

## RCH/EMS,

across the state and among their peers, the Russell County Hospital and Russell County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) continue to serve.

Since COVID hit roughly two years ago, the entities has seen packed emergency rooms, staff shortages, and other challenges, but the level of compassionate, competent care has never wavered.

“It’s been a team effort,” Russell County Hospital Emergency Department Medical Director Dr. Richard B. Perkins said. “Both the hospital and the EMS here locally, as well as statewide is very stressed - short staffed, short on beds - largely because of

the situation we’ve had with COVID, and other factors as well.”

“We’ve had to try to really mitigate some of the issues because of the fact we have been short,” he said.

Dr. Perkins said where once, if it was necessary to transfer a patient to a nearby medical facility, such as Somerset, “it’s now Bowling Green, Louisville, Nashville.”

“For the last few months, we’ve been hardly able to get anyone in at Somerset at all,” he said.

The amount of time taken for a transfer farther away is a factor, Dr. Perkins said, along with issues such as staff shortages.

“It’s really put a burden on everyone,” he said. “It’s put a stress on everyone. We’re trying to work, trying to encourage ideas to overcome this. We just don’t have people walking in the doors ready to work. In fact, we don’t have people ready to work, period.”

“This really is an issue,” he said. “Fortunately I think we’ve been able to manage without anything bad happening that I’m aware of, at least.”

“But it is a concern for all of us,” Dr. Perkins said. “Hopefully, as COVID dies down, it’s going to start to be better.”

He said he appreciates the committed and cooperative relationship with

EMS.

“We want to all work together and listen to each other’s ideas,” Dr. Perkins said.

“We work together well,” Russell County EMS Interim Director Robert Baugh said.

Baugh said the EMS and local hospital have been striving to “keep up with the demand that’s been put on us.”

He said EMS sometimes comes into play when a local medical facility may be full, or additional care is required.

“When they can’t provide the service, then we (EMS) are tasked with taking the

transfers,” Baugh explained. “With our normal operating plan...that’s overwhelming.”

“With the increased distances and the time it takes to turn these transfers around, it is putting a strain on our current operating plan,” Baugh said.

He stressed there has “never been a decrease in (ambulances) to transport patients.”

“The sudden demand, and time to get these patients out is creating a burden on us,” Baugh said.

He praised the good, solid working relationship between RCH and the EMS.

“We’re trying to work

together to get these patients out,” he said. “There’s never been a change in the treatment, or anything like that.”

“I hope we continue to work together,” Scottie Weston, a long-time EMT with the Russell County EMS said. “Patient care is what we’re after,”

Judy Withers, Chief Nursing Officer at Russell County Hospital, agrees.

“We want to make sure patient care doesn’t suffer.. at all,” she said. “That’s our goal, for everybody to work together. Whatever we face, we face it together, and we make sure patients are taken care of.”

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## SULLIVAN,

Department Store, on Main St. in Russell Springs) grew up in the quaint little neighborhood near “the four way stop,” and is presently riding a wave (There’s a pun there, but we’ll get to that later...) of renown and recognition.

Sullivan is an executive producer and writer for the smash-hit streaming series “Reacher” on Amazon.

This is the part where when people hear that, they usually scream, “WHAT? I LOVE that show!”

But it should be no surprise.

Because people around here always felt, always predicted, always KNEW he would “make it.”

With an unabashed humbleness, Scott shrugs at the mention of success.

“I never look at it that way,” he candidly commented. “To me, I’m just on another rung of a ladder I’ve been climbing since I got my first radio job at 18. Or maybe since I was six-years-old, when I did puppet and magic shows for my first grade class.”

Behind those steely blue eyes was a patient and productive mind.

All the things he’s done up to this point - the endless array of shows, plethora of projects, the gigs, the one-offs, performing to tens or thousands - it’s all part of plan which he may not have even understood himself at times, but of which he was well aware.

“I remember my buddy, singer-songwriter Jamon Scott (Who’s from Clinton County) and I talking about this kind of thing in our mid-20s,” Sullivan said. “We were working at the same radio station and I was doing stand-up at the time and he was doing his music and we talked about how when we kind of moved up a notch in the shows we were playing - and at the time I think I’d just sold my first joke to Jay Leno’s “Tonight Show” which might have prompted the conversation - we noticed that the thing that should probably feel like a big success just felt like the next step in a long journey.”

Scott Sullivan has certainly paid his dues.

Sullivan has graced the stages of area schools, theaters, and festivals, conducted a ten-year, summer Shakespeare camp with wife AshleyRose, earned various degrees (Including one from the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television), acted professionally, and even performed at the largest arts festival in the world - the Edinburg Fringe Festival,

in Scotland.

