



Dr. George Herman Pierson Jr.

October 16, 1928 - July 24, 2020

George Herman Pierson, Jr., MD, passed away peacefully at his home in Greensboro, NC on Friday, July 24, 2020. George, a native son of Charleston, West "By God" Virginia, was 91 years old, and he is survived by his wife, Betty Mitchem Pierson; his three children: George Herman Pierson III, Valerie Pierson Gammage, and Holly Pierson; his daughter-in-law, Kalyn Campbell Pierson; his son-in-law, John Combs Gammage, Jr.; his three grandchildren, George Herman Pierson IV ("Bo"), Pierson Elizabeth Gammage, and John Combs Gammage III ("Jack"); his granddaughter-in-law, Nicole Cook Pierson; and four great grandchildren, Carolina Pierson, George Herman Pierson V, Declan Pierson, and Elizabeth Pierson ("Lizzie"). George was a proud alumnus of Washington & Lee University in Lexington, VA (Class of 1950), where he played on the college basketball team and struggled to learn German because, according to his professor, he could not properly speak English. He then attended Duke Medical School in Durham, N.C. (Class of 1954). After serving two years in the United States Air Force, George returned to West Virginia to practice general medicine until 1968, when he entered the radiology residency program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 1972, he and Betty moved the family to Greensboro, and he joined Greensboro Radiology, where he practiced a profession he loved with colleagues he enjoyed and respected until he retired in 1996. (The fact that he retired the year Holly finally graduated from law school is mere coincidence). Upon his retirement, Greensboro Radiology established an award in George's name to annually honor the radiology department member who showed the most compassion to patients.

George was a long-time member of Community in Christ Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, and he served over the years in various leadership positions there. George loved to sing, especially the old hymns, and he was entirely undeterred by the fact that he almost never knew any of the actual lyrics. He also served for many years as the volunteer coach of CIC's church league basketball team, where his insistence on running full court presses and various Dean Smith-inspired traps and four corners strategies often led to less than Christian reactions from his team's opponents. CIC is reputed to have led the league in technical fouls during George's tenure, but no independent confirmation of that rumor exists.

Everyone who knew George knew his love of politics – participating in them, debating them, insulting yours – the whole gamut. He was a lifelong Republican and served as the Republican precinct chairman for the Clay district for years. He felt passionately about America and the political system and was a dedicated and compassionate conservative. George believed in Reagan's shining city on the hill, and he carried that hopeful view of America with him always.

Although not a lawyer, George could wield the almighty legal pad with heft and depth. All three of his children have been (deservedly?) subjected to his legal pad based lectures over the years, and they affectionately called their collective roast of him at his retirement party "Revenge of the Legal Pad Lectures."

George was blessed to have the most loving, most fun, and most loyal friends anyone could ever want (objectively speaking, of course). You know who you are, you know the Big Fella loved you, and you know that George Knows The Way.

George was a rare and bright light who gave generously of his time, knowledge, and friendship to many. He will be remembered for his infectious smile and booming laugh, his quick wit, his kindness and grace, and his deep and unwavering gratitude for the many blessings that his long, robust, and joyful life bestowed upon him, his family, and his friends.

Well done, George. Well done. Rest now in peace.

Because of Covid 19, the service to celebrate George's life will be postponed until it can safely be held. The family is hopeful that the service can be held at the beginning of next year or at least by Spring. Updates on those plans will appear here, on the family's social media, and on the CIC's Facebook page.

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In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you consider a donation in memory of George to one of the following:

* Community in Christ Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund. Donation information can be found at <https://www.cicpresbyterian.com/giving>. Please specify the Endowment Fund.

