



Dr. William Mack Atkins

February 19, 1933 - November 19, 2014

Dr. William "Mack" Atkins, D.V.M. age 81, passed away Wednesday, November 19, 2014.

Dr. Atkins was born in Walker County, Ga., on February 19, 1933. He lived in Trion at a young age and then moved to LaFayette. Upon graduation from LaFayette High School, he attended the University of Georgia, obtaining a doctor of veterinary medicine degree in 1956. He was then commissioned as a first lieutenant and served in the Veterinary Medical Corps of the United States Army, stationed in numerous locations, including Fort Dix and Fort Monmouth. After completion of his active military service, Dr. Atkins returned to Chattanooga and opened the Brainerd Animal Hospital which he continued to operate until his death. In conjunction with his veterinary practice, he rescued and fostered hundreds of unwanted dogs and cats. Over the years, especially after he finished educating his two sons, he focused his practice and his resources upon caring for and adopting unwanted dogs and cats. This was his calling. Even at age eighty-one and in declining health, he still cared for seven cats and six dogs at his office and farm in Rock Spring, Ga., as well as numerous others at his companion's home. Dr. Atkins was a member of the American, Tennessee and Georgia Veterinary Medical Associations as well as the Brainerd Baptist Church.

He was preceded in death by his longtime companion, Regina Burns, his parents, Hugh Richardson and Mary McWilliams Atkins and his sister, Barbara

Atkins McArthur. He is survived by his sons, Joseph Blackshear Atkins, Sr., and daughter-in-law, Marybeth Robertson Atkins of Marietta and William Richardson Atkins and daughter-in-law, Shannon Atkins of Roswell, as well as four grandchildren, Mary Sutherland Atkins, Joseph Blackshear Atkins, Jr., William Banks Atkins and Mary Inman Atkins, several cousins, nieces and nephews.

The family is deeply grateful for all who have helped Dr. Atkins over the years in caring for unwanted animals, for friends and neighbors who assisted him as he became infirm, and for the staff at Memorial Hospital, particularly in the CCU and Emergency Departments for attending to him during the last days of his life.

Graveside Service will be Saturday, November 22, 2014, at 11:30 at the LaFayette Cemetery with Rev. Charles McElhaney officiating. The family will receive friends Saturday from 10:00 a.m. till 11:20 at the LaFayette Chapel of Wilson Funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks donations be made to the McKamey Animal Center, 4500 North Access Road, Chattanooga, Tn. 37415 in Dr. Atkins memory.

Arrangements are by Wilson Funeral Homes – LaFayette Chapel (706)638-1122.

Tribute Wall

JS

“ Thought of Doc Atkins today. Doc, you treated 4 generations of my family's pets, including special care for my Dad's Boston Terrier. You will not be forgotten, sir.

Jim Stevens - March 21 at 04:31 PM

JF

“ I have been in Florida and just recently found out about Doc's passing. I am greatly saddened. Doc gave me my first job at 15. My family used him for all their pets and when he found out that I was interested in animals he volunteered his clinic and wisdom. Throughout the years, he was always there for me: in fact, he extracted a bad tooth for my Pit Bull last June. I will miss him very much! There has never been a more dedicated veterinarian: we have lost a wonderful person!

Jeanne Blevins - Chattanooga, TN - Friend - February 22, 2015 at 12:00 AM

GF

“ So sorry for your loss. Your Dadzwas a wonderful person

greg laduca - Chattanooga , TN - freind - December 30, 2014 at 12:00 AM

AA

“ I shall always remember Dr. William Mack Atkins as my cats doctor and my friend!! I would say that he was the best animal doctor in this world and a mighty fine human being!!! He inspired me to have hope in humanity when I thought that I had pretty much lost it!! I loved and respected him so very much!!
I hope his son's realize what a great man their dad really was!!!!
hope to see him again one day. My cat Sara owes him a huge debt of gratitude for saving her leg, where another doctor had did the surgery wrong. All of my cats will miss him, but especially Sara,Lottie,Charlie,Misty and Roger I already miss him!!!

Annette Foutz Hammill Forbes - Rossville, GA - friend and admirer - December 14, 2014 at 12:00 AM

AC

“ I was deeply saddened to find out that Dr. Mack Atkins had passed away. I have so much admiration for him as a human being and doctor!! He is truly the best, and greatest animal doctor I have ever known! I worked part time for him for a short time, due to my health issues I had to quit. I shall miss him greatly, and all of our animals that have been his patients shall be the poorer for it. I had him on my mind and heart last week. I had gotten over my illness and was supposed to clean his office. Dr. Atkins has helped me out so many times when I was needing help for my cats and low on funds. I believe he realized how much I loved them. I remember his little dog Peanut also. I was sad to hear that little Peanut had passed away last year as well. I am very saddened by Dr. Atkin's death. and am at a loss for where to take my cats for doctoring now!! I have never trusted anyone else as much as I did him!!! He had such a love for animals!! He was always genuine in his love for them, it was never about the money!! I also had the pleasure of meeting Jean, she was the one who trained me to assist when I first went to work there. HE IS SURELY MISSED, AND THE WORLD IS A DARKER PLACE .

Annette Forbes - East Ridge, TN - friend and customer - December 14, 2014 at 12:00 AM

WF

“ I am deeply saddened by the loss of Mack. My life has been connected with his through his relationship with my Mom, Jean Burns. The two had a passion for helping animals beyond any act of compassion out there. My Mom had been facing poor health over the last several years and the two continued to care for homeless animals. The thing that strikes me most about Mack is the fact he was suffering with his own health issues as my mother got worse but he managed to never complain and showed up daily to help with the cats and her needs. He loved her deeply and for that I am grateful. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Wendy Burns Makhm - Maryville , TN - Friend - November 22, 2014 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Joseph and William, You most likely don't remember me as we only met a couple of times. I worked for your dad as kennel help in the early 1980's. He was and still is a great influence on my life. He wrote one of my recommendation letters when I applied to veterinary school. He also gave me huge encouragement when I was severely injured the summer before I began veterinary school. I would stop in to visit him from time to time and he and Jean came to our house for a fish fry. Regretfully, I had not stopped in to see him recently. I wish I had! You have my deepest sympathy. Doc was a great guy and a very dear friend.

Sincerely,
Michael (Mike) Lowrey DVM

Michael (Mike) Lowrey DVM - Flat Rock, AL - Friend - November 21, 2014 at 12:00 AM