CDC. Pharmacies wishing to participate will register with the CDC and show proof they have the necessary space, equipment, and trained personnel to participate in the program. It also appears they will register with the state as well.

When an order is placed, it will most likely be through the Department of Health, who will verify that the facility is approved by the CDC. The state will then approve the order, forward it to the CDC, who will then coordinate with McKesson for fulfillment. That is unless the order is for the Pfizer product. For the Pfizer vaccine, orders will go straight to Pfizer from the CDC, and be shipped from Pfizer. And that's just the simple part.

Recall there are dozens of vaccines in various stages of testing currently. Whether or not they require special requirements for distribution remains to be seen. And speaking of special requirements, in case you haven't had the opportunity to

keep up with some of the requirements on just the two vaccines that are in stage three testing, here's a brief primer:

Moderna

- Can be stored at normal refrigerator temperatures for up to two weeks
- Once at room temperature, it must be used within 6 hours
- 10 dose vial
- Requires two doses 28 days apart

Pfizer

- Can be at normal refrigerator temperatures for up to 48 hours
- Once at room temperature, it must be used within 6 hours
- Stores at -94 degrees F
- Only shipped in large doses (195 vials in a box = 975 doses. Each container can hold 5 boxes or 4,875 doses.)
- Requires two doses 21 days apart

The Pfizer vaccine (and potential others) require dry ice to keep it at its proper storage temperature. Unfortunately, there is a severe shortage of dry ice in the US today. Dry ice is made from CO₂ during the production of ethanol. As Americans are traveling much less due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the need for ethanol to add to gasoline has greatly diminished, thus a dry ice shortage. Based on the information above, US military and federal contractors are expected to play a role in distribution of the vaccines. It is likely that large chains, such as Walgreens and CVS will partner with the CDC. Due to short shelf life of at least the two current vaccines, strict scheduling for vaccination appointments and logistics will also be necessary. [i](#)

Bob Coleman is Chief Executive Officer of the Georgia Pharmacy Association.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

By Mary Ritchie, GPhA Director of Membership

Adrian Backus, Lawrenceville
Christy Stayer, Locust Grove
Chelley Williams, Douglasville

Academy of Clinical and Health-System Pharmacists

Suzanne Poole, Bogart
Debra Gray, Commerce
Kathryn Arvo MacKenzie, Atlanta

Academy of Employee Pharmacists

Joy Rogers, Gainesville
Kevin Philippart, Atlanta
Zarina Najib, Newnan
Racha Khamis, Alpharetta
Jamie Phipps, Marietta
Chelsey Lewis, Marietta
Clint Sanders, Toccoa
Siraje Yusuf, Lawrenceville

Academy of Independent Pharmacists

Carey Vaughan, Buckhead

APT-Academy of Pharmacy Technicians

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Hannah Buchanan, Griffin
Jennifer Thomason, Austell
Anita Carol Conner, Marietta
Edward Harley, Marietta
Rachel Matta, Augusta
Brianna Melson, Tucker
DeAunte Freeman, Lawrenceville
Devon Spires, Quitman
Rhonda Gray, Valdosta
Lexxi Clements, Barney
Krystal DeLoach, Statesboro
JeKerria Dorsey, Kathleen

Anaya Jackson, Macon
Bradley Hoover, Pembroke
James Royals, Griffin
Michael Cane, Clarkston
Charlese Yates, Augusta
NaTasha Norman, Scottdale
Miranda Spahn, Barnesville



Thomas Sherrer,
Poole's Pharmacy,
Marietta



These are the newest members of GPhA's President's Circle — people who recruit their fellow pharmacists, technicians, academics, and others to become part of the association. Recruit a member and join!

Nelson Bedingfield, Cadwell
David Clements, Sr., Griffin
Emily Durham, Cumming
Jimmy England, Valdosta
Bridget Hogan, Macon
Drew Miller, Griffin
Ben Ross, Statesboro
Thomas Sherrer, Marietta
Lawana Walker, Evans

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CALENDAR



OCTOBER IS AMERICAN PHARMACIST MONTH



OCTOBER

Sunday, October 4
**NACDS Community
Pharmacy based Point-of-
Care Testing Certificate
Program**

October 15
**Georgia Pharmacy
Technician Day**

October 20
**National Pharmacy
Technician Day**

October 23-25
**GPhA Board of Directors
Retreat & BoD Meeting in
Savannah, GA**

Saturday, October 24
**Tech U CE and Topgolf
Event for Pharmacy
Technicians**

NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 8
**APhA's The Pharmacist
and Patient-Centered
Diabetes Care Certification
Training Program**

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 6
**APhA's Pharmacy-Based
Immunization Delivery
Certificate Training
Program**

Thursday, December 10
**GPhA's Board of Directors
Meeting**

FEBRUARY 2021

February 3
GPhA Board Meeting

February 11
**Day at the Dome (Mercer
and South) Virtual**

February 23
**Day at the Dome (UGA and
PCOM) Virtual**

APRIL 2021

April 15
GPhA Board Meeting

JUNE 2021

June 17-20
**2021 Georgia Pharmacy
Convention at the Omni in
Amelia Island, Florida**



**Breanna Spires, CPhT
Smith's Pharmacy
McRae, Georgia**

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Georgia Pharmacy
ASSOCIATION

Investing in PharmPAC is investing in your practice.