He speaks fondly of the struggles - things such as living in an old house in Cincinnati, barely being able to afford heat in the winter, or keep cool during the summer.

Those challenges built character, and through his wife, he found courage and inspiration to focus and fine-tune his career toward writing for television.

Sullivan has written for shows such as TNT’S “King & Maxwell,” and the CBS hits “NCIS: Los Angeles,” and “Scorpion.”

The three-year tenure with “Scorpion” had some sting to it.

Sullivan admits he learned a lot about all aspects of television with that show, but a friendship which developed during that time proved invaluable.

While working on “Scorpion,” he met the show’s creator, Nick Santora, who shared a like of similar things, and remembered his friend when a new show, “Reacher” came along.

Got your attention now, huh?

Yes, there are Lee Child books based on the character Jack Reacher.

And also movies featuring Tom Cruise (Also with a Kentucky connection from his days in Louisville).

But the Santora/Sullivan version on Amazon caught on BIG.

Nielsen ratings from January 31 to February 6 places “Reacher” at number two on the Top 10 list - a phenomenal accomplishment.

And that was just for eight episodes.

Viewers love the streaming version of Jack Reacher, and the Internet is filled with people who feel the Amazon version is closest to author’s Lee Child’s vision.

Of course, Scott Sullivan may have had something to do with that...

Sullivan wrote the second, fifth, and seventh episodes of the first season.

The world was thrilled to learn Amazon green-lit a second season - just three days after the premier of season one.

As millions of viewers wait for, wonder about, and want that second season of “Reacher,” Scott Sullivan keeps his cool... and his secrets.

Like one of his oft-remembered magic tricks, or the unexpected,

brilliant, witty remark, he always keeps them guessing.

ALWAYS.

So, you could say Scott’s kinda busy nowadays.

But he remains pragmatic as always.

“I’m absolutely grateful for the success of Reacher and I’m grateful that I’ve been able to find work in Hollywood for the last ten years straight,” Scott said, “but I don’t really feel any more successful or any more like I ‘made it than I did when I was doing my radio morning show or getting paid to act in a play or do my stand-up or magic or whatever.”

“I love doing this,” he said. “I loved doing those things. There have been tough times - and there still are - but it’s all part of a journey and it isn’t over yet.”

Even though enjoying success, Sullivan continues to carry the same philosophy he’s always had.

“I just do the work and, hopefully, people enjoy it,” he said. “That’s why I’m here. What I do isn’t as important as what some other people in the world do, maybe, but it’s what I can contribute. I’m an entertainer. If my stuff helps take your mind off troubles you’re having or just gives you a fun time or something to think about, I feel like I’ve succeeded. My audience is a little bigger now but, essentially, it’s the same job I’ve been doing my whole life.”

Although thousands of miles away from home, Russell County is always on Scott Sullivan’s mind.

And at times, it just may show through in his work.

“I’m sure there’s a lot of home that leaks in subconsciously,” he said. “The old saying, ‘Write what you know’ is an old saying for a reason. I’m always using examples of people and events from back home in writers’ rooms to make points or to explain a story idea to other writers.”

Scott’s time at area radio station WHVE 92.7 FM “The Wave” (Pun promised, pun delivered!) served him well.

“I know something about how local governments work because I did radio news for a good chunk of time and that comes in handy a lot more than you might think it would in the kind of stuff I write,” he said. “I can’t think of anything specifically that has made it to air but the script that got me in the business was a half-hour sitcom called “Dear Chuck Norris” about this guy who gets his life together with the aid of a Chuck Norris self-help

book and I named the character “Brian” in honor of my first karate instructor in Russell Springs, Brian Hachey.”

“Also, my dad grew up in Eli and the name Eli has appeared in a few things I’ve written or developed and will probably continue to do so until it’s finally in something that gets produced,” Sullivan said.

Whereas some people in “The Business” may not understand or appreciate the charm of a small town, Scott Sullivan embraces it.

“I never really wanted to move,” he admits. “I loved living in Russell County. I could have stayed there my whole life. My wife is more comfortable with moving. She’s moved 35 times in her life (to date). She knows exactly how to do it and took care of all of that when it came time to pack all we could in the back of our car and make the cross country drive to a tiny apartment we’d never even seen and a shot at something that seemed almost impossible.”

Scott predicts success for his perfect partner.

“My wife is a writer too,” Scott said. “Her agent is shopping her first mystery novel right now - and she is certainly my muse, my sounding board, everything. I work out a lot of story problems by talking them through with her.”

Sullivan credits small town life for keeping him grounded in Tinseltown.