* The Salvation Army. Donation information can be found at

[https://give.salvationarmyusa.org/give/164006/#!/donation/checkout?](https://give.salvationarmyusa.org/give/164006/#!/donation/checkout?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=red_kettle_brand&utm_content=uss&utm_campaign=red_kettle_national&pid=cpc:red_kettle_national::google:::uss:red_kettle_brand)

[utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=red_kettle_brand&utm_content=uss&utm_campaign=red_kettle_national&pid=cpc:red_kettle_national::google:::uss:red_kettle_brand](https://give.salvationarmyusa.org/give/164006/#!/donation/checkout?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=red_kettle_brand&utm_content=uss&utm_campaign=red_kettle_national&pid=cpc:red_kettle_national::google:::uss:red_kettle_brand)

* The Boys and Girls Club of North Carolina. Donation information can be found at <https://www.ncclubs.org/donate/>

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Through the Years with Family and Friends



Bo Pierson - August 07 at 04:31 PM



“ Our community hero will be missed by all. CIC and Forest Oaks were blessed by the life of Brother George. The medical world has lost a true friend and scholar also. Rest in peace, friend and neighbor. Your smile will be so missed. Peace in the valley for you. Patricia & Jim Routh

Patricia Routh - August 07 at 09:30 PM



“ 14 files added to the album Through the Years with Family and Friends



Herman Pierson - August 06 at 12:20 PM



“ I will always remember George as a southern gentleman, kind and caring. He was a great colleague.

Jim Weissman, MD

James M Weissman - August 03 at 09:12 AM



“ I was beyond fortunate to have George as a friend and mentor in my early years as a radiologist when I was part of Greensboro Radiology. He taught me a great deal about "reading" people and juggling the politics of medicine. His sense of humor and kindness to all of us in the department is a memory I treasure. (And, Betty, our one day New York City adventure is never far from my mind. What fun!). I'm very sad for your family's loss.

Margaret Bertrand - August 03 at 07:26 AM



“ I have never forgotten that wonderful trip to NYC -- and Mom NEVER would have taken us, on a school day no less, without you! From the taxi cab crash to the Russian Tea Room to Peter Pan with Sandy Duncan -- it was a wonderful experience and memory!

Holly Pierson - August 07 at 05:27 PM



“ I have such fond memories of Dr. Pierson from my Radiology days at Cone Hospital!! He was such a wonderful radiologist with such a kind heart - always very kind & caring to patients, as well as staff and radiography students. I loved his laugh & his smile. I always enjoyed working with him - on any shift in the department. He definitely leaves behind a great legacy

Cathy Pike Oakes - August 02 at 02:46 PM



“ 4 files added to the album Through the Years with Family and Friends



Bill Hunt - August 02 at 02:44 PM



“ Love these!

Holly Pierson - August 07 at 05:28 PM



“ Dr. Pierson and Betty are two of the nicest people I've ever known. He had an infectious smile and kindness just exuded from his personality. He drew people to him. He cared about people and was interested in their life. I will miss him very much. Much love to Betty and family. Sorry for your loss. Brenda Staley, RN

Brenda Staley - August 02 at 11:41 AM



“ I worked at Cone Hospital with Dr. Pierson from 1973-his retirement. He was a kind man and a total character. He loved people, took time with patients, gave business, political and life advice to any listening ear. He cared about the people he worked with, had an infectious laugh, noticed things about others that many did not take interest in or lend time to. When I think of him a smile crosses my face & my heart leaps with happiness. He truly was one of a kind!

Since he was such a grand story teller I will share one of my memories of him. There was a Christmas party and many from the Radiology department and spouses attended. Betty was there with Dr. P. Side note...Alice Calhoun & I attended the Cone Radiologic Technology Program from 1973-1975. We made many many mistakes readily visible to anyone paying attention. We lived together following school and worked in the department at Cone for years. We were there when Herman worked at the hospital. Alice & I were young and in full party mode at the time of the Christmas party. For years Dr. P. and I laughed and said the pictures from the party were of bribable quality. While time has passed and I seriously doubt any of us are recognizable to anyone that did not know us in those years it still provides me a belly laugh when it crosses my mind. He was a lot of things and boring was not one of them.

You have my deepest sympathy! I loved him and am grateful we shared time in life together!

Rene Parrish



Rene Parrish - August 02 at 10:47 AM



“ Rene, he would love this! Great memories!
 Holly Pierson - August 07 at 05:30 PM



“ Too many fond memories to express in words. Some pictures of the younger years along the way.



