

THE LEBANON DEMOCRAT  
and WILSON COUNTY NEWS  
Sam Bradshaw McFarland  
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by Marcia Poley



Chat With 'Dr. Sam' Shows His Warmth, Humor, and Sincerity

Dr. Sam. That's all the identification needed really. That is how he is known to his host of patients, friends, associates, and admirers.

It is a short name for a man who is mighty big in the hearts of many.

Dr. Sam McFarland has a way about him. He has a kindly, almost grandfatherly interest in people. And when he enters a room, the atmosphere tingles with respect.

It is a respect for his abilities as doctor, the thousands of different ways he has helped people, and for the type of man that he is.

The Lebanon Democrat had an opportunity to sit down and chat with Dr. Sam recently about his views on various subjects.

The conversation took place in his paneled medical office - - a room filled with plants, pictures of his family, personal knick knacks, a collection of carved wooden doctors and a magnificent grandfather's clock.

It is a room as warm and as gracious as the man who occupies it. "There's been a Dr. McFarland in Wilson county since March of 1941," he began.

Was that what prompted him to take up medicine as well?

"I think the thing that caused me to want to become a doctor more than anything was the fact that my Uncle Sam., in the early days of his surgery, did some operations that created a lot of local talk," he commented. "It made me feel, even as a small child, that I wanted to be a doctor and relieve people of physical deformities, disease, and injuries."

Dr. McFarland said his interest in private school education goes back to his own education.

"I went to David Lipscomb High School and College and, with the exception of my days in the old Oakland grade school, most of my education has been in private schools," he explained.

"My wife and I have always been very much interested in Lipscomb and have given enough to it to have an auditorium named for us."

That statement prompted Dr. McFarland to reveal how he enjoys a good laugh on himself.

"Two boys were at the auditorium one day, looked at the name on it, and were overheard to comment 'I wonder when the old sucker died?'" Dr. Sam chuckled.

He sat, as he talked, holding his familiar cigar. We asked about his well known habit of always having a cigar but rarely, if ever, smoking the whole thing.

He laughed merrily and related: “I never smoked until I was about 20 – in medical school and not quite 21. Dr. Reggio Dudney and I were on the corner of Dunlap and Madison in Memphis. We were worried about our medical graduate school grades. Reggio made the suggestion that we go and get a cigar and let our troubles go up in smoke.”

I was so conscious stricken and thought so much of my Daddy that I wrote to him that same night and told him that I had violated our agreement (not to smoke) and said he would not have to send me a graduation gift.”

“He wrote back that I got so close to graduation before I broke the agreement that he would send it anyway.”



What trait does Dr. Sam most admire in a person? “Truthfulness first. The desire to work and to be dependent – not to be dependent on anymore. I admire an honest religion in both men and women. I also like modesty, especially in women.”

He also admitted with a big grin that he isn’t an avid fan of the woman’s liberation movement. “I asked my wife ‘Do you want to be liberated? And she said ‘From what?’”

*(Picture is of Mr. & Mrs. Dr. Sam B. McFarland.)*

Dr. Sam says his father was the biggest influence in his life.

“He had the ability to talk to boys and to make them understand what he was talking about. He told me once – ‘I realize that it’s not unusual for a boy of your age to get into trouble. I don’t want you to. But remember, if you do, your Daddy will do more for you than anyone else in the world.’”

We talked about the progress in medicine throughout the years. Dr. Sam says he believes the biggest medical breakthrough during his lifetime was the discovery of sulfa.

“Doctors saw many people die from such things as ruptured appendixes because they didn’t have the antibiotics to fight infection. My father, even though he recognized many diseases, didn’t have the tools, implements, or drugs to do anything about it as we do now,” Dr. Sam explained.

And what goals in the medical field would he like to see in his lifetime?

“The first is hopeless – I’d like to see the government out of the practice of medicine and the doctors given more of a free hand in making decisions which affect their patients.”

Dr. Sam expressed particular warm feelings about his patients.

“I feel that everyone who comes in to see is a friend in some way.”

Dr. Sam, who is in his 70’s, put in a day which would be remarkable even for someone much younger.

