



Above, the Laurens County Museum maintains the county’s heritage. Above right, Bailey Memorial Stadium is site of the annual Flight of the Dove bicycling event, sponsored by Hospice of Laurens County. Below left, a cake commemorates signing of a management agreement by Greenville Health System for the operations of Laurens County Memorial Hospital. All these are symbols of a county striving to honor its past and promote the health and medical well-being of its citizens. - Photos by Vic MacDonald



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Dr. Stanley Walsh, super day and doctor



By **Angela Allsbrook**
Horizons 2014 _____

Dr. Stanley Walsh was influenced by his uncle, who was a small town family doctor, to pursue a career in the medical field. Walsh said that he always liked science and more importantly, helping people. Walsh is originally from Greenville, where he graduated high school from JL Mann.

For undergraduate school, Walsh attended Wofford College, and then went to the Medical University of South Carolina for graduate school. For his residency, Walsh was placed at a hospital in Huntsville, Alabama with a program through the University of Alabama.

Walsh said, “Med school forces you to recognize what

your strengths and weaknesses are.” When he first started graduate school, he wanted to become a surgeon, but that he quickly learned that it was not for him. Walsh said he does better with a change of pace to help with his level of focus. He chose family medicine since his day-to-day tasks are always changing. With Family Healthcare, he sees patients starting in the newborn nursery all the way to the nursing home.

He first started working at his uncle’s practice in Easley and was there for two and a half years. Walsh decided he wanted to practice in a different way from his uncle and started looking for another job. He was not quite ready to be a nine-to-five doctor. That is how he got to Family Healthcare in Clinton. He was looking to be a doctor in a small town, but wanted different hours. Typically, Walsh

works a 6am-5pm shift Monday through Friday where he is in the office, but also checks on patients in the hospital. The doctors’ office is open on Saturdays as well, but he only has to work on the weekend once a month.

There are four doctors working in his group: Dr. James Belcher, Dr. Peter Partee, Dr. Louis Stephens Jr. and Walsh. Together, they practice evidence-based medicine. For Walsh to be a doctor, he has to be very flexible and to be able to switch mindsets at any given moment.

Walsh said it is fun to not have to do the same thing every day. Family Healthcare has a great relationship with Laurens County Memorial Hospital, Walsh said. Because they are right across the street from one another, the hospital has been

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Jeff Smith reconnecting to adopted home

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

Reconnection is the word of the hour for Jeff Smith. A Presbyterian College graduate with a background in banking and investments, Smith is transitioning from a workday commute to Greenville to a drive just down the street to manage one of Clinton’s longest standing businesses.

Smith is working with Will Gore to maintain the top-flight service customers have come to expect from the local Allstate insurance office. Gore is working with the Allstate office in Greenville, and he and Smith are in constant contact about customer needs and services in Clinton. Officially, Smith is operations manager, Gore Insurance Group.

Unofficially, he’s the guy who’s had Clinton in his blood a long time, a Blue Hose faithful, family man and First Presbyterian member, and a returner to Clinton Rotary.

When the local Rotary transitioned to a lunchtime meeting, on Tuesdays, Smith found it difficult to attend, working in Greenville; now, if he can get away from a busy office, Rotary is just a hop down Broad Street to the Jacobs Highway.

“Will was interested in finding someone in the community,” Smith said of his opportunity to manage the Allstate branch in Clinton. “We have talked about it for four years, the timing just never was right. This summer, everything lined up. (Gore) has two agencies, he wanted to bring in someone else. We are growing this business as a team.”

Allstate – “the good hands folks,” remember? – has a long-standing tradition as a community booster in Clinton. YMCA teams, community activities donor and supporter of organizations – Gore is a retiring member of the Laurens County Chamber of Commerce board – all have been in All-

state’s sights through the years.

The company’s distinctive blue radiates from the awning on the Main Street, Clinton, office. The work Gore commissioned to relocate the office into a storefront, reclaiming a building and developing a functional and attractive interior, has gained notice far from Clinton.

“This office has gotten a lot of notoriety in the Allstate corporation,” Smith said. “A lot of people with Allstate have commented on it. I don’t like to see empty buildings. We hope we can be part of the development of downtown.”

In addition to the constant train whistles, there is “a hazard” being in that location, however. How can the office people resist the hot dog plates at Wilson Curb Market, virtually next door? “We have to be careful, sometimes it starts with a bacon, egg and cheese biscuit. We try to do that just once a week,” Smith said.

He enjoys the tight-knit downtown – the Gaults are next door, just down the street are friends at Sunshine City. An internet-based company is occupying a former photography studio. Smith said he is missing Jim Adair.

The retired owner of Adair’s Mens Shop is playing golf now – “He was one of the first people to meet me,” Smith said. Adair would say he needed a ride to pick up his car at the shop, and when Smith picked him up for that ride, Adair would suggest lunch at Rotary – as long as they were out and about.

