



## Bruce E. Northrup, M.D.

December 30, 1938 - July 13, 2019

Bruce E. Northrup, M.D. of Dunwoody Village, Newtown Square, PA. died peacefully on July 13, 2019. Beloved husband of Fran C. Northrup, and devoted father of Nicole Elizabeth Beer (Jeffrey) and Michael Vincent Northrup (Samantha Evans); also survived by 4 grandchildren: Luke, Mia, Lincoln and Noah; sister- in- law, Cari Lyn Vinci and brother- in- law, John "Bud" Curva (Judy).

His Memorial Service will be held on Thurs. July 18, at 11 AM, at The Church of the Redeemer, 230 Pennswood Rd., Bryn Mawr PA 19010. A reception will follow. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Northrup Family Medical Legacy Scholarship, The Ohio State University, Development & Alumni Affairs, P.O. Box 183112, Columbus, OH 43218-3112.

Born in Zanesville, Ohio, Bruce Northrup was the son of the late Dr. and Mrs. Edgar Northrup, and the grandson of Dr. and Mrs. Clarence E. Northrup. He graduated from Marietta High School, Amherst College, and The Ohio State University Medical School. Upon graduation, he served two years in Viet Nam as an army doctor in a M.A.S.H. unit.

Following his military service, in 1968 Bruce was selected as the only Neurosurgical Resident at Johns Hopkins University Hospital, eventually serving as Chief Resident. He met and married Fran Curva in 1970. In the

years following his training, he practiced neurosurgery at Penn State's Medical School in Hershey, Pa., the Neurological Institute in Fargo, North Dakota, the University of Pennsylvania, and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, where he was a Professor of Neurosurgery.

While at Jefferson, he co-authored several neurosurgical books, and published numerous scientific articles. During the Jefferson years, he also served as President of The Pennsylvania Neurosurgical Society, as well as President of the Cervical Spine Research Society.

Dr. Northrup helped establish the European Branch of The Cervical Spine Research Society. Most notably, as part of his Cervical Spine teaching commitment in Italy, he operated on a patient and performed the entire surgical procedure while speaking fluent Italian!

In 2001, Dr. Northrup was instrumental in the canonization of a new Catholic saint, St. Leone Aviat. Dr. Northrup testified to the Vatican tribunal, was invited to the canonization in Rome, and was honored with a private audience with Pope John Paul II.

A true Renaissance man, Bruce lived his life to the fullest. He was brilliant and had a dry sense of humor; often referred to as "the absent-minded professor". He had a multitude of interests: music (particularly opera), mountain climbing, canoeing, and windsurfing. He played piano with his daughter, Nicole, scuba diving, ski instructor, ski patrol, heli-skiing with his son Mike, karate-black belt, tai chi and wine connoisseur. Bruce ran three Marine Corps marathons and a triathlon, he enjoyed long-distance biking, including the MS City to Shore, dog- obedience training, cooking, languages, history, and astronomy.

He was a lifelong Episcopalian who was active in the churches where he worshiped. Those who knew Bruce describe him as modest, gentle, caring,

and kind. He was a mentor and role model to family, friends and to young doctors. Fran received a sympathy text that “Bruce’s ‘fierce’ love for his wife and family knew no limits and that the connection and commitment Bruce and Fran had to one another was unparalleled”.

He was a member of The American Legion, The Masons, the Philadelphia Rotary Club, The Philadelphia Dog Training Club, The Suburban Dog Training Club. The 1827 Society of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and The Men’s Garden Club of Philadelphia. Bruce was a lifelong learner. After retirement he completed the 3-year Barnes Foundation Horticultural course, and received a certificate of merit in horticulture science.

Bruce was a “doctor’s doctor”, beloved by his patients, and loved and respected by the nursing staff. Jeffersonians frequently referred to him as “the last of the gentleman doctors”!

