



# BIZ BIO



Partners in life and business

## Teamwork is making the dream work for college sweethearts



UW-Madison pharmacy grads Cindy and Joe Stock are the proud owners of The Medicine Shoppe in Ashland. Joe's brother, Mike, who passed away in 2012, designed and built the Stock's award-winning building. (See upper photos.)

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Being partners in a marriage as well as a small business may not work for everyone, but Joe and Cindy Stock make it look easy. The pair met while attending pharmacy school at the UW-Madison, where they graduated from the same class in 1984.

The Stocks have owned Ashland's Medicine Shoppe for 10 years now. They worked for the former owners for 18 years and then bought them out in 2006. Designed and built by Joe's late brother, Mike, their new store on Ellis Avenue opened in spring 2008.

Cindy and Joe have worked side by side together for 28 years of their 31-year marriage. "We've fired each other 6 or 7 times over the years," joked Joe, a Washburn native whose father was employed for decades by DuPont at the Barksdale Works. Cindy grew up in southern Minnesota.

They have two children: a daughter, Jessica, who has her Master's degree in criminology; and a son, John, who lives in Toronto and is working on his law degree.

"We love our customers and we enjoy having our own business," said Cindy. "We really feel like all of our hard work has paid off because we will be retiring in 9 years."

The couple's retirement plans include going on vacation together for the first time in many years. "We are forced to take separate vacations for the most part right now because of the need to have a pharmacist on staff at all times," Cindy explained. "If we want to be gone at the same time, currently we have to pay to bring in another registered pharmacist to cover for us and that can be expensive."

Fortunately, Joe and Cindy do have different hobbies and interests, so when they get some time off each does their own thing. Joe likes fishing & hunting, while Cindy enjoys boating and travel to new places.

Anyone who stops in can't help but notice the thriving plants growing all over the sunny store. "Almost all of these are from when we opened," Joe said. "They were gifts from people. We have the best customers!!"



A smiling Deb Guerin, pharmacy tech, waits on a customer.