George Herman Pierson III - July 31 at 01:38 PM



“ Our sincerest condolences to you and your family, Herman. Your love for your dad always came through. May his legacy of love and service live on through each of you. With love and prayers, Sarah and Jim
 Sarah Robinson - August 04 at 07:00 AM



“ In the early 1970's as a very young teenager, I knocked on the front door of George and Betty Pierson's house looking for a job to mow their yard. (I had heard Dr. George did not enjoy yard work. What a surprise to all of us now!!) Little did I realize it would be the start of a lifetime of friendship, mentoring and guidance? Throughout the years, George has been a constant source of support and caring for the well-being of me and my eventual family. Ironically the last major discussion I had with George involved my plans for retirement. We will all deeply miss the "Big Fella" but I know that his caring and wisdom will live with me and my family forever.
 Ben Miller, Sr.

Ben Miller, Sr. - July 31 at 08:50 AM



“ 7 files added to the album Through the Years with Family and Friends



Holly A Pierson - July 30 at 01:06 AM



“ 19 files added to the album Through the Years with Family and Friends



Holly Pierson - July 29 at 12:58 AM



“ 92 files added to the album Through the Years with Family and Friends



Holly Pierson - July 28 at 04:36 PM



“ In the mid-60's, two men whom had never met . . . and had just finished playing basketball against each other at the YMCA were having dinner by themselves at separate tables at The Sterling Restaurant in Charleston, WV. One mentioned to the other to join together for dinner, and that began a life-long friendship based on mutual respect, admiration and shared family values.

Beginning while single in Charleston and carrying on through marriage, being neighbors in Forest Oaks, buying Condos in the Admirals III at the Outer Banks, vacations together, countless shared hot dogs (let's just start with 500 or 600) and more than a few beers and glasses of wine.

Dr. Pierson was among the most intelligent people I have ever met, and he used his medical knowledge to help countless patients and friends. How many of us have shared a minor ache or pain with George to be greeted the next day with a 14 page article from the New England Journal of Medicine, part of which we understood and knew would be followed up with detailed questions from George about how we were doing health wise.

He was a man of high character who truly cared for his friends and family. Valerie, Holly and Herman are most fortunate to have had George as their Father. I know several young professionals who saw him as a mentor, an encourager and a coach. He guided them personally, professionally and athletically.

The best decision George ever made was to marry Betty Mitchum, who among her many accolades, is a medal for "Best Performance in the Game of Twister when Pregnant". Betty's love for George was never more evident than the care she provided him in the last years of his life. Thank you, Betty, for taking care of my "Friend For Life".

We have shared many good times, sang many songs together, laughed and cried together, and now George is with the Greatest " Big Fella". . . GOD in Heaven.

Hallelujah . . . What a man!!

Bill Hunt



Bill Hunt - July 28 at 02:42 PM



“ Beautiful memories of a lifetime of friendship and love! Dad loved you, Kitty, and your girls (Julie, Anna, and Amy) as family, and we are all so fortunate you two gents crossed paths at the Y that fateful day!
 Holly Pierson - July 28 at 04:41 PM



“ I worked for Dr. Pierson for many years. He was always smiling and always ready to willing to share his expertise in financial matters. I remember calling him at the hospital when my son was stung by a nest of yellow jackets. He was ready to help as always! My prayers go out to a of you. He will be missed
God bless each of you!!

Barbara Goff - July 27 at 04:26 PM



“ I worked for Dr. Pierson for over 20 years . He always had a smile on his face & a story to tell when he came in the office . He was always smiling , and would willing give you some advise . A great doctor & person . He will truly be missed . Prayers to all your family .

Sincerely,
Una Bowman

una Bowman - July 27 at 08:59 PM



“ I worked with Dr Pierson as a Radiology Student and then as a Nuclear Medicine Technologist. He was such a compassionate physician . I am so thankful that I had the opportunity and pleasure to work with him . He was a teacher always sharing his knowledge with students and staff members. My prayers are with your family in his lost and thankful that he is now in his "Heavenly Home"

May God give you comfort in the days ahead.

Sincerely,
Pam Falls

pam falls - July 30 at 11:27 AM



“ Crystal Morrison lit a candle in memory of Dr. George Herman Pierson Jr.



Crystal Morrison - July 25 at 02:03 PM



“ Mrs Pierson and family,

We're so sorry to hear about Mr. Pierson. He was such a sweet man, with high spirits. No matter what he still kept a smile going. Our prayers are with you and the the family.

Crystal Morrison and family
Jimmy Garrett

Crystal Morrison - July 25 at 02:08 PM