



Robert Luther Barnes, III M.D.

April 28, 2020

Robert Luther Barnes, III, M.D. (Bob) departed this life on April 28, 2020, at the age of 74 following a valiant battle with leukemia. He will forever be remembered by his loving and devoted wife and best friend of 32 years, Laura, and his family and friends.

Born November 30, 1945, Bob grew up in Rock Ridge, North Carolina. He received a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1968 and medical degree in 1972, both from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. During his study of medicine at UNC, Bob participated in study electives in both Warwick and High Wycombe, England. After a residency at Children's Hospital of Alabama, University of Alabama Medical Center, Bob joined the practice of Hill, Styles, Rochester, and Larmee, now known as Knoxville Pediatric Associates (KPA).

Bob was the quintessential pediatrician. He was a caring physician who was loved and admired by children and parents. He loved each one of them in return. Bob was active in his practice and served on the KPA Board of Directors. He was an active member of the medical staff at East Tennessee Children's Hospital where he served as chair of many medical staff committees, as Chief of Staff, served on the Medical Staff Executive Committee and the hospital Board of Directors. He remained a member as Medical Staff Emeritus. Bob also served on the Physician-Hospital Organization (PHO) Steering Committee and as President of Partners in Pediatrics (PHO). He enjoyed serving as a clinical preceptor for Family Practice Residency Programs from the University of Tennessee Medical Center and for Nursing and Physician Assistant Programs in our community. Bob was a Diplomate in the American Board of Pediatrics, a Fellow in the American Academy of Pediatrics, a member of the Tennessee Medical Association, and the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. In 2012, Bob was recognized as Pediatrician of the Year by the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Bob was a man of strong faith and an active member of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension. He was a long time member of the Parish Choir, a Stephen Ministry Leader, Eucharistic Minister, Home Eucharistic Minister, and a Lector. He served on the Organ Committee, the Board of the Friends of Music and the Arts, and on the Vestry.

Bob was known for his compassion, his intellectual curiosity, humor and his warm laugh.

Having grown up on a farm in Eastern North Carolina, his heritage gave him a love of plants and flowers; he loved his time in the garden. He loved music and the arts, particularly the symphony and opera. He was an accomplished pianist and loved to play four hand piano music weekly with a dear friend after his retirement. He loved his home, UNC basketball, UT sports, Italy, hiking, the beach and the mountains. He went to Hurricane Island Outward Bound School both as a participant and a volunteer physician. He had a knack for languages and enjoyed studying French, Italian, and Spanish. He was preceded in death by his father Robert L. Barnes, Jr., mother Doris Lee Barnes, and infant brother Thomas Lee Barnes.

In addition to his wife, Laura, Bob will be lovingly remembered by his sister Linda Barnes Cater (Vince), brother-in-law Frank Preston (Elaine), sister-in-law Susan Smith (Charlie); nephews Robert Mayo, David Mayo (Erin), Mark Preston, Robert Preston (Sarah), Preston Smith (Emily) and niece Erin Ahlstedt (Kirk); great nephews David Andres Mayo (Bridget), Jonathan Mayo (Emily), Charles Mayo, Thomas Mayo, Charlie Smith, Tyler Preston, Derek Preston; great nieces Anna Mayo, Maria Mayo, Caroline Mayo, Laura Smith, Kate Ahlstedt, Natalie Ahlstedt; great-great nephews Ford Mayo, Colin Mayo; and great-great nieces Ella Mayo and Brennan Mayo. He will also be remembered with great affection by many extended families of aunts and cousins as well as a host of wonderful friends.

The family would like to express their appreciation and thanks to Dr. Felicia Wheeler, Dr. Jashmin Patel, and Dr. Spence McCachren at Thompson Cancer Survival Center and Dr. Douglas Leahy. The family also greatly appreciated the care and compassion of nursing and support staff of the Thompson Oncology Group, Thompson Oncology Infusion Center, 8 North, and the Ambulatory Infusion Center.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to: Friends of Music and the Arts Church of the Ascension, 800 S. Northshore Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee, 37919 or East Tennessee Children's Hospital, P.O.15010, Knoxville, Tennessee 37901.