After a life so well-lived, and a courageous nine-year struggle with Lewy-Body Dementia, we know God was waiting for his servant with open arms.

Rest in peace, Bruce, we all love you.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JUL 18. 11:00 AM (ET)

Church of The Redeemer  
230 Pennswood Road  
Bryn Mawr, PA

# Tribute Wall



“ I was a sport parachutist in the 1960s, jumping at La Fleur Airport in Northampton. On a cold, December day, in 1958 (As I best remember the year.) I misjudged the wind and landed in the Connecticut River, downstream from the Coolidge Bridge and about 100 yds. from the shore. I wasn't wearing a life preserver and was wearing a heavy coat. The water was freezing cold. I started to swim to the shore, but my coat kept pulling me under, which required a few heavy kicks to get my head above water so could take a breath before going under again. I thought my time was up, but suddenly Bruce was there. He had come (with some other fraternity brothers) to watch me jump, and when he saw me land in the water, swam out to rescue me. I made it back to shore (with his help) and was taken to Cooley Dickinson Hospital where I was treated for hypothermia, but was otherwise O.K. If Bruce hadn't kept me afloat, I think I would have drowned. I am sorry to learn he is no longer with us.  
Stuart Rose, MD

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Stuart Rose - May 06, 2024 at 12:14 AM

SF

“ From: *Stuart Rose, MD, Amherst, class of 1960.*  
*I was a sport parachutist in the 1960s, jumping at La Fleur Airport in Northampton. On a cold, December day, in 1958 (As I best remember the year.) I misjudged the wind and landed in the Connecticut River, downstream from the Coolidge Bridge and about 100 yds. from the shore. I wasn't wearing a life preserver and was wearing a heavy coat. The water was freezing cold. I started to swim to the shore, but my coat kept pulling me under, which required a few heavy kicks to get my head above water so could take a breath before going under again. I thought my time was up, but suddenly Bruce was there. He had come (with some other fraternity brothers) to watch me jump, and when he saw me land in the water, swam out to rescue me. I made it back to shore (with his help) and was taken to Cooley Dickinson Hospital where I was treated for hypothermia, but was otherwise O.K.*  
*If Bruce hadn't kept me afloat, I think I would have drowned. I am sorry to learn he is no longer with us.*  
*Stuart Rose*

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**Stuart Rose, MD, FACEP** - May 05, 2024 at 11:59 PM



*So, basically, Bruce saved my life!*

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**Stuart Rose** - May 07, 2024 at 11:37 AM

PP

“ *Pete and Barb Pizzutillo purchased the With Dee pest Sympathy Gift Basket for the family of Bruce E. Northrup, M.D..*



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**Pete and Barb Pizzutillo** - July 17, 2019 at 02:38 PM

CU

“ Dr Bruce Northrup and Fran (Chi) became great friends through our mutual commitments to the Cervical Spine Research Society. We spent many wonderful days together at meetings in North America and Europe over more than 25 years. We have missed seeing both he and Fran since his health declined. Bruce had a wonderful sense of humor. He was an outstanding physician and surgeon. He was a man of integrity. We want to extend our condolences to Fran and their extended family.

*Chris and Betsy Ullrich*

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**Chris and Betsy Ullrich** - July 17, 2019 at 02:22 AM

CM

“ I too worked in the Neuro department at Jeff. I remember him walking the halls in his suit and bow tie checking in on his patients post-op. Such a kind man. Sorry for your loss. He will be remembered forever.

