



# ATHLETES OF THE MONTH JIM & LIZ SMITH

With Valentine's Day approaching, we are so excited to share one of our favorite STF couples for our February Athlete of The Month feature! Meet Jim and Liz Smith!

#### About Liz & Jim:

Dr. James C. Smith and Elizabeth R. Smith, "Jim and Liz" are 93 and 90 years old respectively. They have lived at The Westminster Oaks Community in a "stand alone" house for the last ten years here in Tallahassee. Each week they come to Sweat Therapy for an hour of personal training, Liz with Kim and Jim with Brian. It is a fun hour, filled with hard work, lots of laughter and a lot of love.

Jim is a native of Birmingham, Alabama and graduated from Auburn University. In 1950, he came to Tallahassee to begin his graduate studies in Neuroscience. His studies were interrupted by the Korean War, and he received a direct commission in the Air Force when he was stationed at Lowery Field in Denver, Colorado. After three years, he returned to FSU, finished his PhD, and with a few exceptions spent the next 52 years as a distinguished professor of Neuroscience at FSU. He won numerous teaching awards, professional awards, and was even selected for the highest award the University can bestow, becoming a Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor in 1972. He ran a large research lab, published many papers, graduated 25 PhD's under his mentorship, and influenced the lives of countless others.

Liz grew up in Clearwater, Florida and also came to Tallahassee to attend FSU, arriving in 1949. She majored in microbiology and after graduating was offered a fellowship, and stayed at FSU to earn a Master's Degree in 1954. In the early 50's she met Jim, and they married in 1954. She joined him in Denver where she worked in a research lab at Fitzsimons Army Hospital until the birth of their first child. When the couple returned to Tallahassee, she was a stay at home mom raising three children. Liz was an active member of Trinity Methodist Church teaching Bible studies, chairing the Lay Academy Committee, and was one of the original volunteers at Meals on Wheels.

These days Jim's "hobby" is woodworking and at 93, he is still making beautiful gifts for family and friends in his garage shop. In the early 70's the Smiths were lucky enough to acquire a share of mountain property in Western North Carolina, and over the following 40 years fulfilled a dream of Jim's by building their own cabin from the ground up with the help of only family and friends. They enjoy sharing their unique mountain home with those they love!

Liz learned to sew early in her married life and even taught sewing at the local community center for several years. She loves words, both spoken and written- she is an avid crossword puzzle worker and even does some writing!

#### Their STF Journey:

After moving to Westminster Oaks, Jim was diagnosed with Lymphoma. He suffered through chemotherapy and going through a long hospital stay followed by weeks of rehab. He had met Kim many years earlier and in November of 2015, he decided to give her a call. "Jim played handball most of his adult life until an injury sidelined him, but he had never been an avid gym goer. Kim took him on and did wonders for him", says Liz.

Liz was always a "B-team" athlete, but jogged her neighborhood and was active in the yard. When she was 72, following rehab for bursitis, she hired a personal trainer and worked with that trainer until they retired 15 years later. It was an eye opening and transforming experience for Liz. She likes to boast of doing 80 push ups on her 80th birthday! Kim began training Liz in 2018, and in 2020 during the pandemic the Bibeaus would visit the Smiths at their home for weekly training sessions on the back porch.

## SWEAT TIPS FROM THE SMITHS:

◆ Jim says, "Kim is absolutely the best motivator I have ever seen. I tease her about being tougher than Brian, but he is wonderful and keeps me going. I walk with a walker at home and ski poles outside. I have limited mobility and many aches and pains, but coming to STF is a must and these two are well trained. They are like our own kids to us. It is never too late for their help!"

◆ Liz says, "Just going to a gym can be non-productive. You need to understand how the equipment works, and how to use it correctly. STF is innovative, personal, and the TRX straps are fabulous (the TRX Plank is her favorite exercise). The group workouts are great, and if you can, having a personal trainer can change your life. We would not be able to live on our own and do what we do if it was not for the strength and level of fitness we have been able to achieve training with Kim and Brian at Sweat Therapy. They have become cherished friends."



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