

Obituary – William Lewis Stewart, M.D.

William L. Stewart, M.D., formerly of Westminster, MD, and recently of Highlands Ranch, CO, died November 18, 2011.

Born in Baltimore in 1925, Dr. Stewart was the son of Charles Wilbur Stewart, M.D. and Elsie Hendrix Stewart. He was married to Esther (Penny) Evans Stewart of Westminster, his beloved wife of 58 years, who died in 2008. He was a lifelong Episcopalian and was active in Ascension Episcopal Church.

William Stewart, who graduated with his M.D. from Johns Hopkins in 1951, was one of the pioneers in the establishment of Family Practice as a medical specialty. He built up a general practice in Westminster from 1952 through 1968 with a couple of years spent as a Captain in the U.S. Army Medical Corps' Occupational Health Laboratory in Edgewood, MD. He recognized that the medical schools in Maryland were not graduating enough general practitioners to meet the state's needs and approached the State Legislature about the problem. As a result, he was asked to serve as the first Head of the Division of Family Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. In 1971, he left for the opportunity to help build a new medical school from the ground up at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield, IL. He served as Professor and Chairman of that Department of Family Practice for almost a decade and implemented many innovative teaching techniques for medical students interested in becoming Family Physicians. Dr. Stewart retired in 1991 as the Chairman of the Dept. of Community Health and Family Medicine at the University of Florida College of Medicine. When he retired, he continued to volunteer in a free clinic for several years.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Stewart was a member of dozens of medical societies, residency review committees, editorial review boards and foundations and wrote numerous articles and speeches – all with the goals of attracting more students and promoting the highest standards for the education of family physicians. He was awarded the Thomas W. Johnson Award for Outstanding Family Practice Educator of the Year in 1978 by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Surviving are his daughters and sons-in-law Cindy Stewart Murphy and Keith Schrum of Highlands Ranch, CO and Erin Stewart and Curtis Martin of Bothell, WA, as well as granddaughter Erica Murphy Jones of Columbus, OH.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, April 13 at 10:30 a.m. at the Carrollton Church of God, 2151 Bethel Rd., Finksburg. Officiating will be Rev. David Meador. Interment beside his wife will follow in the Church cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research or to the charity of one's choice.

Local arrangements made by Pritts Funeral Home and Chapel, 412 Washington Rd., Westminster.