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**Catherine Markowski** - July 15, 2019 at 02:28 PM

RC

“ To the Northrup family, I am a nurse who worked with Dr. Northrup in the NICU at Jeff. My best memories of him while working night shift were his late night & early morning phone calls to check in on his patients. He deeply cared about them as well as the staff. I truly share your loss. He was one in a million. Sincerely, Rae Conley

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**Rae Conley** - July 15, 2019 at 11:35 AM

SB

*My deepest condolences to Dr Northrup's family. I was honored to be a part of his Jefferson family, working as a nurse in the NICU. He was a wonderful man, mentor, and gifted physician. His patients and their families held him in high esteem. I especially loved his sense of humor. He was a special man.*

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**Sherrie Bille** - July 15, 2019 at 03:42 PM

DA

*My deepest condolences to the Northrop family . All of us who were part of the Jefferson NICU family thought the world of him. He was gentle, kind and thoughtful to everyone he met. I remember how proud he was of each of his children sharing stories about them. We share your loss but heaven has gained a wonderful soul.*

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**Donna Ambrogi** - July 15, 2019 at 08:20 PM

DG

*My deepest condolences to Dr Northrup's family. I met Dr Northrup in 1995 at Jefferson Hospital. He operated on my grandfather who was diagnosed with a brain aneurysm. At a time when my family and I were emotional and scared, Dr Northrup was kind and compassionate caring not only for his patient but their families as well. I later graduated from nursing school and worked on 9 Center where I would be taking care of his patients and seeing him regularly. He was a wonderful doctor and my family remembers him fondly to this day. You are all in my prayers.  
Diane Gallelli*

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**Diane Gallelli** - July 15, 2019 at 08:26 PM

MJ

*Also a nurse in the Neuro ICU I had the honor and pleasure of working with Dr.Northrop. He was highly respected by patients and staff. A little quirky yes, delightful, kind , caring. He was a wonderful doctor. My condolences and prayers tho the Northrop family.  
Mary Johnston*

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**Mary Johnston** - July 15, 2019 at 09:20 PM

JS

*I too was a Neuro nurse from 1990-2001. Dr Northrop was always a gentleman and kind soul. One of my fondest memories is him coming into our nurses' lounge where we would eat. He would sit at the table, talk with us and at times pick up a fork and take a forkful of food from your plate. Very endearing. I "grew up" at Jefferson and learned much from Northrop, Osterholm and Barolet as they were called. The good old days. Much love to his family*

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**jamie strause** - July 15, 2019 at 11:31 PM

LS

*I worked as a nurse with Dr. Northrup at TJUH in the Neuro ICU, the department of Neurosurgery, and in Neurosurgery in the OR. What a privilege and a blessing this was for me. His brilliant mind and his dry wit were always respected, embraced, and appreciated by us. His heart was huge. I will never forget him taking the time to quietly sit at the ICU bed of a patient who had a devastating head injury and weep. He was not just a wonderful Neurosurgeon. He was a great man and I am thankful that I had the opportunity to know him and to work with him. My prayers go out to his family. He was always so proud of you...*

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**Lynn Schneider** - July 16, 2019 at 11:11 PM

PP

*Truly an exceptional human and distinguished professional. What a delight and privilege it was to work with Bruce at Jefferson. His appearance as a quiet and reserved professional effectively hid the child-like wit and quirkiness of his true nature and the devoted warmth and love for Fran and his children. It has been an honor to know Bruce and my prayers are for him, Fran and their whole family to have peace and great joy in their multitude of wonderful memories.*

*Pete and Barb Pizzutillo*

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**peter pizzutillo** - July 17, 2019 at 02:31 PM

AP

*I was so dismayed to hear of Bruce's passing from our mutual friend, Mike O'Connor. I was on the Jefferson Neurosurgery faculty with Bruce from 1997 through 2003. I have nothing but extremely fond memories of Bruce who served as a mentor and role model to me. I can never forget when he was the President of the Cervical Spine Research Society, which helped co-found, and he gave the President's address in Charleston, SC. His devoted and beautiful wife, Fran, was brimming with pride and joy at this zenith event in their lives-so well deserved. He was a compassionate, accomplished, respected physician, a great skier, a superb husband and father and he always looked like a movie star!*

*Andrew Freese, MD, PhD*

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**Andrew Freese, MD, PhD** - July 27, 2019 at 07:39 PM