

JAMES E. McCREEDY



Age 87. Jim passed away peacefully with his family near his side on December 15, 2023.

He was born March 9, 1936, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to James S. McCreedy and Charlotte McCreedy.

Although his name was James or Jim, to his friends and colleagues, he was more commonly known as just "McCreedy".

Jim was born in a small town outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was the product of the outdoors; hunting, fishing, and adventuring in the Pennsylvania woods. His upbringing instilled self-confidence, independence, and a belief that anything was possible with hard work, determination, and high standards. After High School, he entered Westminster College New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. While at Westminster he played and lettered in multiple sports and excelled in football as a quarterback. He also quickly adapted to the lifestyle of a free thinker and director of mischief. One Christmas Jim and his friends felt that their dormitory needed a Christmas tree. In the night, he and his buddies wandered over to the President's home where a beautiful Spruce tree stood. They cut it down and dragged it back to the dorm through the snow. They were subsequently summoned to the President's office where he was told, "Young man, you will never amount to a hill of beans!" But, it was only the start of a stellar career. Many years later he started his own Christmas tree farm. Every year, as a thank you for hunting access, he hauled dozens of trees to eastern Montana farmers and ranchers – forging longtime friendships in the process.

McCreedy moved on to Medical School at George Washington University in Washington DC. Due to lack of funds, he moved into an apartment with three other students, and as night would fall, one slept in the bedroom, one in the bathroom, one on the couch, and one in the closet. Despite the inconvenience, he excelled as a student, beginning a profession he loved and cherished. He was a life-long student of medicine, maintaining this level of commitment to his medical practice throughout his career.

Jim joined the Navy as a Senior Medical Student and served at Naval Hospitals in Bethesda, Maryland; Kodiak, Alaska; Oakland, California; and Bremerton, Washington. As a young physician, he had the privilege of serving as a naval physician for Admiral Nimitz. Once, upon entering the Admiral's room, he found him watching an early television documentary film of the Battle of Midway and weeping over the loss of so many under his command. It was for the young doctor, a never-forgotten moment of his early career and fixed within him both a profound commitment to those under his care and a love of country. Admiral Nimitz personally gave Jim a signed and framed picture of the signing of the peace treaty on the deck of the USS Missouri which he kept throughout his career.

McCreedy married Kaye – a recent widow with three young boys in the late 60's. He adopted the three boys who proudly carried the McCreedy name and became the joy of his life. After serving 8 years in the Navy Jim resigned his commission to go into private practice in Internal Medicine and Pulmonology. Enamored with Montana, he and his young family moved to Kalispell in 1970. He was part of a growing wave of specialist physicians and was the first Board Certified Internist in the Valley. His background in Pulmonology and Cardiology brought new skills to a growing medical community and began to grow lasting friendships as more doctors arrived with new skills. Along with Jack Davis, McCreedy continued to grow the practice, bringing in Ben Rossetto, and Bill Boehme. New physicians were bringing new skills to a then-new hospital and the "hospital on the hill" continued to grow.

Jim McCreedy was not only a fine Internist, but also active in every aspect of the growth of the medical center. Along with Dr. Jack Davis, a state-of-the-art intensive care unit was developed with advanced personnel and new technology, and a first-class pulmonology service grew to meet the need. The faculty of the hospital grew quickly in the 70's and 80's, and deep friendships were formed. There was a close comradery among the many physicians, and all were focused on growing the needed additions to Kalispell's healthcare. They fished, hunted, visited, chased mountain lions, climbed mountains, floated rivers, knew the families, and respected one another, all the while keeping medicine at the forefront of their efforts. They shared lunch daily at the "Dr's Dining Room" where there was meaningful conversation, raucous laughter, and serious planning. Jim was often the source of endless and wonderful stories.

Jim retired in 1998. He and Kaye divorced, but Jim remained close to his now-grown sons. In February 2000, he married Donna Bolton, and they moved east of the mountains settling in Highwood Montana where he became deeply involved with breeding, training, and field trialing English Springer Spaniels. Not being one to sit around, he also began coaching High School javelin. For the next 20 years, with Donna at his side, the two of them found joy in the activities of rural Montana, spending time with their boys, and maintaining contact with all his old friends. As the years passed and age took its toll, Jim and Donna made the decision to return to Kalispell and moved into a new home in town.

The Logan Health Library has been renamed the James E. McCreedy Library not only for his contributions to medicine and to the growth of the medical community, but also his recognition of the necessity of continuing medical education for the medical staff. Jim was the perfect example of that necessity and continuous education was a hallmark of his practice. He was a voracious reader, and, on any given day, could be found in the library reading books and journals, constantly improving his patient care.

Like so many, Dr. McCreedy honored the Hippocratic tradition of Medicine, and was both mentor and example of compassionate and knowledgeable care. He was an outstanding physician, wonderful dad, lover of every Springer Spaniel who ever barked, world's greatest storyteller; friend to all, and to his loving wife.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, James, and Charlotte McCreedy; his brother, Jack McCreedy; sister, Nancy MacLeod; Brother-in-law, David Juran; and nephew, James Juran.

Jim is survived by his wife Donna, sons Clark (Christine), Phil (Elena), Chris (Tara); his first wife Kaye McCreedy, sister Prudence Juran and grandchildren Rebecca (John), Erin (Nate) Scout and, Zebediah as well as stepchildren Mark (Rhonda), Gary (Carolyn), Lindsey (Jon); grandsons, Justin (Samantha) Ben (Paula) and granddaughter Shelley (Dennis); great-grandchildren, William, Adalynn, Rylee, and George.

A celebration of Life will be held in the Spring or Summer of 2024.

The family would especially like to thank Logan Health Hospice Care and Veterans Administration (Loyal Care) for all the care and support they provided to Jim and his family at the end of his life. Friends are encouraged to visit our website at www.buffalohillfh.com to leave notes of condolences for the family. **BUFFALO HILL FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATORY** caring for the family.

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