

Dr. William Lawrence Nichols, Jr.



Published September 09, 2022 08:33 AM

Dr. William Lawrence Nichols, Jr. (Bill) passed away suddenly September 7th at the home he shared with his wife of 59 years, Sharon Nichols (Moore).

Bill served as an esteemed hematologist at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. His career began with both BA ('63) and MD ('68) degrees at the University of Kansas. He served 2 years of required military service with the Navy at Camp Pendleton, CA, and then completed his residency and hematology fellowships with the Mayo Clinic. His career there spanned from 1977 to 2022. Bill was dedicated to the science of medicine, pursuing decades of research in the field of hematology, while also training subsequent generations of physicians. He was known within the Mayo hematology community for his generous manner... and his trendy socks and colorful neckties.

Bill furthered his scientific study through frequent international conferences. He and Sharon cultivated many friends and colleagues around the globe and often hosted international physicians visiting Mayo. The trips were too numerous to count, but Bill was sure to document every place traveled with photos of art museums and new cuisines they tried.

Bill was instrumental in establishing and incorporating two professional scientific organizations. He worked with special coagulation laboratory professionals to establish the North American Specialized Coagulation Laboratories Association (NASCOLA) to improve the quality of coagulation laboratory testing and create a network of education and learning. Bill served as NASCOLA president as well as undertaking several other offices and committee assignments. His latest endeavor is the External Quality Assurance in Thrombosis and Hemostasis (EQATH) organization whose mission it is to assess existing external quality assessment programs and enhance communication among the different programs. Bill served as the inaugural secretary/treasurer and worked again with colleagues to create the organizational framework.

Bill was the son of Emma Nichols (Knott) and William Lawrence Nichols, Sr. In his younger years he was a newspaper carrier, motorcycle rider, and coronet player. He loved eclectic music and held a particular fondness for NPR's Prairie Home Companion, tuning in weekly. In later years he enjoyed entertaining friends with a sunset pontoon cruise at the family cabin on Balsam Lake.

Bill was the patriarch of a large, close family. He is survived by his wife Sharon Nichols, daughter Susan Phillips (Joe), son Douglas Nichols (Patti), granddaughters Emma Phillips, Reed Phillips (Drew Martin), Mary Nichols, and Margaret Nichols, sister Linda Sharpe, sister-in-law Ann Lerner (Moore) (Skip Drinkard), brother-in-law James Moore, and many nephews and nieces.

A celebration of Bill's life will be held Saturday, September 17th at Ranfranz and Vine, 5421 Royal Place NW, Rochester, MN at 4 p.m., preceded by a gathering at 2:30 p.m. Service will be livestreamed on Ranfranz and Vine Funeral Homes Facebook page. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the American Society of Hematology Foundation, an organization focused on philanthropic investment in sustaining the future of hematology as a vibrant, flourishing career path in both academia and clinical practice. The ultimate beneficiaries of gifts to the ASH Foundation are patients battling blood diseases.

Ranfranz and Vine Funeral Home is honored to be serving the Nichols family; to share a special memory or condolence please visit www.ranfranzandvinefh.com