“We have a great group of customers. We want to continue serving Clinton and Laurens County for a long time,” Smith said.

Maintaining a busy business environment is challenge enough, but Jeff Smith has even more on his plate. He has worked with city zoning, and now serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals. That service is just a whistlestop on long list



Surveying downtown. From the front of the Allstate office in uptown Clinton, Jeff Smith, operations manager, Gore Insurance Group, can look out onto Main Street, Clinton, and of course the railroad tracks. Smith said the office’s location, in what originally was a livery during Clinton’s early days, is great for him to work on promotion the uptown area. “It’s a great downtown,” Smith said. “We love to see new faces move in.” - Photo by Vic MacDonald

of community involvements.

“I was on the planning commission for several years, and I asked the city to step away from that,” said Smith, who chaired the commission three years, in addition to eight years on the Clinton Family YMCA board, Rotary and activities at First Presbyterian Church.

City officials said OK, he could leave the planning commission, if – he would agree to serve on the appeals board, which meets if there is a zoning matter to mediate.

Smith has a keen eye for the future of Clinton.

“It’s a great downtown. We want to see new faces coming in,” he said. “We have the land, the college, access to transportation. Everything (from Greenville) is moving in this direction. They are running out of real estate. I was in commercial construction with BB&T. “We (Laurens County) have

done a great job bringing in new industry. Laurens County is in a great position for the next 20 years.” Now, Clinton needs to take a step into the next two decades.

“We are on the farthest end of I-385. The Georgia Port is talking about (accessing) an easier route through the mountains. There is talk of a new interstate. We see the growth coming in the transportation industry – truckers are getting insurance again. We are still feeling some of the roll-off of 2008, (but) there is a positive movement going on.

“American workers, we

don’t stay down too long,” Smith said.

Smith, who is from North Carolina, and wife Kim, who hails from Knoxville, Tenn., are PC graduates, 1992-93. Their daughter Mary Grace, 14, is a freshman, and volleyball/lacrosse player at Clinton High School; and son Holt, nine, plays just about every sport there is at the Clinton Y, while attending Clinton Elementary.

A Blue Hose soccer player (1988-91), Smith coaches Clinton Y soccer for Holt’s teams in the fall and spring. “I enjoy working with the kids,” he said.

Things you may not know about Jeff Smith

Current – serves on the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Clinton
Clinton Family YMCA, 2004-present, Board of Directors, past chairman, 2014 treasurer
City of Clinton Planning Commission, Board of Appeals, chairman, 2006-present
Laurens County Young Farmers Association – associate

founding member, 2013
Associated Builders & Contractors of the Upstate, Upstate Council Workforce Development and Safety Committee chairman, 2011-13
Rotary Club of Clinton – past president
Laurens County Chamber of Commerce, 2005 Board of Directors
Hospice of Laurens County,

2003-05 Board of Directors, past chairman
Laurens County Touchdown Club, 2003-05 Board of Directors, past chairman

Smith adds, “We are blessed to have a large group of friends who have kids the same ages as ours, so we all have fun socializing together.”



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Walsh

From Page 2

able to help them with patient emergencies that happen after Family Healthcare has closed for the night.

In January, Family Healthcare moved into a brand new \$12 million office building. The building is designed in a new way to help with their unique patient flow system where the exam rooms open into the waiting room. Walsh said that the facility is beautiful and everyone has enjoyed working in a new building.

Walsh resides in Clinton with his wife, Megan, and their three children, Gray, Jack, and Lilly. The day of the interview, he was picking his children up from school early and surprising them with a weeklong trip to Walt Disney World.

Walsh makes a huge effort to be there for his kids all the time. He always helps with bath time, bedtime, attends their soccer games, and they eat dinner as a family every single night. His wife is able to work from home, but she is also a full time mother. Walsh said, “It is my job to make sure that she gets a break from her job.” The couple has to work together as a team in order to run the family.

When describing why he loves the town of Clinton, Walsh said, “Everybody cares about everybody, it’s a good life... being in this community has allowed us to do things that we would not have been able to do in other places.”

The Walsh family has met many fantastic people. The chil-



Family physician Dr. Stanley Walsh was cast in Laurens County Community Theater’s “Annie” as a Depression-era apple seller. His line got a chuckle from audience members who knew his chosen profession: “Get yer apples! An apple a day keeps the doctor away! Apples!” – Photo by Angela Allsbrook

dren are able to participate in many extracurricular activities around town. In addition, Walsh has built lasting relationships with his fellow doctors. They all have families in different stages of life where they are able to

work around each other’s schedules.

Walsh continues to enjoy pursuing a career as a doctor for the Clinton and Laurens communities.

Marion Reeder - there's always a rainbow

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

More than “look on the bright side,” Marian Reeder’s attitude about living with cancer is as aggressive as “the beast” inside her body. “Everybody has a time to go,” she says. “Let’s just work til you get there.”