“I don’t know how I might have reacted to reaching this level in my 20’s,” he wondered, “but I suspect it wouldn’t have been a lot different and I’m sure my raising had a lot to do with that. I never wanted to leave Russell County, to be honest. I loved doing what I did there. I just had to go where the work is. My wife, AshleyRose Sullivan - who grew up partially in Monticello - and I feel like we’re exactly the same people we’ve always been.”

“And we prefer small towns,” Scott said. “After living in the city for three years we moved up to what is essentially a small town in the Santa Clarita Valley in the northern part of Los Angeles County. The commute is longer - and in Los Angeles, that’s no small problem - but I enjoy my day-to-day life so much more.”

“Also, I doubt I’d be where I am without the work ethic my raising instilled in me and I certainly don’t live any kind of a ‘Hollywood’ lifestyle,” he said.

Having a good family and friends, and a caring, supportive community behind him as he chased his dreams kept Scott away from excess, and focused

on success.

“I read somewhere once, a long time ago, that the top two factors a person needs to have to make it in Hollywood is the feeling that they’re lucky and the willingness to move,” he recalled. “I don’t know if that’s true, but I get what whoever said it was saying. This is such a hard business because there’s no real, reliable path into it.”

“I mean, if you want to be a doctor or a lawyer, there’s a path and, if you work hard and have a baseline level of smarts or talent or whatever, you can follow that path and get in and make a decent living at it,” Scott said. “Hollywood isn’t that way. You can be the most talented, hardest working person in the world and just never get your foot in the door because luck certainly plays a factor. If you don’t believe you’re lucky, you’ll never stick around long enough for your hard work and talent to pay off. I don’t know if I’d say I think I’m lucky, but this is just kind of what I’ve always felt like I was meant to do so I decided to do it until I can’t do it anymore.”

“Whatever happens is just what happens and I just kept doing it until it worked,” he said. “Honestly, I thought that if I could just get to write one episode of one TV show it would be worth it. We made the move in September of 2010. I got the opportunity to write an episode of NCIS: Los Angeles in October of 2012 (It aired in February of 2013) and between staffing on shows and selling a pilot, I’ve been lucky enough to have had work ever since.”

Bringing an immensely-popular character to life in a hit show is obviously rewarding.

But one must remember Scott Sullivan is a born entertainer.

“Writing is a full time job,” he said. “Lately, more often than not, I’ve been working on two shows at once, but I do miss doing my act. I haven’t done a comedy or magic show since the spring of 2016. I’ve been too busy and it’s something that needs constant work.”

“I haven’t given up the idea of doing it again, though,” he said. “I keep a deck of cards and a few coins on the desk beside me when I write and, while I think, I practice sleight-of-hand, keeping my chops up, just in case. I don’t ever practice juggling the torch, bowling ball, and M&M I used to close my act with, though. Would you?”

Good question.

Sure, there is the

occasional fond remembrance of the past - nods to the “different” Scott Sullivans.

“I’d happily do a radio show again under the right circumstances,” he said. “Even acting is something I might want to do again but it’s a tough way to make a living.”

“I was trying it back home just before we moved out to Los Angeles,” Scott said. “I played Tom Joad in a professional production of the “Grapes of Wrath” in Cincinnati. In Louisville, I played a guy who boxed with an android owned by the Devil in a really weird play written by horror author Clive Barker. I did Shakespeare in the Park in Lexington. But auditions are tough.”

“I got sent on a shampoo commercial audition by my agent in Cincinnati,” he said. “I had the same haircut then that I have now, so...”

Scott alludes to his cleanly-shaved head, but scoffs at any “ruggedly handsome” reference.

“My hands were in a Pringle’s commercial,” Scott said. “I reached into frame and took the can away from a newscaster to make her stop shoveling them into her mouth. This poor woman had to eat a lot of Pringles and all I had to do was grab the can... and the pressure was on me because if I screwed up the timing and blew the take she’d have to eat that many more Pringles. I thought, ‘What am I doing here?’”

But that writing thing is working out pretty well for him.

Who knows?

Maybe he’ll end up back home some day.

“Don’t get back often, but I could certainly see myself moving back home eventually,” Scott said. “I was happy living in Russell County, doing a radio show, writing a newspaper column, doing my little act, occasionally acting in a play, doing the summer Shakespeare camp for kids my wife and I did for 10 years at Somerset Community College, writing a movie review column for The Russell Register.”

No regrets, though.

“Heck yeah,” he said. “This Hollywood thing was something I had to try and I’m happy - and relieved - that it worked out but it’s not who I am, it’s not my identity. I’m just a Russell County boy who worked hard, took a big chance, and got very, very lucky.”

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