The following pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, students, and others have joined GPhA's PharmPAC for the 2020 calendar year.

The contribution levels are based on investment through August 31, 2020.

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*As of August 31, 2020



Mahlon Davidson,
PharmPAC, Chairman

VIRCON2020



VIRCON2020



And the winner is...

Atlanta, Georgia: On September 10-12, 2020, the Georgia Pharmacy Association (GPhA) held its annual awards ceremony at its first ever Georgia Pharmacy Virtual Convention. Chris Thurmond, PharmD, outgoing 2019-2020 GPhA Board President, Village Drug Shop, Athens, Georgia, presented most of the awards.



Lance Boles, RPh, MBA, Hartwell Drugs, Hartwell, Georgia, was presented the GPhA President's Award and was personally selected by Chris Thurmond to receive

the honor. When asked why he chose Boles, Thurmond said, "...his wisdom and leadership made me understand and believe that the work of GPhA was important and necessary for the survival of this great profession. If you know Lance, he is one of the nicest people you will ever meet and has a knack for developing friendships and professional relationships. His mentorship has been invaluable for me both personally and professionally and I can think of no better recipient for this award."



Kevin Florence, RPh, ADD Drug Store, Athens, Georgia, was presented with the GPhA Service Award for outgoing board members. He will continue his service as a member

of the AIP board. After announcing the award, Thurmond said, "On behalf of the membership, the GPhA Board, and myself, GPhA's loss is AIP's gain. We thank you for all of your contributions while on the GPhA board and look forward to working with you for many years in the future."



Chris Thurmond, PharmD, was presented the GPhA President's Pin, by GPhA Immediate Past President, Tim Short, RPh. The President's Pin signifies and is

presented in honor of the GPhA president's service to the organization. Short told Thurmond, "You've been a credit to our members and to the pharmacy profession. Wear it proudly."

Drew Miller, RPh, Wynn's Pharmacy, Griffin Georgia, was presented with the GPhA Bowl of Hygeia Award for his over 40 years of service and leadership in his community, in various practice settings, including chain, hospital, and independent pharmacy. During the presentation, Chris Thurmond repeated one of Miller's most infamous quotes, "In Georgia, we like biscuits." Miller has a knack for breaking complex topics into simple sound bites. He was explaining the individual attention required to make lifestyle changes to the Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board. "I took to heart, get into politics or get out of pharmacy," said Miller. "As a pharmacist, you either get it or you don't."



Sujal Patel, PharmD, Guardian Pharmacy, Kennesaw, Georgia, was presented the GPhA Mal T. Anderson Outstanding Region President Award for his service as Region Seven President. Sujal became involved as a student pharmacist at Mercer, at GPhA's Day at the Dome, and became interested in advocacy and recommended getting involved. "It's a great way to see the big picture and to open opportunities for yourself that you may have not had before, and to see how you can better help your community," shared Patel.



Deborah Thurmond, was presented the GPhA Pharmacist's Mate Award by Rita Short, (mate of Immediate Past President, Tim Short). Short told the virtual audience, "The president's mate is quick to adjust their plans or offer ideas or suggestions in support of their mate. While away, the spouse may take on additional responsibilities with business and of course, holding down the fort at home. With cheer, confidence, and courage the mate offers advice and encouragement to your GPhA President. At this time, GPhA members would like to thank Deborah for joining Chris in the adventure to remember."



Also recognized during the convention:



Nikki Adams Bryant, PharmD, Adams Family Pharmacy, Preston, Georgia, was presented the NASPA Excellence in Innovation

Award, by Rebecca Snead, EVP/CEO, National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA), for demonstrated innovation in her practice. The award is sponsored by Upshire-Smith Laboratories. Snead quoted Bryant, "You need to meet people where they are." Bryant stated that she never intended to be innovative. "I simply identified patient needs, gaps in therapy, and put practices in place that would address these issues."



William Huang, PharmD, MS MTM, Atlanta, Georgia, was awarded the GPhA Academy of Employee Pharmacists (AEP) Outstanding Member of

the Year Award. The award was presented by Hannah Head, PharmD, Kroger Health, Atlanta, Georgia. Head said to Huang, "Thank you for always being willing to help with AEP initiatives and for being such a positive voice for employee pharmacists." Huang was both surprised and happy about the award. He said with a smile, "I was surprised when the package arrived. It was really heavy and I didn't remember ordering anything!" (Thank you Amazon for changing the world.)