He arrives at the hospital about 5:30 or 6 a.m., eats breakfast in the hospital kitchen, and gets home – if he’s lucky – between 7 and 11 p.m.

That is his schedule every day except Sunday, He tries to keep most of Wednesday free, but one Wednesday recently he was in surgery from 1 a.m. to 1 p.m.

It’s been a busy, productive life for Dr. Sam, and he shows no signs of slowing down. As far as retiring, he says:

“As long as I feel able to work I do not plan to retire. I don’t feel like deserting any of my patients if I am able to help them.

And the philosophy around which he carries on his daily life?

“I try to do the best I can by each patient that I see, and I try not to leave the hospital until I feel I’ve accomplished all that I can on that particular day.”

Editorial Comment: No Descriptive Measure

By Sam Hatcher

Democrat Editor

Since this writer can remember, the name McFarland has been synonymous with health care in Wilson County.

But long before this generation the name McFarland was carved into the medical history of this community.

In 1917 the McFarland Hospital was established by Dr. Sam W. McFarland, the uncle of Dr. Sam B. McFarland, the honoree of this special tabloid issue.

The first building housing this early 1900 health care idea was constructed with ten patient rooms, an operating room, kitchen and dining room.

During this period there were no regular staff personnel and all county doctors were extended the privilege of practicing medicine at the hospital.

The hospital remained in the same structure until 1938 when today’s honoree made its first addition including a new surgery room.

For the next three years he made other additions to the facility and by the end of 1941 there were living quarters for nurses, a lower-level dining room and kitchen, a new delivery room and a minor surgery area plus the addition of patient rooms.

In 1953 more additions were made to the facility and in 1955 an agreement was reached to have located on the premises a pharmacy to serve patrons of the hospital.

More additions came in 1961 with 11 new private and two semi-private patient rooms, a new delivery, a new minor surgery, larger nursery and larger laboratory.

“Dr. Sam” is a man responsible for all these changes. He personally changed health care in Wilson County as he motivated Lebanon’s pioneering ten bed hospital in 1917 to a health facility of 74 patient rooms in 1961.

For about 150 years there has been a McFarland practicing medicine in Wilson County according to the history books.

But it is what the history books do not point out that our community is most grateful.

The records tell of college degrees and professional accomplishments but fail to show the extreme generosity of one Dr. Sam B. McFarland.

The printed word does not touch upon this man’s contributions to education or to charitable organizations. There is not a punch clock record to show the number of hours he has paced hospital corridors, chewing the end of an old stogie, and anxiously awaiting the live or die verdict on a patient that he may or may not personally know.

Dedication has no measurement just as the other good qualities of this man. There is not a price tag, a yard stick, or gauge that can accurately register this one man's influence on Wilson County. To say we are grateful, appreciative and indebted is only a beginning.

A simple thank you is certainly a gross injustice but perhaps it's the phrase best understood.

Thank you "Dr. Sam".

Good Samaritan Receives Award  
Dr. Sam McFarland  
By J. Bill Frame  
Democrat, Editor Emeritus

To say that Dr. Sam McFarland has become a "legend in his own time," while true, that designation has been applied to so many that it does not have the same significance that it once did.

So, in searching for another designation that would be altogether fitting and proper, it seems to me that the best one would be that he is our one really Good Samaritan. He most assuredly fits all of the requirements for that title.

If he ever turned down a patient because of lack of money, I have never heard of it. That is one good reason, because he has treated thousands of patients and many of them could not, and have never paid him for the services received.

That is just one reason.

Others that seem to me fully qualify Dr. Sam for the title is his contributions to needy individuals. While not of record, he has made it possible for many to eat, be clothed, housed, and in many other instances get an education. His contributions to churches, educational institutions, and service organizations is legendary.

So, I feel that the title of Good Samaritan is deserved, and in addition, I want to award Dr. Sam probably my last Cedar Bough.

I met Dr. Sam when he first came to Lebanon to take over McFarland Hospital, I knew he would need printing, so I went to see him. Needless to say, I got several printing jobs, and continued to receive them for several years. I have known, loved, and respected him through the years, and that love, and respect has always increased the longer I have known him. Several thousand others feel the same way.