Reeder is one of thousands worldwide living with Stage 4 cancer. It cannot be cured – it can only be managed. Her personal journey with breast cancer and liver cancer dates to August 2011. “No matter what stage,” she said, “it haunts one forever once they’ve gone there.”

Reeder is doing what is required of her to keep “the beast” at bay, and she is looking to do more. Go “beyond expectations,” as she counseled her customer service people at Laurens County Hospital when they dealt with case management.

“I have moved into meditation, its effects on the body, relaxation, blood pressure,” Reeder said during a recent interview at the Laurens County Cancer Association office in Professional Park. “I am looking for an acupuncturist who works with cancer. Exercise – walking



“I’m not going to let that be my life.” Marian Reeder is a willing listener, in the new office of Laurens County Cancer Association, for cancer patients and caregivers who just want to talk. Fighting through a rare form of breast and liver cancer herself, Reeder is active in LCCA and Wings of Hope, a support group for people dealing with all forms of cancer. “The Bible teaches us, what you are going through, use that to comfort someone else. You can be a distraction, so they are not fixated (on cancer). I’m not going to let that be my life, an idol in my life. You can have your moment (crying), then let’s live. Let’s fight.” - Photos by Vic MacDonald



Supporting each other. Wings of Hope, support groups for people going through cancer treatments, held its annual meeting in December at the conference room in Women’s Life Center, Laurens County Memorial Hospital. “Support groups are so important. It is good to come out of this journey knowing where I am, I can make a difference,” said Marian Reeder, Wings of Hope organizer and volunteer with the Laurens County Cancer Association.

or using an exercise bike. Journaling, I would advise it for any traumatic life event, it’s so inexpensive. You realize, ‘Wow, another year’s gone by;’ are you getting through this thing? Record your moments of celebration.”

And, help someone else.

A professional social worker by education and trade, Reeder works closely with LCCA, a home-grown group that assists Laurens County patients and families dealing with any type cancer diagnosis, and Wings of Hope, sponsor of cancer awareness support groups.

“What you are going through, use that to comfort some else. It is a distraction, to not be fixated (on cancer and treatment),” she said. “I am not going to let that be my life. It is an idol in my life.”

Helping others provides purpose so “you don’t get in a stupor,” she said, “so it’s not a way of life. Have your moment (crying), then let’s live. Let’s fight.”

Reeder fights through cancer with the help of husband Spurgeon, daughter Ashlon, who attends the Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, and “forever five” daughter Jamie, “my baby girl in heaven,” who died of cancer.

She fights through cancer living lessons learned from “a wonderful career of serving people at the hospital.” She fights by applying for clinical trials – “I am glad to send you this saliva,” she says, flashing a winning smile.

“My petition for prayer is complete eradication. At this stage you will be on chemo the rest of your life,” Reeder said of her personal journey. “You have to make decisions based on quality of life. Even five years ago the treatment options were so limited.”

Lately, Reeder said, she has decided to take a break. She takes treatment, but aggressive treatment has consequences. “You have to combat the side effects, my body was saying ‘ouch’. I’ve been truly blessed beyond my expectations. My

last two scans have been stable. I was taking chemo and a special liver treatment.” Her “double whammy” form of the disease affects just 3% of cancer patients.

While she and “the beast” co-exist, Reeder does her research. “The more you know,” she advises, “the more you can do.”


The latest cancer studies are African-American women-specific, she said. “You can learn about prevention. You can teach your daughters.” Through the Laurens County Cancer Association, she is part of a local outreach – to families who have ever-rising transportation costs, they can provide gas cards. For patients low on energy they have cases of nutrition supplements. They can provide advice about medications; they have adult diapers. They can assist women with prosthetics after breast cancer surgery.

LCCA, Reeder says, wants to reach out to prostate cancer patients and at-risk males. “Sometimes,” she says, “people may not want to talk about that in an open group.”

LCCA partners with the Best Chance Network to sponsor screenings on a routine basis, especially geared to people who do not have insurance.

Most of all, Reeder wants word about the Laurens County Cancer Association to travel word-of-mouth, the most personal and effective means of communication. “If you know someone going through cancer,” she advises, “keep them in your circle. Just realize their new normal will be different. That’s a biggie, people don’t realize the message they are sending” when they shun or drop out of the life of a person going through a cancer journey. “There are people I never would have met without this journey,” she said, “the wisdom they have brought me.

“Live in the now – nobody really has more (personal possessions) than the other. Make something good come out of what you’re going through. There’s always a rainbow.”



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Dr. Neeley is originally from Upstate SC where she graduated Magna Cum Laude from Furman University. From Furman, she went on to graduate from the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Dr. Neeley completed her Pediatric Residency at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, NC. She has been practicing in private practices in North Carolina and Georgia over the past 13 years.



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