Jennifer Shannon, PharmD, BCPS, Lily's Pharmacy, Johns Creek, Georgia, was presented the Joseph Mengoni, Jr., Independent Pharmacist of the Year Award

by the GPhA Academy of Independent Pharmacy (AIP). In 2013, Shannon and her husband Michael, opened an independent pharmacy in Johns Creek, with a goal of providing more direct patient care services in the community. Lily's pharmacy is now the preferred pharmacy provider for Emory Johns Creek Hospital and proudly provides clinical transition of care services from hospital to home for Emory Johns Creek Hospital and Emory Johns Creek Cardio-thoracic Center. Jennifer also serves as the Director of Pharmacy for Johns Creek, Alpharetta, Milton and Roswell Fire Departments. She is a passionate advocate for advancing the profession of pharmacy and serves as vice chair-

man of the legislative committee for the Georgia Pharmacy Association, in addition to being on the Good Neighbor Pharmacy National Advisory Board. Shannon said, "I am so honored. You all have shown me a path in Georgia and welcomed me with open arms."

Austin Tull, PharmD, BCPP, Cherokee Custom Script Pharmacy, Canton, Georgia, was presented the Pharmacists Mutual Distinguished Young Pharmacist Award by Hutton Madden, ChFC, Pharmacists Mutual Insurance Company. Tull graduated from Mercer in 2013, and worked at Carter's Pharmacy, where he focused on psychiatric medication and delivery and obtained a board certification in this area. "There have been countless friends and colleagues that have offered their expertise and guidance and for that, I give my deepest gratitude," said Tull.



Wes Chapman, RPh, incoming 2020-2021 President of the Georgia Pharmacy Association and owner of Chapman Healthcare Pharmacy, Vidalia, Georgia, was presented the:

McKesson Leadership Award, by Brian Thomas, VP/General Manager, McKesson. Thomas shared, "From one Bulldog to another, congratulations Wes. I look forward to working with you."



NCPA Leadership Award, by Brian Caswell, RPh, President, National Community Pharmacist Association (NCPA). Caswell said, "Not only has this year's NCPA award recipient achieved success in his business, he has leaned in, and been a part of the good fight, through his active participation in GPhA, NCPA, and PUTT."



Smith Pharmacy Kaleidoscope Award, by Wade Lewis, President of Smith Drug Company. "Smith Pharmacy has had a long standing relationship with GPhA and all the member pharmacists," shared Lewis. "This year's Kaleidoscope Award goes to a person who has worked tirelessly, over the many years, to care for others."



BTS VIRCON



BTS VIRCON



Despite the Law, PBM Steering Continues

BY GREG REYBOLD, General Counsel and VP Public Policy, GPhA

What can I do if I continue to see patient steering?

It is no secret that patient steering continues to be central practice of many PBMs with patients across the country being required to use PBM owned or affiliated pharmacies. Georgia enjoys the strongest anti-steering laws in the country with prohibitions on the PBMs, as well as on the pharmacies affiliated with PBMs and insurers. Additionally, those laws were strengthened this year to prohibit, amongst other things, steering via patients and plans being penalized financially when a patient chooses a non-affiliate in network pharmacy. These changes take effect January 1 of 2021.

However, despite Georgia's robust anti-steering laws, we continue to receive calls from pharmacies as well as patients regarding this practice and pharmacies continue to lose long-time patients as a result of PBM steering. In the event you have a patient who is being steered, below are suggested steps which can be taken.

Inform the pharmacy benefits manager of the law.

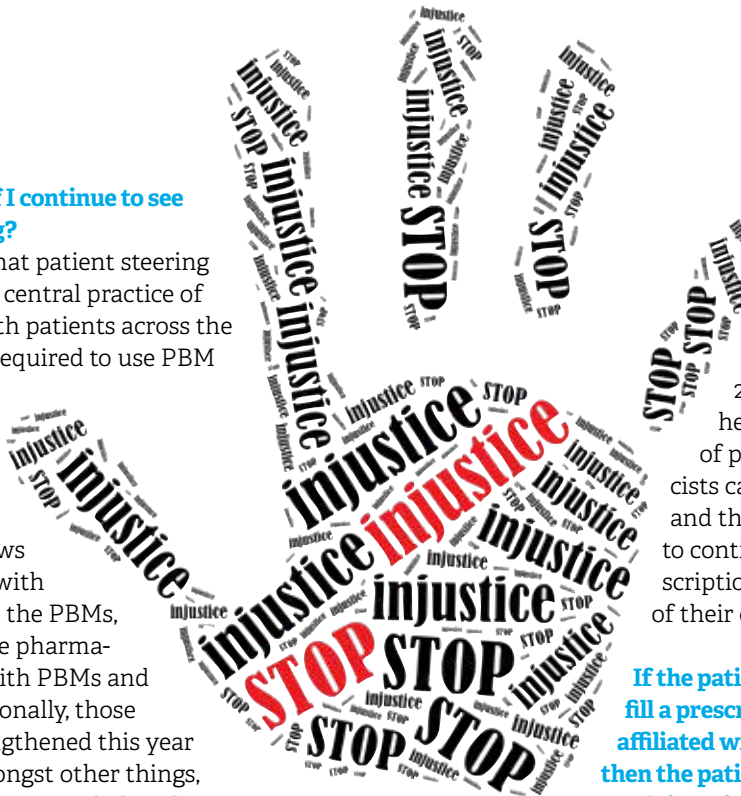
If a patient receives a communication from a PBM indicating that she or he must fill a prescription at a PBM affiliated pharmacy or a pharmacist receives such a message at the point of sale the pharmacist and/or patient can and should reach

out to the PBM and notify them of Georgia's anti-steering laws O.C.G.A. 33-64-11 and O.C.G.A. 26-4-119. We have heard many examples of patients and pharmacists calling, citing the laws, and the patient being able to continue to fill their prescriptions at the pharmacy of their choice.