So, may I join the legion in paying tribute, and wishing for Dr. Sam many more years of service to the people he loves.

'Dr. Sam:' A Good Man For A Good Cause  
Dr. Sam McFarland Appreciation Dinner – August 30 1980  
Friendship Christine School, P.O. Box 727, Lebanon, TN 37087

Editor's Note: The following is the text used by Dr. Joe F. Bryant in addressing an organizational banquet for the McFarland Day celebration.

It is a great personal honor for me to be here tonight to participate in the "kick-off" meeting for Dr. Sam's dinner on August 30, at which time we will show our appreciation to Dr. Sam McFarland for his lifetime of service to the people of Wilson County and to contribute to Friendship Christian School.

“A Good Man for a Good Cause.” This affair is to honor the achievements of a great man – and without this man – we would not be here tonight.

From the moment I entered the building a little while ago, I felt the warmth and excitement that this group has produced. We have come this evening as loved one, neighbors, patients, and friends. It is obvious that you have great admiration for the faith, judgement, leadership, character and service of Dr. Sam. I’m sure he has befriended many of you who are here. It is good to know that the really significant work while is being done at Friendship has attracted the interest and support of so many people.

Beginning in September of 1973, Friendship Christian School met in the borrowed facilities of the College Street Church of Christ. Grades seven, eight, and nine opened that year with 59 student. After three years at College Street, it moved to this new million dollar building in the fall of 1976 and graduated the first senior class of 20 members in 1977. Also, in the fall of 1976 an elementary school was opened and at the present time a full kindergarten through 12 operation is in progress with an approximate enrollment of 400 students. There will be 27 faculty members this fall.

Friendship Christian School is an institution that has become a school truly dedicated to the best interest of the young. It gives students an opportunity to attain a quality education in a spiritually wholesome, controlled environment and provides a strong and sound moral code; a code that teaches our children respect for other people for worldly authority, and for God’s law.

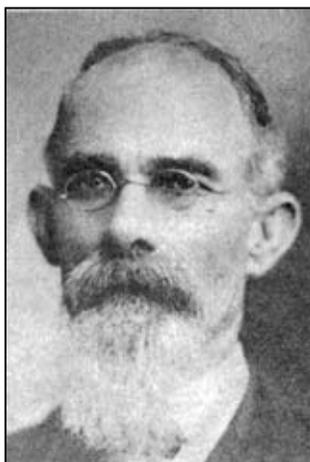
It is important fact that Dr. Sam deserves credit for what Friendship school is today. All of us owe a debt to him which can never be repaid. Even the most complex proposal seems simple after one has shown the way, and it was Dr. Sam who showed the way, despite the doubters and obstructionists. His dreams were massive; there have been so many milestones. Medicine has been his life’s work – a long life of work, and enduring work indeed! He has loved it and so many of you love him for what he has meant to you. Dr. Sam is a man who loves his God and his fellowman; a kind, compassionate man – and when he encounters one of the needy, he doesn’t stutter with his pocketbook.

Can we ask less of ourselves? This is where you come in. We have a challenge and a hope. A great challenge cannot be faced except by a strong and united group. Our job is to get these invitations delivered and have the largest group of people ever on this hill on August 30 to honor the achievements of a great man. This is the work that awaits us all. We want to show the love and devotion to Dr. Sam that he has shown in so many ways, at so many times, to so many people. You are working for ideals, and for a purpose. You have come here this evening to prove what men and women can do through hard work, staying close to the job and a willingness “to do anything that needs to be done.” How grateful I am. If enough people begin, right now, to work together to do the best they can with the task before us, we can make this a night Dr. Sam will never forget. It will be a great night, and one that I suspect all of us will reflect upon for years to com.

If you want to do something for yourself, do something for someone else.



Dr. James McFarland  
Great Grandfather of Sam B.  
McFarland



Dr. Billy McFarland  
Grandfather of Sam B.  
McFarland



Dr. Jerry McFarland  
Father of Sam B.  
McFarland

## PROCLAMATION



WHEREAS, SAM BRADSHAW MCFARLAND of Lebanon in Wilson County of the State of Tennessee has demonstrated deep interest in knowledge and education from his early education in the schools of Wilson County though his higher education at David Lipscomb College and the University of Tennessee Medical School and through his internship in surgery at Grace Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, and through his constant updating of his own professional skills and those of others with the writing and delivering of scholarly papers and through his unflagging support of educational institutions such as Cumberland College, David Lipscomb College, Castle Heights Military academy, Georgia Christina School and Friendship Christian School...

