

SWB'S Metzger marks 25 years

There will be a celebration today at PNC Field. It won't have anything to do with pennant races or players being called up from the RailRiders to the New York Yankees. But it will honor one of the great guys who has been there since the Triple-A franchise came to northeastern Pennsylvania, and someone who has been integral in making sure ballplayers are physically ready to give it their best shot at making it to the majors.

Chris Metzger, who has been the team physician for the franchise since its inception, celebrates his 25th anniversary today, as well as his birthday. And while I'm not privy to the exact number, suffice it to say he's not ready for the Social Security checks to come rolling in just yet.

An orthopaedic surgeon with Scranton Orthopaedic Specialists, Metzger has always been a salt-of-the-earth guy in my dealings with him, which date back to before his days as the Red Barons team doctor. He operated on my wife's mangled shoulder many moons ago, repairing it with a skill that has allowed her to resume slapping me in the back of the head when I need it, and treated her with a bedside manner that was second to none.

And though we seldom run into each other these days, he always asks about my wife, which speaks volumes to me about the man.

It also might explain why when the Yankees brought their Triple-A franchise here in 2007, they kept Metzger aboard. From what I'm told, that's an unusual move, unless you know Metzger.

Happy birthday and anniversary, Doc. And go easy on the cake.