A celebration of Bob's life will be scheduled at a later date due to the current Covid-19 restrictions.

Online condolences may be extended at www.rosemortuary.com

Comments



“ Dr. Barnes was my childhood doctor. From my youth, I remember a magnificent doctor who has instilled many positive memories despite my file being one of the two largest in the office. My only regret now is I did not get the opportunity to see him the man I have become. I will miss you, Dr. Barnes. Truly.

R.I.P



Joshua Thornhill - June 16 at 03:17 PM



“ A good friend in Medical school. hard working and devoted to his patients.
Selman Welt

Selman Welt - May 14 at 06:02 PM



“ We knew we had a good doctor in our new pediatrician Bob Barnes, but when our daughter suddenly developed diabetes at 9 years old, we learned we had a great one. Having recently moved to the area in the mid-80s, he treated not only her but the whole family in our adjustment to dealing with her disease. He didn't work alone - - he was in contact with the expert research doctors in the nation -- but primarily he was working with a gifted and compassionate nurse named Laura. They kept her functioning well in school, dealt with her challenges creatively, and never wavered in their belief that she would lead a normal, happy life. They were right! The rest is history for our kids and for the young medical couple -- Laura and Bob married and our daughter thrived despite her disease. She and our son were later counselors at the Tennessee Diabetic Camp at Soddy Daisy for over 10 years, a suggestion from Bob and a place where they could give back as well as get support. Today our kids are both professionals -- tech field and education. Although we moved from Knoxville in 1991, the city always reminds us of the kindness and quality of life that we had there because of Bob and Laura Barnes. I hope our remembrances will sustain Laura. Bob was an intelligent, gifted doctor but equally important he was an empathic and kind person. We all feel such loss at this news, but also such appreciation for our good fortune to have know Bob and had him as a children's doctor. Our regards, Cathy and Bill Colglazier (McLean, VA), Geraldine Colglazier Tunnell (Austin, TX), and Will Colglazier (San Mateo, CA)



“ Dr. Barnes was our pediatrician for all three of our children, who are now 23, 25 & 27. I say "our" pediatrician, because as we all know, he cares as much for the parents as he does the children. We absolutely loved Dr. Barnes. He was very attentive to each child and considered their unique personalities in the big scheme of things. He would pick up on small nuances about my kids that were accurate and helpful. He was always kind, gentle, patient and helpful. He encouraged me along the way and always asked about the ones not present at a visit. Dr. Barnes was an excellent physician and I trusted him wholeheartedly. It breaks my heart that he died too young. He had so many fascinating interests and was always wanting to learn more. He is near and dear to my heart; always has been.

Laura: please keep in touch and reach out. I'd love to come help you in the garden!

Kirstin Kropilak

Kirstin Kropilak - May 11 at 09:42 PM



“ There are truly no words to express our sorrow in the loss of our dear friend, Bob. He and Laura have been "family" to us for over 30 years and he was our daughter's Godfather. Bob and my husband connected through ETCH as Pediatricians (and their love of UNC basketball). It was because of Bob's positive and professional influence that my husband joined Knoxville Pediatric Associates (now KPA) until his recent retirement. He was a Prince of a man who made this world a kinder more gentle place. Rest in eternal Peace, dear friend. We continue to carry our love for you in our hearts. Always will. Wayne, Linda and Sarah Fogle

Linda Fogle - May 09 at 09:43 AM



“ I never met Dr Barnes but always heard excellent comments concerning his care for his patients. Laura, I'm so sorry for your loss. Praying for you and all the family.

Yevonne Harrison - May 08 at 04:34 PM



“ Dr. Barnes was my two sons' pediatrician. I always told everyone that he was the best doctor and the worst doctor for the same reason. He was the best because he would always take time to talk and listen so I rarely left the office feeling rushed or with unanswered questions. But, that also made him the worst doctor because he did the same with every patient so we did often have to wait. However, it was always worth the wait.

