



Physician Leadership

2017 Wyoming Physician of the Year

Sigsbee Duck, M.D., RPh

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Wyoming Medical Society



Sigsbee Duck, M.D., RPh

The familiar sound of “Forever and Ever, Amen” filled the room as the Randy Travis ringback tone resonated from the speakerphone. An equally rich and vibrant voice then answered, and for the next 40 minutes from a fogged-in cabin in Jackson, Sigsbee Duck, M.D., RPh, shared his journey as a physician. Overarching themes of being intentional about stepping into physician leadership and leaning on family support paved the way to what he believes is one of the biggest honors of his life—being named the 2017 Wyoming Physician of the Year.

Born and raised in Mars Hill, North Carolina, Dr. Duck was introduced to medicine at a young age. His father, a general practitioner who did some specialty work in obstetrics, and his mother, a nurse, served as role models and

major influences in his life. “He was my best friend. I always wanted to be just like my Dad, so ultimately through a course of events I went to college, graduate school and medical school,” he stated.

After attending Mars Hill College and graduating from Wake

Forest University in 1974 and then the Mercer University School of Pharmacy in 1977, Duck completed medical school at East Carolina University School of Medicine in 1981, followed by a surgical internship at the University of Kentucky Medical Center in 1982. He then completed his residency at Emory University Medical Center in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1986. He is Board Certified by the American Board of Otolaryngology and a Fellow of the American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy.

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SIGSBEE DUCK
M.D., RPh

He has been in private practice since 1986 and began practicing medicine in Wyoming in the mid-1990's, starting in Gillette and transitioning to Rock Springs 14 years later. When asked about his experience in building his life in Wyoming, he said, "I have always loved it."

Eager to share the significant place his family holds in his life, Duck spoke fondly of Cindy, his wife of nearly 36 years, and his three children: Marguerite, an ICU nurse in St. Louis; Riley, a third-year medical student at the University of Louisville; and Zachary, a Frontier Airlines Captain based out of Las Vegas. "Without the support of your wife and family, you can only take leadership so far," he said. Along with "the most incredible family in the world," Duck also credits his border collie, Blaze, his dachshund, Mandog, and his deceased basset hound, Harley, with being the support behind his successes.

Duck's views on physician leadership are grounded in taking action and being intentional. He was strategic in rebuilding the Campbell County Medical Society during his time in Gillette and similarly revived the Sweetwater County Medical Society with the assistance of the Sweetwater Memorial Hospital staff.

While strengthening the local medical societies, he also actively participated in the state medical society. He served as both a Trustee and President on the Wyoming Medical Society Board. "Wyoming Medical Society became such a large part of my life because I met and became friends with so many really remarkable people," he recalled. "I'll always be proud of and invested in the Wyoming Medical Society... You can't be an ef-



Dr. Paul Johnson presents Dr. Duck with the WY Physician of the Year Award.



Dr. Duck with his wife and children



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Duck's father and mother



Dr. Duck greatly enjoyed being a pilot. He is pictured here with his son Zachary.

fective leader without support from the WMS staff.”

He was also appointed by the Governor to serve on the State Board of Pharmacy and held the appointment for 4 years. “It was fortuitous for me to have been on the Wyoming Board of Pharmacy during difficult discussions about immunizations and allergy extracts, subjects near and dear to me professionally, and I interacted with and was fortunate to befriend so many people,” he reminisced.

He noted that there is an interesting dynamic to being a physician in Wyoming- the geographic area is large, but it is very small networking-wise. Due to the nature of the small population, it is very possible to effect change. “You simply have to participate,” he said with conviction.

“My philosophy is once you’ve grown through this process, younger folks need to become more involved with their future and they need to participate,” Duck said. He feels the Wyoming Leaders in Medicine Physician Leadership Academy is a great way for doctors in the state to launch their leadership roles. “The program is very important to help younger physicians realize the importance of involvement in local and state affairs... To try to have at least some say so in the future of healthcare so our patients will ultimately receive better care- which is what it’s all about.” He believes that these agencies and programs are what encourage comradery amongst physicians and knows this is an even greater need than it used to be due to the constantly changing healthcare environment.

Perhaps one of the greatest achievements in his numerous physician leadership roles, Duck was recently named President-Elect of The Triological Society this year. This national-level, academic society is the most prestigious society in otolaryngology and consists of very few private practitioners. Fellowship is achieved by presenting a thesis in the field of otolaryngology

considered acceptable to a panel of peers.

Duck recalls making numerous trips to Chapel Hill while conducting research for his thesis which was presented- and won an Honorable Mention award- in 1997. “I am just very honored and humbled to have been chosen to be president of such a fabulous organization,” he stated. “It’s a really big honor and it will be a unique experience.”

It was one of Duck’s most prominent mentors in the area of physician leadership, Dr. Rick Pillsbury, that introduced him to The Triological Society. At the time of their interaction, Pillsbury was President of the American Board of Otolaryngology, Dept. Chair at the University of North Carolina and served in numerous other leadership capacities. “He has been a very inspirational force in my life,” Duck remarked. Another large influence in Duck’s life was Dr. Gerry Burke from UCLA.

Currently finding more time to live out and expand upon his interests that go beyond medicine, Duck was appointed by the

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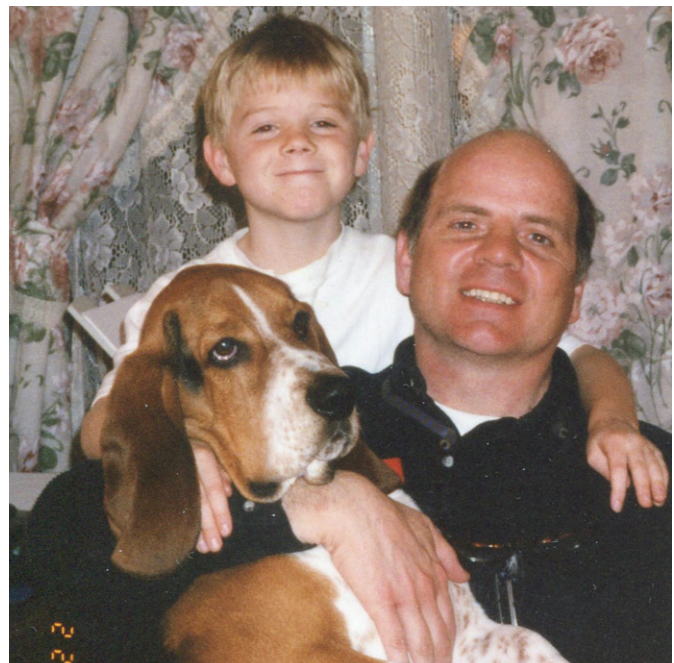
Dr. Duck and his wife Cindy

Governor to sit on the Wyoming Aeronautics Commission last March after sitting on local airport boards for several years. “You’ve got to get involved on the local level,” he said. He has had a lifelong passion for aviation and obtained his pilot’s license at an early age.

When asked what people might not know about him, Duck shared that he loves music. He can play guitar, loves to sing and has even been known to unexpectedly sing a song instead of deliver a speech.

He is an avid reader and loves to play golf. You may also see Duck shredding the slopes on his snowboard- which is not a surprise when coupled with the youthful and energetic nature that he emanates.

Kindled by intentionality and gratitude, Duck’s attitude towards life and leadership has earned him many incredible opportunities and genuine, long-lasting relationships. After taking a moment to reflect on our conversation, he returned once again to discussing his friendships and family. He closed the discussion by saying, “I am blessed... I am one blessed individual and faith has seen me through.” 



Dr. Duck with his son Zachary and beloved basset hound Harley