

Physician Spotlight:

Roger E. Schultz, MD, Hampton Roads Urology

Beth Scharlop, MD, Womancare of Williamsburg

If you think it's strange to discuss abnormal bleeding or premature contractions over dinner, you definitely didn't grow up in Roger and Beth's house. Beth Scharlop, MD, OB/GYN at Riverside's Womancare of Williamsburg, is honest about how "nothing was shocking to hear at the dinner table" when her son and daughter were growing up. For Beth and her husband, Roger Schultz, MD, of Hampton Roads Urology, work often finds its way into family life.

From Med School to Marriage

These seemingly unusual conversations aren't very surprising considering that Roger's and Beth's paths have always intersected through their journeys towards careers in medicine. They met during their first year at Mount Sinai Medical School when they were paired together as lab partners. "The class was divided alphabetically, and we were right next to each other," Roger remembers.

Later, Roger and Beth discovered they had each received their first choice for residency, the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. During their years in Pennsylvania, the couple got engaged and married in 1983.

Roger and Beth moved to Virginia when Roger received a Naval assignment to Portsmouth Naval Hospital. Beth began working at Virginia Beach General Hospital. When Roger's assignment ended in 1989, the couple received two job opportunities in Williamsburg. They have lived in Williamsburg ever since, each joining Riverside within the past five years.

Out of the Office

In addition to managing successful medical careers, the pair has always made time to pursue other interests. Roger's hobbies span the spectrum from performing in a Klezmer band to snapping photographs half a world away. "Bagels and Fraylox," the Jewish Klezmer band in which Roger plays clarinet and sings, boasts several notable gigs and two CDs. The original members have been playing together for 13 years, and Roger's most memorable performance took place in front of 500 guests at a lavish Hanukkah party, thrown by Virginia Representative Eric Cantor in Washington, D.C. Locally, the popular group has performed at the First Night celebration and An Occasion for the Arts in Williamsburg.

Inspired by his individual and family travels, Roger took up photography. Teaching himself how to capture memories on film, he seeks out the strange. "The weirder, the better," Roger says. "I love to be in places totally unlike here." This drive has sent him to Thailand, India and Tibet, among many others. He asserts, "There is nothing more foreign than drinking yak butter tea with Tibetans in a mud hut heated by a yak dung fire." Most of us will have to take his word for it.

Beth shares Roger's love of travel, and the couple loves traveling together and with their two children. In addition to her own excursions, Beth has joined Roger on many adventures, including a trip to South Africa through the People to People Ambassador program. The trip placed the couple in some of the poorest areas in the country, revealing the marginal health care

available to citizens. “It was the kind of trip that reminded us we don’t have any real worries in our life,” Roger remembers. “You kissed the tarmac when you returned home.”

While the People to People trip was a structured program, Beth remembers a family trip to Spain, where they created their own ambassador experience. “We had an acquaintance who allowed us into OB/GYN surgeries. We were in operating rooms in Madrid and Barcelona. It was our own personal People to People trip,” she says with a smile.

Without hesitation, Beth lights up as she talks about the next trips on the family’s agenda. “We’re going back to Israel, where we haven’t been since 1987, and we’re also planning a trip to Chile.” With Roger’s interest in Spanish-speaking countries, Beth says, “Learning Spanish is on my list of things to do.”

Committed to the Community

That’s an ever-growing list, as Beth also nurtures a passion for the arts, an interest—like traveling--she attributes to growing up in New York City, where performing arts were a part of life. “Living in the city definitely exposed me to the arts and to lots of diversity,” Beth explains. “My neighborhood and high-school were multi-cultural, and I knew people from many different backgrounds.”

She brought this passion to Virginia and serves on the Williamsburg Board for the Virginia Arts Festival. Additionally, Beth helped launch the Virginia Peninsula Jewish Film Festival. The annual festival is held at Colonial Williamsburg’s Kimball Theatre and is celebrating its 11th year.

At home, Beth stays active in her children’s lives. She served on the PTA while her children attended Lafayette High School. She now enjoys participating in a local book club and serving on the Board of Directors for the United Jewish Community Center of the Virginia Peninsula.

Like Beth, Roger devotes time to organizations he values. He is a dedicated board member for the Williamsburg Community Foundation, where he helps raise support to improve areas such as education, health and safety in the community. He has worked his way through the ranks of professional associations and now serves as the Vice Chair for the American Urological Association’s Coding and Reimbursement Committee.

Roger also took part in a venture to expressly improve the lives of his patients. Together with one of his patients, Roger wrote a book titled “Humanizing Prostate Cancer: A Physician-Patient Perspective,” intended to help newly diagnosed patients understand and process their condition. “We purposely wrote the book in an easy-to-understand way,” Roger says. “We got rid of the medical jargon without losing the message that this disease is not always lethal, and patients can do something about it.” Several pharmaceutical companies have been awarded grants to receive mass quantities of the books to distribute to physicians nationwide who, in turn, can give them to patients.

Family Ties

While the pair is a continual source of inspiration for others, Roger and Beth draw inspiration from their mothers. Roger's mother, Shirley, is a retired New York City school teacher and Beth's mother, Edythe, is a retired geriatric social worker. Shirley and Edythe are both 89 years old and live in Williamsburg.

Despite the potential for the conversation to turn a bit graphic, if you ever get invited to dinner with Roger and Beth, be sure to accept. Not only are they a couple who genuinely enjoy each other's company, they're engaging, down-to-earth individuals intent on living life to the very fullest.

"Humanizing Prostate Cancer: A Physician-Patient Perspective" is available through Amazon.

Learn more about the Bagels and Fraylox Klezmer Band at www.fraylox.com.

He Said/She Said

We put Roger and Beth to the test to see how well they know each other after 28 years of marriage. Like “The Newlywed Game,” we asked each physician to predict how their spouse would answer questions about work, life and marriage.

What would Beth say?

He said...

She actually answered...

1. *What’s the best part of being married to another physician?*

They understand the schedule, especially being on-call. And you can laugh about work together.

They understand your life and can talk to you about the issues you deal with every day.

2. *What’s the most difficult part of being married to another physician?*

The on-call schedule.

The schedule.

3. *I know it’s going to be a long night at work when I answer the phone and Roger says...*

“I’m still getting paged.”

Nothing. It’s a long night when I can’t even get him on the phone.

4. *The most popular topic of conversation at the dinner table is...*

The kids’ activities.

Overheard phone conversations about abnormal bleeding or early labor.

5. *What activity do you enjoy that might surprise people?*

Jazzercise.

Jazzercise.

6. *If you had an unexpected day off, how would you spend it?*

Shopping.

Shopping, time with friends, going to a museum or to the beach.

What would Roger say?

She said...

He actually answered...

1. *What’s the best part of being married to another physician?*

They understand. You can talk to them on the same level.

She understands my work.

2. *What’s the most difficult part of being married to another physician?*

Night call.

On-call obligations.

3. *I know it’s going to be a long night at work when I answer the phone and Beth says...*

“There’s another patient in labor.”

“I’ve got another woman in labor.”

or

“I need you to...”

4. *The most popular topic of conversation at the dinner table is...*

Work stuff. (It's not popular,
but it's frequent.)

Politics.

5. *What activity do you enjoy that might surprise people?*

Riding motorcycles. (I think most people
know about his music and traveling.)

Music, travel and photography.

6. *If you had an unexpected day off, how would you spend it?*

Kayaking or biking.

Kayaking or biking.