*(His profession is medicine and being a surgeon in a small town is how it all started.)*

WHEREAS, Sam Bradshaw McFarland in his gifted practice of medicine and surgery in Lebanon of forty-eight years has bettered and extended and saved lives of countless persons, unselfishly, often at the expense of his needs and interest in a practice unmarked by avarice...

WHEREAS, Sam Bradshaw McFarland has shown himself to be a man profoundly immersed in the tides of human experience through his charitable activities and civic interest as shown by membership on the Board of Trustees of McFarland Hospital, holding office in the Wilson County Medical Association, membership in the State of Tennessee Medical Association, membership in American Medical Association, membership in the International College of Surgeons, life membership in the American Society of Abdominal Surgeons, Chairman of the Board of Friendship Christina School, silver membership in the Men's Garden Club of America, and through numerous gifts and donations to causes and person in need...

WHEREAS, Sam Bradshaw McFarland devotion to his Lord Jesus Christ is in evidence daily and is reflected through his support and attendance of his church and its programs, The College Street Church of Christ, and thorough his being instrumental in establishing the Highland Heights congregation by purchasing the property, building the first preacher's home, serving as an elder for several years, and supporting a missionary nurse in Africa...

WHEREAS, Sam Bradshaw McFarland is a loving husband, father, father-in-law, and grandfather to Gwendolyn Moss McFarland, Gay McFarland Chamberlain, Sam Grady McFarland, Jerry Allen McFarland, James West Chamberlain, Cherly Whitaker McFarland, Katherine West Chamberlain, Dawn Chamberlain, Allen McFarland Chamberlain, James Howard McFarland, Mary Gwendolyn McFarland, Jerri Ann McFarland, Sam Allen McFarland...



WHEREAS, Sam Bradshaw McFarland is a known benefactor of mankind as shown in the many honors bestowed on him, some of which include the dedication of McFarland Hall at David Lipscomb College in his honor, the Edgerton Civic Award presented by the Lebanon Woolen Mills, being made Colonel of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Colonel under the administration of several governors of Tennessee, the Silver Beaver Award from the Boy Scouts of America; and as shown in his unceasing efforts to better McFarland Hospital throughout the years he supervised its development... *(Picture: Dr. Sam, the father of three; Gay Chamberlain, Sam Grady McFarland, and Jerry McFarland, holds his daughter shortly after his birth. Dr. and Mrs. McFarland are the grandparents of eight.)*

WHEAREAS, Sam Bradshaw McFarland has revealed a deep devotion to the land of Middle Tennessee in years of productive farming and cattle-raising...

WHEAREAS, gratitude and honor and appreciation are meager words for the debt we the undersigned, on behalf of ourselves and of all those whose lives and whose descendants' lives have been touched by the beloved "Dr. Sam" owe to SAM BRADSHAW MCFARLAND...

WE DECLARE THIS THIRTIETH OF AUGUST NINETEEN HUNDRED EIGHTY TO BE DR. SAM B. MCFARLAND DAY.



Dr. Sam accepts a light for his cigar from a hospital employee and awaits dinner in the hospital's old basement kitchen.

*Dr. Sam McFarland was highly respected and loved by my grandmother, Audra Camilla Anderson. Audra broke her hip and her doctor was Dr. Sam McFarland who gave her medical care while she was in the McFarland Hospital in Lebanon, TN. She had this newspaper article in her scrapbook along with warm remarks about Dr. Sam McFarland. My grandmother would stay with her sister, Ollie Julian when she was in Lebanon. She was very close to her sisters & one brother. See Family Sheet for Virgil Timothy Denny - - Chapters 4 & 5 for more Denny information and Chapters 1-4 for Anderson family information.;*

*By Audrey J. Denny Lambert*

[www.ajlambert.com](http://www.ajlambert.com)