

Know your DCMS President Introducing Stephen Ozanne, MD

by Lauren Cowling, director of communications

If the new DCMS president wants to hear music in the OR when he's repairing a herniated disc, he could play a recording of his own music. Stephen Ozanne, MD, could choose a violin selection from his college days or a guitar riff from his current band. He may be the first of 125 previous DCMS presidents who has a bachelor of arts degree with an emphasis in violin performance.

In high school Dr. Ozanne wasn't sure of the career path he wanted to take, so the young violinist asked his violin instructor for advice. The instructor told him, "You are a good musician, but not great. You will make a better living as a doctor, and you can always enjoy music as a hobby." And so he has.

Dr. Ozanne grew up in suburban Chicago and Washington, D.C. When his family lived near Chicago, his mother worked in a cancer research lab at Northwestern University, and he was fascinated by the microscope slides of her research. His mother introduced him to more health- and science-related activities through museums, exhibits and home science projects.

Dr. Ozanne grew up admiring his family physician and always thought he would enjoy being a physician, but he had another passion, as well—music.



Dr. Ozanne's desire to play and write music started when he was young as he watched his parents sing in their church choir and listened to his father play the piano. His father encouraged him to work hard and be disciplined in all things. This advice led Dr. Ozanne to the University of Maryland, where he became the orchestra's concert master as he pursued a music major and pre-med minor. He was accepted to the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore and, upon completing his first year, married his college sweetheart, Bev. After navigating his way through medical school and a few rounds of rotations, Dr. Ozanne realized he was passionate about orthopaedics. He chose a subspecialty in spine because he likes the challenge of helping those patients explore nonsurgical treatment options first in advance of spine surgery.

Dr. Ozanne has been a DCMS member since 1986 but became more involved with the society through his wife's participation with the DCMS Alliance. Through that group he was introduced to Project Access Dallas in 2005 and began volunteering his time to the program. His deep involvement with PAD comes from his deep faith in the Lord. His outlook on being a physician is unique in this interesting time for health care. He says, "Bottom line, we're here to help people."

He credits his faith and Christian values for developing who he is as a physician, and says that, because of his beliefs, he has more grace and compassion toward his patients. This empathy continues on his overseas mission trips. He recalls a trip to Cambodia as "eye-opening and rewarding." It was one of his favorite mission trips, and reminded him "how much we have and how much good we can do with very little resources."



Dr. Ozanne participating in a surgery.

This attitude pervades his office, Cedar Hill Spine, where he has been in solo practice since 2000 and where each patient room has a prayer request box. Patients frequently say that Dr. Ozanne and his staff treat them differently than do other medical offices. This could be because Dr. Ozanne's philosophy about his practice is, "A medical practice should be about people."

When Dr. Ozanne isn't practicing medicine, he is soaking up as much family time as possible in his Grand Prairie home. He and Bev have been married for 31 years and have two children. Rachel, 26, is a graduate student at the University of Texas and hopes to be a history professor. Ben, 24, is following in his father's healthcare footsteps as a student at Parker College of Chiropractic Dallas. His daughter-in-law, Lucy, works in the Grand Prairie school system.

Dr. and Mrs. Ozanne are involved with their church and participate in its worship ministry in addition to mentoring and providing support to marriage and families in the church. His band — the Docit Band, a two-man guitar group — plays original rock, blues and folk-style music. The second man in the group is his neighbor and they enjoy playing at local neighborhood gatherings.

Dr. Ozanne plans to bring his attitude of caring to his role as the 126th DCMS president. "I want to help



Lucy, Ben, Rachel, Bev, and Dr. Ozanne after Bev's graduation from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary with her master of arts degree in marriage and family counseling in 2009.

us keep in mind the heart and joy of being a doctor in the midst of a changing healthcare climate," he says, "and highlight and encourage the spirit of community service, plus emphasize local solutions for healthcare issues." **DMJ**



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