

# Leading on and off the field

## Dentist, coach sets example through charity work

By CHARLES MENCHACA  
cmenchaca@shawmedia.com

With his constantly full schedule of activities, Dr. Peter Smith shouldn't be too hard to spot around St. Charles.

Smith this year is coaching his 12th consecutive St. Charles Storm Basketball league team, serving in his fifth term as treasurer in the St. Charles Breakfast Rotary Club and is in his eighth year on the Renaux Manor Homeowners Association Board. In between all of this, he sees patients at St. Charles Dental on the city's west side.

"Dr. Peter Smith is an Everyday Hero, in my opinion, because it is likely he has made a positive impact on someone every day," said Bob Carne, a St. Charles resident and Smith's nominator.

Carne said Smith not only donates his time but also his talents through the Tri-City Health Partnership, which provides medical services for people in need who could not otherwise afford them. Patients are screened for dental services and then referred to dentists such as Smith.

Smith has practiced 16 of his 24 years in dentistry in St. Charles. He said he is able to participate in several community groups because he is fortunate to live a few minutes from his job, where he has a fairly set schedule every week.

"I find it very rewarding to live and work in the same community," Smith said.

As his three children grew up in St. Charles, Smith began to volunteer extensively. While Smith's wife, Judy, held several positions from 2007 to 2013 on the Lincoln Elementary School PTO, he was at her side helping to set up, plan and clean up at various events.

Smith's family has accompanied him on gift-card handouts and as bell ringers for The Salvation Army during the holidays. Smith also collects unwrapped gifts with the Breakfast Rotary Club during the annual Electric Christmas Parade in downtown St. Charles.

"I want to make sure our children know that giving back to the community is a very important [part] of life," Smith said. "It reminds us how bless-



Sandy Bressner - sbressner@shawmedia.com

**Dr. Peter Smith is seen in his St. Charles dental office. Smith donates his time and dental skills to the Tri-City Health Partnership.**

ed we are to live in a community like this."

Smith recognized that youth sports live off of volunteer coaches, so he decided to do his part. His first coaching stint was with Tri-Cities Soccer. Then he expanded to St. Charles girls softball, boys baseball and the Storm teams.

Smith said youth sports help children grow their athletic abilities and their self-confidence. He and the other Storm coaches try to get every child to score in a game at least once a year.

Smith said coaches have to be in it for the children, and not necessarily

creating a powerhouse team.

"You have to make it fun and interesting for them – winning isn't everything," Smith said.

With his youngest child now in middle school, Smith is transitioning out of coaching youth sports. He is hopeful other parents will come forward to make a difference with the athletes.

Smith said the best approach is for residents to be proactive and seek out a group that fits their individual schedules.

"There's always some way you can contribute to something in the community on a part-time basis," he said.

### The Smith lowdown

**Who he is:** Dr. Peter Smith, an active community member who also works with the Tri-City Health Partnership

**Town of residence:** St. Charles

**Age:** 50

**Family:** Wife, Judy; children, Meagan, 18, Emily, 15, and Vincent, 12

**Hobbies:** Fishing and slalom water skiing

**Fun fact:** In 1982, while still in high school, he and his friend spent a couple hours fishing with Walter Payton – Smith's friend's father knew Payton.