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Walberg Family Pharmacies partners with Mercer Co. distillery to create hand sanitizer

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Record-Argus staff reports



HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP – Randy Clark (left), a pharmacist with Walberg Family Pharmacies hands Jay Metheney, a paramedic with Life Force Ambulance in Hempfield Township, a donation of hand sanitizer spray bottles made by Walberg employees and ethanol from MLH Distillery in Grove City. Contributed photo

HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP – Two local businesses have joined forces to help first responders by donating homemade hand sanitizer.

Bretton Walberg, Greenville resident and owner of Greenville's Care-Fill Pharmacy, Reynolds Pharmacy, Mercer Pharmacy and Jamestown Pharmacy, came across MLH Distillery in Grove City, while diligently searching for supplies to keep his staff and customers safe.

Hand sanitizer has become increasingly more difficult to find due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The owners of MLH Distillery had heard how other distilleries were using their supplies and equipment to make hand sanitizer and wanted to help.

Walberg said MLH had ethanol, one of the basic raw materials needed to produce sanitizer, and agreed to offer it to Walberg at a discount.

In response, Walberg and his team of pharmacists quickly got to work producing homemade hand sanitizer from a 5-gallon drum, packaging it in spray bottles.

“Time is of the essence on things like this. Our customers count on us and we need to do whatever we can to help protect our community,” Walberg said.

Fifty percent of the homemade hand sanitizer was donated to first responders in local communities, including the Greenville, Jamestown, Mercer and Hempfield Township Police Departments, as well as the Greenville, Hempfield Township, Transfer and Mercer East End Volunteer Fire Departments; plus Life Force Ambulance and McGonigle Ambulance Services.

Many other organizations were also contacted, but the sanitizer was available on a first-come, first-served basis.

“It’s about local people doing local things. By coming together, we can accomplish so much more,” Walberg added.

The remaining hand sanitizer will be used by Walberg Family Pharmacies’ staff and delivery drivers.

Curbside pickup and free delivery service continue to be available, in addition to drive-thru service at select locations including Care-Fill and Reynolds Pharmacies.

“We look forward to reopening our store fronts in the coming weeks,” Walberg said. “There are certain measures that must be in place before we can do so.”