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Jack Glasser retiring after 41 years in medicine

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Dr. Jack Glasser, a family medicine specialist in Bowling Green and a for University from 1969 to 1973, stands among his WKU baseball and basketball memorabilia next to Greenview Hospital as he prepares to retire from his medical career. (Photo by Grace Ramey/[photo@bgdailynews.com](mailto:Ramey/photo@bgdailynews.com))

Grace Ramey

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As tough as it was for Jack Glasser to leave behind his catcher's mitt and chest protector after an All-American baseball career at Western Kentucky University, his decision this month to hang up his stethoscope and tongue depressor may be harder.

Glasser, a family medicine doctor in Bowling Green for the past 41 years, will retire at the end of the month from a career that often required him to be as hyperactive as he was behind the plate or on the basepaths.

"It's going to be hard to slow down," the 69-year-old Glasser admitted Wednesday during an interview at his Glasser Clinic office next to TriStar Greenview Regional Hospital.

"I'm a little nervous," interjected Janice Glasser, the doctor's wife of 46 years. "He's a very energetic person. This will be a new challenge for us, but I think it's going to be fun."

Fun is a route that Jack Glasser chose not to take back in 1973, when he finished his WKU baseball career with a .326 batting average and an

armload of honors that included WKU Athlete of the Year and that All-American award.

An excellent defensive catcher whose hustle and speed was often bad medicine for Hilltopper opponents, Glasser was good enough to consider following the path of WKU teammate and batterymate Don Durham, who pitched for both the St. Louis Cardinals and Texas Rangers in a brief Major League Baseball career.

Glasser attracted attention from the Cardinals and other MLB teams but opted to study medicine at the University of Louisville.

“He was the real Moonlight Graham,” said Dr. Gene Harston, a retired Bowling Green cardiologist and longtime friend of Glasser’s, referring to the character in the “Field of Dreams” movie who abandoned his professional baseball ambitions for a career as a hometown doctor. “He could’ve made a career in baseball.”

The analogy isn’t far off.

Like Graham, Glasser ditched baseball but still fashioned an all-star career of sorts by meeting the health care needs in the town where he grew up.

A graduate of the now-defunct College High School that was associated with WKU, Glasser came back to Bowling Green in 1980 after serving his residency in Gainesville, Fla.

First located in the CDS No. 7 building that was at Broadway and U.S. 31-W By-Pass, Glasser's practice moved to Graves-Gilbert Clinic for a few years and then to the Glasser Clinic in 2011.

"I've been going to him for 25 years or more," said Jody Richards, the former state representative from Bowling Green. "He just has such a wonderful manner and gives good advice on staying healthy. A lot of patients, once they start with Dr. Glasser they stay there."

That loyalty, said Janice Glasser, was due to her husband's approach to medicine that she said is summed up

by the motto “Curing them with kindness.”

Janice Glasser, a nurse who worked with her husband for a few years, said he would routinely come to work at 6 a.m. and begin appointments at 7 a.m.

An “old school” doctor, Jack Glasser was still making house calls in recent years.

“He’s one that has gone above and beyond the call of duty,” Janice Glasser said. “He’s a caring person who would go the extra mile. His patients literally are his friends.”

Jack Glasser would see many of those friends in a special “Red Room” at the Glasser Clinic that is filled with WKU memorabilia and such items as his own catcher’s mitt and letter jackets.

That room is a particular favorite of former WKU teammates like Phillip Vanmeter, a Bowling Green periodontist.

“He has been my doctor for a long time,” Vanmeter said. “He has been on the ball and up to date, and his professional relationships are very good. He sees my brother, my wife and my mother.”

Another longtime patient and former College High classmate, Kentucky Chief Justice John D. Minton Jr., said Glasser’s success as a physician could have been predicted early on.

“He was a high-energy performer who had high expectations for himself at every level,” Minton said. “That’s the way he approached life.”

Like many others, Minton hates to see Glasser step away from his practice.

“Now I’m going to have to find a new doctor,” Minton said. “I’m sure I won’t find one like him.”

Glasser said a search is on for a doctor to join the clinic he established and that now includes Dr. Todd Douglas and nurse practitioner Desiree Hughes.

“I want to pass the baton to younger folks who can take care of my patients and take care of me,” Glasser said. “I want to retire while I still have a lot of energy and spunk.”

He plans to use that energy for more golf outings with Harston and some travels to his beloved Disney World and other destinations.

“I’m looking forward to traveling and seeing some new and different things,” he said.

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