If the patient is required to fill a prescription at a pharmacy affiliated with a PBM or insurer then the patient can file a complaint with the Georgia Board of Pharmacy.

First, it is important to remember that a PBM affiliated pharmacy doesn't violate the law (O.C.G.A. 26-4-119) when a PBM or insurer sends out a letter mandating the use of their affiliated pharmacy or when there is a point of sale rejection at your pharmacy counter. (The PBM or insurer may have violated another law and those complaints can be sent to the Commissioner of Insurance.) Rather, affiliate pharmacies violate the law when they have processed the referred prescription and submitted claims for payment.

If your patient receives a letter or email from a PBM ordering them to use a PBM or insurer owned pharmacy, or you receive a point of sale rejection, inform the patient of the new law and if the PBM has been informed of the law, but still



requires the patient to fill the prescription at an affiliated pharmacy:

1. Let the patient know that once they fill the prescription at the affiliate pharmacy there may have been a violation of the law and that, if they believe the law was violated, they can file a complaint with the Board of Pharmacy.
2. Provide the patient with steps for filing a complaint with the Board of Pharmacy set forth below and if there was a point of sale rejection provide them with a copy of it.
3. Maintain any records provided to you and keep track of patients you believe have been steered.
4. Do not file a complaint with the Board of Pharmacy yourself without seeking legal counsel. The touchstone to a violation is whether the affiliate pharmacy submitted a claim for payment and complaints will need to be patient specific.

Finally, these complaints will not be resolved quickly and could take many months. This is a new law with lots of nuance and the Board will take the time needed to investigate and assess complaints. We have every confidence that the Board will decide on an appropriate course of action in the event of any violation.

Suggested patient steps for filing complaint with the Board of Pharmacy

- Patients should have records reflecting the steering, such as letters, emails, or point of sale rejections from the PBM or insurer, as well as records showing they later filled a prescription at a PBM or insurer affiliated pharmacy after being steered. In the event that the steering is oral, the patient should write down as much as remembered about the call or communication, including what was said, the date and time, the name of the person he or she spoke with, the phone number used (if it's a call) and the place of the steering (if it is in person).
- Complaints can be filed with the Board of Pharmacy directly from their website at <https://gbp.georgia.gov/georgia-professional-licensure-complaint-form>
- For 'area of complaint' they can select "unprofessional conduct" or "other."

“DESPITE GEORGIA’S ROBUST ANTI-STEERING LAWS, WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE CALLS FROM PHARMACIES AS WELL AS PATIENTS REGARDING THIS PRACTICE AND PHARMACIES CONTINUE TO LOSE LONG-TIME PATIENTS AS A RESULT OF PBM STEERING.”

– Greg Reybold

- In comment section they should offer a brief explanation such as the following example: “I was ordered by my pharmacy benefits manager to use _____ pharmacy located at _____ to fill my most recent prescription. I believe I was steered to the pharmacy and that it may have been in violation of O.G.G.A. 26-4-119. I do not believe I should be forced to use a pharmacy against my will and regardless of my plan type. I believe all pharmacies should be subject to Georgia’s laws and Board of Pharmacy oversight. I have records, including communications steering me to the pharmacy as well as the pharmacy filling the prescription. Please contact me and I will provide these records to you.

Commissioner of Insurance Complaint

A patient can also file a complaint with the Commissioner of Insurance via the consumer complaint portal which can be found at <https://www.oci.ga.gov/ConsumerService/complaint-process.aspx>. The records set forth above would also be necessary for any Commissioner of Insurance investigation. It should be noted however, that while filling the prescription at a PBM affiliated pharmacy is necessary for affiliated pharmacies to be held accountable under the law, a PBM may violate the law based on its attempt to steer whether the patient fills a prescription at the PBM affiliated pharmacy or not.

