

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

A new partnership has formed, leading to the purchase of the Grant Pharmacy by two entrepreneurs from the Chase County area.

New owners Jamie Hanes and Jason Burke, natives of Imperial, took possession last Friday of their new business in the 200 block of Central Avenue, purchased from Jorje Geisert, pharmacist.

The Grant Pharmacy name will remain, and the employees will remain in place, including Geisert, until the new pharmacists get licensing and insurance in place.

Burke, a pharmacy student at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, will graduate in May. He will then become the pharmacist in charge of the Grant store while Hanes continues to assist his father, Jim Hanes, who has owned Adams Drug in Imperial for the past 22 years.

Hanes moved back to the area four years ago to work with his dad again, employment he'd had in younger years before receiving a degree in biology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, attending pharmacy school at Creighton University and performing a residency at the University of Iowa. Prior to returning to Imperial, he held a clinical pharmacist position on the cardiology floor at St. Mary's Hospital-Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

In addition to working at Adams Drug, he holds a coumadin clinic at the hospital once a week in Imperial for patients on anticoagulant medication.

"I enjoy talking to patients and getting to know them," said Hanes. "It's a nice break."

That type of friendly demeanor is an asset that both he and Burke possess, and they are anxious to get to know customers in the Grant area.

Small town life is what each of them sought after having been exposed to life in large cities. Hanes, 36, and Burke, 27, agree that returning to their hometown to raise their families and pursue their careers is something they didn't really think would fall into place.

Burke said while growing up in Imperial, he knew he wanted to return but didn't think it was possible that an opportunity would come along that would place him closer than three hours of his hometown.

He did a pharmacy rotation last August at Adams Drug where Hanes was working, and two of them started talking about the possibility of acquiring the Grant Pharmacy—something Hanes said had previously crossed his mind but knew couldn't happen without help.

Now that it has become a reality, they can't wait for things to settle into place. At that point, new ideas and services will be incorporated.

Through connections at Adams Drug in Imperial, Hanes is especially enthused about communicating with and serving physicians in Grant.

"It will be nice to come here; I already know the voices [of Grant physicians] on the phone and their prescribing habits," he said.

Both Hanes and Burke concur that their business venture has been a smooth transition and they are eager to dive in.

"For the last few days, it didn't seem like this day would get here!" said Hanes, who along with his partner were scheduled to sign the closing papers later in the afternoon.

Burke is eager to finish his schooling and bring his wife west to get started as Grant's new pharmacist.

“Grant has excellent providers—optometrists, a dentist, and physicians— and our goal is to provide excellent pharmacy service to compliment the health care Grant already has,” said Burke.

Once settled, the new owners will have a chance to gauge what people want and try to stock the shelves to best meet the needs of their customers, stressing that they will try to get whatever is desired to please people.

Hanes’ wife, Brandy, is originally from Newman Grove and works part-time as a nurse practitioner at the Chase County Clinic. The couple has two young children, Madelynn, eight, who is in second grade, and five-year-old Miles who is in preschool.

Burke’s wife, Whitney, is also an Imperial native. She is a registered nurse and currently works in the oncology department at Allegiant Lakeside Hospital in Omaha. She is the daughter of John and Angie Paisley of Imperial.

The current employees of Grant Pharmacy are Pam Young, Ashlee Smith, and Kathleen Bartels of Imperial, who comes to Grant part-time to help out. Geisert will stay on until June. Once Burke graduates and passes boards, he will be able to assume her duties.

The Burkes plan to move to Grant where he will be the main person in charge of the pharmacy, however, Hanes will also make his presence known in the community.

Living in a small community enables the men to easily pursue their interests.

Besides enjoying family time, Burke golfs and hunts. He likes going to the lake and riding motorcycles.

Hanes also enjoys the lake and likes to run. Much of his spare time is taken up by enjoying family time with his wife and kids.

Hanes and Burke also have another business venture in place. They are awaiting licensing in order to open a pharmacy in the Holyoke grocery store owned by Kenny Owens of Imperial who they approached about placing a pharmacy in the grocery store. Holyoke did not have a drug store, so putting an addition on the new grocery store seemed like the perfect opportunity.

Grant Pharmacy History

A pharmacy has existed in Grant for many years. In the early 70s the town’s drugstore was owned by Darold Raburn where present-day Grant NAPA is located. The business had a soda fountain, high end jewelry, cosmetics, and perfumes.

Jorje (McCullough) Geisert worked at the drugstore during her high school years.

The business was later moved to its present site a couple of blocks south.

When Geisert returned to Grant with a degree from the University of Nebraska Medical Center, she asked her former employer for a job at the pharmacy and she was welcomed aboard.

In 1980, when Geisert was only 23, Raburn approached her with an offer to sell her the business which she successfully ran for the next 33 years.

