

Retailer Profile: *Emporium Western Store*

Turning 100

The Emporium Western Store is celebrating hitting the century mark this year. **By Sarah Muirhead,** *Publisher*

The Emporium Western Store in Bakersfield, California, was founded in 1909 as a true “emporium” or general store. In 1928, it was purchased by Isaac Rubin, grandfather of the current owners, and it has remained in the family through three generations.

In 1946, operation of the store passed to Rubin’s daughter and son-in-law, Rose and Al Goldwater. It was in 1948 that Al Goldwater began to convert the store into a specialty Western clothing store, one of the first in California, and changed the name from The Emporium to Emporium Western Store. Currently, the store is owned and operated by the Goldwaters’ two children, Stephen Goldwater and Carol Goldwater Durst.

Through the years, the store has received several honors, including Wrangler’s PRCA Dealer of the Year, Justin Boot Co. Dealer of the Year and the Resistol Hat Windy Ryon Award. In 1995, the Emporium was the first Western store outside of the state of Texas to win “The Western Image Award Retailer of the Year” for a single location store. According to Goldwater and Durst, the strength of the Emporium over the years

has been its service, selection and value.

“You can find a wide selection of boots, hats, jeans, shirts, belts and all the other favorite Western accessories and gift items as well,” said Goldwater.

Customer service is old fashioned at the Emporium, where many customers are welcomed by name as they enter the store. Many long-time local families have been shopping at the store for three or four generations and old friends are always running into each other while shopping there. It’s a store where the real cowboys shop, said Goldwater and Durst.

From October 13 through October 25, the Emporium Western Store will be holding its Sale of the Century to recognize 100 years in business.

On Saturday, October 24, to honor the Western industry, the store, its current and former employees, and valued customers, there

will be a celebration at the store including festivities such as pony rides and a petting zoo for the kids, and a tri tip barbeque with all proceeds benefiting the “Save a Family” Program of the American Red Cross—Kern Chapter.



Stephen Goldwater and Carol Goldwater Durst, owners of the Emporium Western Store.

Manufacturer Profile: *Western Resourcing Inc.*

A New Venture

Success with forming a new company is never a sure thing, but when you bring three talented people together with a combined experience in the Western apparel industry of more than 100 years, it’s a good bet. The three-way venture, Western Resourcing Inc., includes Dan Kuhl, design, Jerry Morris, sales and Shoba Reddy, corporate.

Kuhl is a multi-talented apparel designer who has been working in the Western industry for more than 35 years. His experience has been both in retail and wholesale. Among the brands he has been responsible for creating are the San Angelo Collection, Silver River, Chili’s, Martini Ranch and Go!

Baby. In his new position with Western Resourcing, he is charged with designing the company’s new collections, including Cattlelac Ranch, Pink Cattlelac for young women and ‘Lil Cattlelac for children. He also oversees offshore operations.

Morris has been connected with the apparel industry in either retail or wholesale for more than 50 years, selling product to a wide range of customers, from the smallest mom and pop stores right up to larger operations such as Sears, J.C. Penney and Dillard’s. As a part of the sales effort, he maintains showrooms in both Dallas and Denver. As new exhibitors, he and his wife Janie found to their delight that the show-

rooms they had rented in the past were still available when they called to enquire about space.

“It was like it was meant to be,” said Janie.

Reddy oversees domestic operations at the company’s corporate headquarters. Western Resourcing was incorporated in February 2008. The company broke a soft holiday offering in June 2009, following that up with the grand opening of their showrooms in August and September where the new labels were introduced. The company will have lit signs available for retailers of its products beginning in December. For more information, call (858)703-4666.