Finally, it should be pointed out that PBMs often make preemption arguments to the Commissioner of Insurance when complaints are filed. [🔗](#)

STUDENT POV: ROTATIONS



Jasper Westbrook

As my fourth-year rotations rapidly approached, I was excited and eager to use the knowledge I gained in the classroom to provide meaningful patient care. My first two rotations were at a large healthcare system in Atlanta, where I was able to expand my knowledge while working with clinical pharmacists that specialized in a variety of areas. These experiences helped prepare me for my third rotation that I completed at a small hospital in rural Georgia. All of my preceptors have been exceptional at helping me grow as a student. They have increased both my confidence in providing patient care and my experiential knowledge. As a part of the Community-Based Advanced Clinical Track at Mercer, I will be completing the remainder of my rotations in rural Georgia. I'm very excited to serve patients that have limited access to healthcare and gain the skills and knowledge to become a successful pharmacist. —*Jasper Westbrook, Student Pharmacist, Mercer University*



Genell Singleton

This first year of rotations has been eye-opening in many ways, especially amidst a worldwide pandemic. It was exciting to further my involvement into the vast opportunities that the world of pharmacy has to offer, and to use knowledge gained from my first year of schooling. I had the opportunity to collaborate with preceptors and their staff and gain hands-on practical experience which is crucial in becoming a successful and hardworking pharmacist. Having finished my rotations for the summer of 2020, I've come away with improvement of my communications skills, acquired additional proficiency in building and developing a professional attitude, and had incredible experiences working with various skilled, dedicated, and inspiring individuals who were encouraging in helping me to further my career in pharmacy. Rotations have shown me that the practice of pharmacy is challenging, engaging, and has shown me the qualities needed to be highly effective. —*Genell Singleton, Student Pharmacist, South University*



Rebecca Bruning

“How are rotations going? Has COVID-19 changed things?” These are the questions students have been bombarded with as we adjust to the pandemic. As a fourth-year pharmacy student, I have been answering these questions as positively as I can. I won't lie—after 19 years of learning in a traditional classroom setting, adjusting to the online format of clinical rotations has been challenging.

I am completing my third block in Augusta, and have been exposed to multiple practice areas: community at Barney's, infectious diseases at the Charlie Norwood V.A. Medical Center, and inpatient family medicine service at the Augusta University Medical Center. Each rotation has given me unique opportunities to improve patient care doing medication reconciliations, patient counseling, and making recommendations for physicians on interdisciplinary rounds.

My goal for 2020 and beyond is flexibility, because during these unprecedented times, we must learn to embrace change. I encourage you to view this as an opportunity to prove pharmacists' valuable contribution. —*Rebecca Bruning, Student Pharmacist, University of Georgia*



Betelehem Sheferaw

When rotations are discussed, the prevailing thoughts center around being able to utilize the knowledge you've acquired, gain hands-on experience, and networking opportunities. The pandemic shifted our realities and all these became limited when many of my rotations became virtual. Five of my first six rotations are virtual, with the only live portion having been my first rotation at Piedmont Hospital. Working from home sounds like an ideal situation, but it requires a lot of adaptation and discipline! I spent my second rotation at a pharmacy benefits manager (PBM) called myMatrixx. My third rotation was at Bristol Myers Squibb (BMS), and I am currently completing an ambulatory care rotation at Northeast Georgia Physicians Group. I will have two rotations at the pharmaceutical company Bayer. While disappointed that I didn't get the opportunity to experience these rotations on-site; it became a teachable moment for me in embracing change and adapting to succeed. —*Betelehem Sheferaw, Student Pharmacist, PCOM*

COVID-19 TESTING DURING THE PANDEMIC

BY SAVANNAH CUNNINGHAM, Mercer University College of Pharmacy, Class of 2022

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has offered a unique opportunity to serve in my community as a student pharmacist and hopefully contribute to the resolution of the virus. As a rising third year student at Mercer University College of Pharmacy in Atlanta, Georgia, I have been working at Walgreens' only testing site in the state since the beginning of May. This site is a self-testing location that has an in-house rapid results lab, which means that my role can range from demonstrating testing technique to processing tests for a positive or negative result.

Many patients come through our drive through filled with apprehension about their potential results or the test itself, and it is my responsibility to ease their anxiety and walk them through the process and provide next steps. It is a privilege to be there and I feel honored to be able to help curb some of the fear that much of the world is experiencing right now.

Part of the Oath of a Pharmacist includes devoting yourself to a lifetime of service to others. No matter how frightening that may be, putting the needs of our patients above our own is part of our duty. Pharmacists have always done this but continuing to reliably show up for our communities through a global pandemic makes the commitment we have to our profession and our communities very clear.

Another element of the Oath of a Pharmacist includes advocating for changes that improve patient care, and this pandemic provides a unique opportunity here as well. This pandemic has created a huge need and opened doors for expanded roles for pharmacists across the country. Student pharmacists like myself have been able to practice skills we may have never otherwise used and will hopefully graduate more equipped to handle future unforeseen circumstances with more expertise.

I feel lucky to have been well prepared for a moment like this as a student pharmacist. At



Pictured above are Savannah Cunningham and Alex Reaves, both working at Walgreen's doing COVID-19 testing.

Mercer, our first two years include labs that focus on teaching clinical skills and patient care experiences. Much of our didactic curriculum also focuses on the importance of our contribution to healthcare as pharmacists. This training, combined with my long-time jobs as both a pharmacy technician and intern, have allowed me to confidently face the responsibility of testing patients for this virus that has brought the entire world to a standstill.