Lisa Berry

Lisa B Berry - May 07 at 03:41 PM



“ Laura,
You are in our thoughts and prayers!

I was privileged to sit next to Bob in choir for a number of years; he was a pleasure to listen to and a joy to blend with. His kind spirit and words were a joy. He will live on in my heart and thoughts... as well as living on in the eternal lifetime!

Ted Smith

Ted Smith - May 07 at 07:27 AM



“ Laura, we have never met, nor did I have the privilege of meeting your husband. I moved to Rock Ridge long after he left home, but did visit with Mary Rachael, his aunt. My grandfather and your father in law were first cousins, so my mother and your husband are second cousins. From the delightful obituary, Dr. Bob was a wonderful person and I am sorry not to have had the pleasure of meeting him. The local paper in Wilson printed a photograph, and oh, what resemblance to some of my family members through the Stanton line! My sincere condolences to you in your loss. Sincerely, Emily Shepard Scott

Emily Shepard Scott - May 06 at 11:33 AM



“ A great man and a great physician. He will be missed.

Randy Galler - May 05 at 10:56 PM



“ Laura I am so sorry to hear of Dr. Barnes passing. He was a great pediatrician and man. I knew the days he was doing newborn rounds he would brighten my day and make me laugh. Love and prayers Misty Vass, previous nurse clinician for ETCH

Misty Vass - May 05 at 11:13 AM



“ Dr. Barnes will be sorely missed by everyone. What a phenomenal doctor & person!! Both our daughters ALLISON & LAURA LOCKWOOD we're lucky enough to be his patients. LAURA is a Doctor now & shadowed Dr. Barnes. ALLISON lives in Cary, NC with her family & is an engineer. He & Laura came to her wedding. We all adored him & respected his brilliance!!
Love, Bonnie & David Lockwood

Bonnie Lockwood - May 04 at 07:15 PM



“ We were truly blessed to have Dr. Barnes as our daughter's pediatrician and will never forget his kind, calm, and comforting spirit throughout the years. We will always appreciate him and remember him fondly.

Cindy Smith - May 03 at 10:56 PM



“ This man was the best doctor I have ever known. My three children are now in their upper 30s and he took good care of them all. He was so very kind and genuine and great at what he did. It was a pleasure to have him care for my kids until in their teen years. I thank God for putting this man on this earth. He has left a mark on this world and many children's hearts. God bless this wonderful, gentle, intelligent, caring man. I could not have raised my children without him. He will be missed by many.

Debbie Bowles Fowlkes - May 03 at 08:03 PM



“ Laura,
We hope you are finding comfort and the peace that passes all understanding in knowing what a special, wonderful person Bob truly was and all the special memories you have. Thinking of you often now and hope to see you soon. I feel blessed to have known and worked with the kindest Doctor in the whole world and you, the best boss ever.
Love you,
Loretta and Lynn Maples

Loretta Maples - May 03 at 05:23 PM



“ Dr. Barnes was an influence of professionalism and calm at Children's. I started working at ETCH in 1976. He made such an impression.

Ann Bales - May 04 at 10:18 PM



“ i am so sorry to hear about your loss. He was my handicap son doctor and i feel very bless to have had him .He will be sadly missed. prayers are with you sheree ball

sheree ball - May 03 at 04:51 PM



“ Dear Laura, so sad to learn of Dr. Barnes' passing. He was a kind, gentle person who will be remembered fondly and missed by all who knew him. I met him under difficult circumstances but feel privileged to have known him. My prayers to you.
Shanda Bruner (TCSC)

Shanda - May 03 at 02:37 PM



“ Laura, I am so sorry to hear your sad news. I only met Bob a couple of times but in talking to you, I could tell how very happy you were and that he was a special man. Both of you were blessed to have each other. Keeping you in my prayers. Love you,
Brenda Shamblin Flowers

Brenda Flowers - May 03 at 12:54 PM