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Customers mourn the passing of Fairfield pharmacist

By Eric Robinette

FAIRFIELD — Customers of Mills Pharmacy in Fairfield are mourning the passing of its longtime owner, Robert Mills, who died this week and whose funeral is Monday.

Mills, who retired from the family-owned pharmacy nine years ago, passed away at the age of 79 at Fort Hamilton Hospital on Tuesday. This week, customers at Mills Pharmacy on 640 Wessel Drive were talking about the man who took such good care of them, said his daughter, Tina Weisenberger.

“He loved the pharmacy and he loved the people. He knew all the customers. I had a customer who is 70 who said, ‘He took such good care of my mother,’” said Weisenberger, who owns the business now. “It was heartwarming.”

The family came to Fairfield in 1977 from Richmond, Ind., with Mills wanting to start his own business. His father William had been a chemist, which led Mills to take an interest in medicine, she said. The store opened as the Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy, but it eventually took the name of its founder.

Placing his family name on the business reflected the personal touch Mills wanted to give to his store and to his customers, his daughter said.

“It was a sincere caring ... it wasn’t just a business,” Weisenberger said.

Mayor Ron D’Epifanio, a regular customer for years, agreed.

“Is it more convenient to go to a box store that’s open 24 hours a day? Yes, but he was compassionate. He was such a caring, soothing man. And his daughter is exactly the same way. They’re just a good family,” he said.

Mills set his pharmacy apart from others of its day by offering preventive medicine screenings, such as blood pressure and glucose, said Weisenberger.

“Now I’m following in his example. And he set a tremendous, tremendous example to follow,” she said.

Visitation will be from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday at the Brown-Dawson-Flick Funeral Home, 330 Pershing Ave., Hamilton. A Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10 a.m. Monday at the St. Julie Billiard Catholic Church on 224 Dayton St. in Hamilton.

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