Mercer's motto is "Everyone majors in changing the world," and I think pursuing a pharmacy degree allows me to carry that out. I have a chance to make a difference in the lives of every patient I come in contact with—not just after I graduate, but right now as I work every day throughout the pandemic. As a pharmacist, I hope to continue searching for solutions to the most challenging health problems facing our world today, and I believe that this experience working on the front lines at a COVID-19 testing center will prepare me all the better for my future career and whatever I may face throughout it. [📧](#)

Ready. Aim. Phire! Was a Blast!

BY TERESA TATUM, Director of Education, Foundation Director

WOW! What a great time everyone had coming out to Gay, Georgia for the first-ever Ready, Aim, Phire! sporting clays fundraiser, benefitting the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation.

We want to thank our sponsors for their support:

- **IHS: Local and here for you.**
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Ten teams of four shooters engaged in some friendly, but fierce competition, each with their eye on the prize; being named Top Gun!

The weather could not keep these pigeon pounders at bay. Clad in their best camo, flannel, and all-weather boots, these phierce pharmacists persevered, phiring away at the orange clay pigeons throughout the humid, middle-Georgia afternoon.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, GPhF staff and volunteers were busy preparing for BBQ, beer, and the finest raffle seen around these parts in quite some time. Prizes included Adirondack chairs, Yeti cooler, UGA cooler, wine, whiskey, and assorted gift baskets. Didn't

shoot so well on the course? No worries, you can be a winner at the raffle!

The hottest raffle item? Donated by Kent Kicklighter of Pembroke Pharmacy, a Rebel 22! Again, the competition for this smokin'-hot item was phierce! In the end Joe Ed Holt walked away with the win.

Prizes were awarded to the overall highest scoring individual shooter (Top Gun), highest scoring team (Clay Slayers), and of course, the lowest scoring team (Duck-n-Cover.)

- **Ready, Aim, Phire! Top Gun award went to Ryan Meeks, Dust in the Wind.**
- **Ready, Aim, Phire! Clay Slayers award went to Orange Crush: Scott Elliott, Gary Hendrix, Brad Smith, Jason Smith.**
- **Ready, Aim, Phire! Duck-n-Cover award went to Wild Phire: Mark Arnold, Vickie Arnold, Amy Miller, Laird Miller.**

Many thanks to everyone for their support and participation. We look forward to seeing you all again next year!

Event proceeds benefit the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation's initiatives. The nonprofit funds student pharmacist scholarships, offers free CE and resources to stay mentally well, and gives pharmacists a path to become a Champion for Opioid Safety. Learn more and make your tax-deductible donation at <http://www.gpha.org/foundation/>. 📺



TOP GUN

CLAY SLAYERS

DUCK-n-COVER



IN MEMORIAM



GPHA MOURNS THE PASSING OF JIM BARTLING

BY ANDREW KANTOR

Georgia lost a pillar of the pharmacy community. It is with deepest regret that we inform you of the passing of GPhA Past President Jim Bartling on September 24, 2020. Jim served as president of the Georgia Pharmacy Association for 1992-93, and served on the Board of Directors of the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation — chairing the foundation until his passing. Jim also co-owned the Medical Arts Pharmacy in Conyers, and worked occasionally as a relief pharmacist in the community.

In 2009 he was awarded the Bowl of Hygiea, one of the most prestigious recognitions of pharmacist leaders in the state. Jim's passion was supporting the recovery of pharmacists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians with substance use disorders. A certified addiction counselor, he founded and to a great extent ran the Georgia Pharmacy

Foundation's PharmAssist program.

Jim was also an integral and well-loved member of the Mercer College of Pharmacy, where he earned both his bachelor of science (1976) and PharmD (1977). He practiced at Doctors Memorial Hospital in Atlanta before joining what was then the Mercer University Southern School of Pharmacy as director of admissions, job placement, and continuing education. He was later named associate dean for student affairs and admissions, the position from which he retired in 2016, and even after his retirement, he remained a familiar face on the Mercer campus.

Jim's engagements in pharmacy, in healthcare, and in his community are far too numerous to list. His impact and legacy on the profession and on the Georgia Pharmacy Association will be felt forever. [G](#)

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The Georgia Pharmacy Foundation promotes public welfare, professional development, and provides resources for pharmacists and student pharmacists in Georgia.

Students can leave pharmacy school with the equivalent of a mortgage, without ever purchasing a home. Our scholarship programs support students and alleviate some of their financial burden.

The opioid crisis hasn't made the headlines during COVID-19, but it's still real and out there. We offer a path to become a Opioid Safety Champion.

Our PharmWell program promotes mental wellness and deals with common professional issues like burnout, drug abuse, depression, and suicide. The Foundation provides resources and free CE credits on these important mental health topics.



Be a part of the solution and join forces with the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation. Your donation will make a difference in the quality of lives of pharmacists, student pharmacists, and patients across Georgia.

To donate, go to www.gpha.org/foundation. Better yet, sign up for a small but consistent monthly contribution. Every dollar counts. Thank you for joining the cause.

