



ON SOME FORMER STUDENTS

ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN RETIRED a decade, I still associate with many of my best former students who are professionals in the medical sciences. I felt that my most important role in advanced education was to serve as a talent scout who recognized and identified and actively encouraged those special students who had the potential of attaining excellence in a capacity of becoming an outstanding dentist or physician. As a biologist, I taught some of the core curriculum courses – general biology, comparative vertebrate anatomy, vertebrate embryology, and physiology. Almost all pre-medical students took my courses of lectures and laboratories. I wish to introduce some of them to you.

Dr. J. B. Embry is my dentist, who is a member of AAPA. He enrolled as a freshman student in 1968, the year I became a Transylvania University professor. He initially was interested in a pre-law curriculum, but he tells me he found biology to be infinitely more interesting. He stood out as a warm human being, and was a very successful student who graduated and went to dental school. I was

delighted to be accepted as one of his patients shortly after his graduation. Family and friends thought it strange that I looked forward to visit him for twice-yearly checkups and necessary dental treatment. He would schedule an extra half hour for my visits so we could retreat to his office and talk. Soon we recognized that this was not long enough to chat, so we agreed that on the first Wednesday of each month, we would have lunch together and talk, a schedule we have kept for many years. Wednesdays are his days off, so this worked out well for both of us. I cherish our time together and the most interesting subjects we discuss. Once I was having trouble with a recalcitrant crown on an upper premolar, and during lunch with him one day, it came off in my mouth. I laughed at the event and wondered what the chances were that this would happen in the presence of my dentist. I told my son, David, about this and he wryly opined that I was lucky because it could have been my proctologist!

Our family primary care physician is Allen C. Haddix, who was one of my prize anatomy

students. His wife, Lori, was also a student at Transylvania, though she had not had a class with me. They have two precocious, lovely children, whom I once taught the basics of typesetting and printing on a Kelsey hand press. Allen and I, and sometimes Lori, are able to find time on his rare afternoons off and get away for lunch and talk. None of my physicians are uninteresting nerds. They have wide, unusual interests. Allen found himself a piano teacher and began instructions, from scratch, and is making excellent progress. I enjoy sharing my interest in composers and music with him. One of my most memorable events with him was during my first annual physical exam. He had me bent over his examination table with a gloved hand, for a mercifully quick prostate exam, and I asked him if in his wildest dreams, while suffering through my anatomy class, did he ever believe he would ever have me in this position. He broke up in laughter and answered in the negative. Allen has given me and my family outstanding medical treatment and the best kind of advice, doubtless life-saving on more than one occasion. He gave me a referral to the best orthopedic surgeon in the Bluegrass region of Kentucky, who replaced both of my knees, a life-changing operation. He also diagnosed my need for a pacemaker, and checked on me daily in the hospital. We share a great mutual respect which I feel is very special.

Brian Shouse, one of my academic advisees, with whom I spent many happy hours through four years of college, is our surgeon. The Navy paid for his medical school training and advanced surgical training, for which he served many years on active duty as a surgeon on an aircraft carrier. He has performed surgery on my wife Libby, and daughter, Debbie, and our office visits take longer than usual because we have so much to talk about. My past professional contact with him involved him searching my alimentary canal, where the sun doesn't shine, performing a colonoscopy. One becomes very intimately involved with one's surgeon.

Libby is no longer surprised when she meets a new specialist because so many were once my students. She was referred to a radiologist who looked at me, who attended her, and commented, "You look just like one of my Transylvania University professors, a Dr. Hamon." It was Dr. Haynes, a former student, Marta Stone, who had taken three courses with me over twenty years previously. I am flattered and pleased that so many of my students remember me and still want to talk with me. I remember them as genuinely nice, bright, interesting people first, who have since become outstanding physicians and dentists. I am one of the luckiest men alive.

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