THE BEST MEDICINE

Carroll County's First Female Pharmacist Shares Her Experience

BY ANGELA DAILEY,
 Angel Media, LLC
 d/b/a West Georgia Woman Magazine

RUTH FULLER'S MOTHER, Jewel, was a strong-willed woman who loved everything about learning. Although she only had a 5th-grade education herself, Jewel was determined that her daughter would have every opportunity to get an education and become successful. Ruth, now 92 years old, made her mother proud. In 1950, she became the first registered female pharmacist from Carroll County, Georgia.

When Ruth was a teenager, she worked during the summers for Edgar Johnson and his son, Billy, the owners of Johnson's Drug Company on Adamson Square in Carrollton, Ga. In the mid-1800s, Dr. W.E. Johnson started the business. The pharmacy was family owned and operated through five generations until it closed in 1974, according to Buchanan Drugs.

In the 1940s, school only went through the 10th grade. Ruth graduated high school in 1944 at the age of 16. After graduation, she began attending West Georgia Junior College (WGJC), now known as the University of West Georgia, in Carrollton.

Ruth graduated from WGJC in 1946 and went on to study pharmacy at the University of Georgia Pharmacy College in Athens, Georgia. The ratio of women to men at pharmacy school was shockingly different from the ratio Ruth was accustomed to at WGJC (mostly women due to the war). "There were three or four of us women and about 100 men," she says. In spite of the college having so many more men than women, the men in the pharmacy program were all very respectful and supportive of the female students.

In 1944, Ruth met 18-year-old Carlos through a



ZACHARY DAILEY, DAILEY LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

cousin of his during a basketball game at the WPA Center in Carrollton. "I was 16 when we met, and he was just getting out of boot camp," she says. Carlos was in the U.S. Navy. He was attached to the Marine Corps as a navy corpsman and spent two years in the Pacific. Carlos was released from the Navy in 1946. In 1947, they began dating steadily. During the winter holidays in 1948, Carlos gave Ruth a ring and asked her to marry him. With only six months to go before her graduation from pharmacy school, she accepted his proposal.

Ruth graduated from UGA on June 11, 1949. In July, Ruth landed a job as an intern at Emory Hospital in Atlanta. Although she had graduated from pharmacy college and had some work hours from Johnson's Drug Company, she didn't have enough pharmacy



ZACHARY DAILEY, DAILEY LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

work hours to be a registered pharmacist. At the end of her internship, she would also have to take an extensive pharmacy board exam that included making certain drug preparations.

“The Dean of the college always kept his eyes out for jobs for the girls,” she explains. “There were no pharmacy jobs for girls at the time except in hospitals – unless a girl was married to a man who owned a pharmacy or if her father or a relative owned one, and she worked there.” When Ruth began working at Emory, the pharmacy department staff was made up of only women. Ruth’s boss, Miss Price, was older, and she took the other girls under her wing.

“She was a wonderful lady,” Ruth shares. “She was one of the oldest women pharmacists in Atlanta. So she taught us a lot. We had progressive women back then. I was progressive, along with the other women

who were involved in pharmacy with me. Miss Price, and the women I worked with – they were all very progressive. They were all so great, and I think I just took after them. Working there was not a chore. It was a pleasure.”

Carlos began attending pharmacy school in the fall, and worked part-time in downtown Atlanta at Jacob’s Pharmacy, a drugstore chain that had about 10 or 11 stores.

On October 8, 1949, Ruth and Carlos were married. They rented a little upstairs apartment in Decatur, Ga., for \$75 a month. Ruth worked full-time while Carlos attended pharmacy college and continued to work part-time.

At Emory, Ruth received two meals a day, her uniforms were laundered for her and her salary was \$175 per month. Ruth’s favorite part of working at the hospital was mixing medication ingredients, or compounding. In compounding, drugs are created by combining two or more raw ingredients to match the individual needs of patients. Pharmaceutical companies today primarily grew out of 19th century chemical manufacturers and pharmacies, according to Arthur Daemrich in his book, *Pharmacy in History*. These companies expanded worldwide after World War II, and the large majority of pharmacies in the U.S. experienced a sharp decline in the need for drug compounding between the 1950s and the early 21st century. There are still a few pharmacists who offer drug compounding today.

“I used to love to build drugs up from scratch,” she says. “We made up saline solutions for them to use in the IVs. They weren’t checked or anything – we just made them up. We fixed the doses of medications for all of the patients. I enjoyed making the drugs by hand, but we can’t do that now. It was not like it is now. That’s the part that I liked the best. I wanted to be able to do the IV nutrition. I was able to do some of that later when we owned a drugstore in Tucker, Ga.”

About six months after graduating, Ruth had enough work hours to take the board exam. She had finally become a registered pharmacist. When Carlos finished school and became a registered pharmacist in June 1953, he made \$1 per hour. In the summers, he would work close to 80 hours a week so he could make more money.

Much has changed for pharmacists over the last 70 years, including the salary. There are about 314,300 pharmacists in the United States today and

the median salary in 2019 was \$61.58 per hour, or \$128,090 per year, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

There were many breakthroughs in medicine during the 40s and early 50s, including the development of the polio vaccine and the creation of the kidney dialysis machine, but the one Ruth remembers most is the development of chemotherapy drugs used to treat leukemia, breast cancer, lymphoma, lung cancer and others. Methotrexate was one of the first anticancer agents that was created in 1948. Ruth would make the chemotherapy solutions up that were used in the hospital IVs.

Ruth worked at Emory throughout her pregnancies with sons, David and Joe. "When I was pregnant with David, I was working at the hospital the day I went into labor," she says. "And I went right upstairs and had him." All four of their children were born at Emory Hospital. "All the nurses would say, 'Well, we've got another Fuller,'" she laughs. Later, in the 1960s, Emory stopped providing labor and delivery services.

After Joe was born, Ruth switched to part-time.

The family lived in Stone Mountain, and Carlos bought a drugstore in Tucker where he and Ruth both worked while the kids were growing up. Their son, David, 66, is a freelance engineer who lives in Atlanta. Joe, 63, is a Navy veteran who worked 34 years for the U.S. Postal Service. Their only daughter, Nancy, 61, retired last month from Tanner Health System after 30 years. Jon, 59, is a Navy veteran and works as a maintenance coordinator for Delta. "They have all been successful with their jobs," Ruth says. "We're very proud of them." Although none of their children went into a pharmacy career, Ruth is proud to share that her little sister, Terry, followed in Ruth's footsteps and became a pharmacist.


Carlos later sold the drugstore and worked as a pharmacist for Kroger. He retired from pharmacy in 1987 at age 62. Ruth worked at Doctors Hospital in Tucker for 15 years and a couple of other hospitals in the Atlanta area for the remainder of her career. Thirty years ago, they moved from Stone Mountain back to Carrollton to care for their aging parents.

As for Ruth's path in life, she really has no regrets – only happy memories of her time as a pharmacist. "When I was at Emory, the girls and my boss were so special there," she relates. "We would do things together, other than work there. I loved our boss, Miss Price – I just loved her to death. I miss her still. I



ZACHARY DAILEY, DAILEY LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

guess all of us being together is my fondest memory. And all of the guys who were detail men (pharmaceutical representatives) – they were all special to us. Just a lot of good memories. It was fun."

Although she stopped practicing pharmacy in 1994, Ruth didn't surrender her license until 2008, when she was 80 years old. She enjoyed going to continuing education training each year. "I just love every part of pharmacy," she shares. "I really do. And if I could, I would go back today. I don't think there is any part that I didn't love." 

Reprinted with permission from the July 2020 issue of West Georgia Woman magazine. Article condensed for space, view original article in the July issue of West Georgia Woman Magazine at www.westgeorgiawoman.com.

From the President

The 2020 GPhA Convention... a Virtual Reality.



WES CHAPMAN

In my last visit to this postscript column, I spoke of gratitude and I'll start this postscript with the same voice of thanks. Thanks to all of you who joined us for this one of a kind and what I will deem a MOST successful meeting. If you've ever seen a Broadway play or local school pageant for that matter, you can imagine the hours upon hours expended just to get one minute of performance on stage. For such, we all owe Bob and the GPhA staff, in our most voluminous voice a hearty THANK YOU SO MUCH.

As incoming president, myself and a few others were in actual attendance and were privy to the nerves of steel needed to produce this meeting. As a real-time convention, the GPhA puts on a meeting each year that is the envy of most state pharmacy associations. This virtual convention parallels the same. Our numbers, while smaller than a real-time convention, were out of the park compared to other state association's virtual meetings. This only reinforces the quality of our staff and the commitment of you, our members, to your profession.

Also, at this convention, you as members, brought our board of directors two new voices in Izabela Welch and Jennifer Shannon, and a familiar voice in the at large position in Ashish Advani. I look forward to working with each of our board members. I have often voiced my appreciation to our board, during our meetings, as being one of the most if not THE most productive boards I've had the honor of serving. Opinions are solicited and spoken in succinct and respectful voices. Not all our decisions come with unanimous votes. This is in no way a voice of derision or divisiveness, yet gives testimony to the character of the mem-

"OUR 2020 VIRCON WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS AND YOU AS OUR MEMBERS SUPPORTED THE MEETING LIKE NO OTHER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP."

bers you as our members have chosen. We all "defend with vigor" our collective profession of pharmacy and once again, I'm honored to serve with such a distinguished group of pharmacists.

Let's speak of the future for a moment. I'll step out in hope and say that we WILL have a NON-virtual convention next summer at Amelia Island. Pharmacists for the most part are people persons. We enjoy being face to face with our patients and colleagues. Personal relationships are key to our professional fulfillment as medical professionals. I'm looking forward to the mask-less smiles and relaxing atmosphere that are a welcome reality for our 2021 gathering. Our 2020 VirCon was a tremendous success and you, as our members, supported the meeting like no other association membership. The value and opportunities that conventions bring us are immeasurable. Whether or not you attended, mark your calendars for June 17-20, 2021 where we can make virtual into reality. [📍](#)

Wes Chapman is the Board President of the Georgia Pharmacy Association.



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