



## Dr. John W. Phillips, Jr.

June 9, 1942 - September 16, 2020

John William Phillips Jr. MD

(1942-2020)

Our beloved husband, father, and grandfather lost his courageous battle with Parkinson's Disease on September 16, 2020. He peacefully passed at home with his family by his side.

John was born on June 9, 1942 in Ft. Smith, Arkansas to John and Annabel Phillips, the middle brother to his two devoted sisters, Judy and Janet. After graduation from Northside High School in Ft. Smith, he went on to attend Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, Arkansas. There he met and married his loving wife of 57 years, Jane Henry.

He obtained his medical degree from the University of Arkansas School of Medicine in Little Rock. In 1968 he completed an internship at St. John Medical Center in Tulsa. In 1969 he served honorably during the conflict in Vietnam as a lieutenant commander in the Medical Corps of the United States Navy.

Upon return from his service, he completed a general surgery residency at Parkland Hospital through the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. He developed friendships and professional relationships at Parkland that lasted throughout his lifetime. He made the decision to return to Tulsa in 1975 and join Surgery Incorporated at St. John Hospital where he practiced for 35 years.

Dr. Phillips was known for his remarkable bedside manner, compassion, and dedication to his patients. He was also known to be a loyal fan

to the Arkansas Razorbacks and Dallas Cowboys. His affiliation as an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine made an indelible impact on many future healthcare professionals. He received numerous honors and accolades throughout his career. He was instrumental in starting Project TCMS which provides free medical care to the underserved communities of Tulsa.

John was a loving father to his three daughters, Michelle, Jennifer, and Sarah. His brood of women continued with his five granddaughters Hannah, Annabel, Virginia, Maggie, and Lucy.

His deep faith in God started at First Baptist Church in Ft. Smith and continued with a 30+ year membership at Boston Avenue United Methodist Church. His love of Christ and old hymns carried him through his final days.

He is preceded in death by both of his parents, John and Annabel Phillips. He is survived by his wife, Jane Phillips; daughters, Michelle Hubner (John), Jennifer VanHanken, and Sarah Doyle (Sean); and granddaughters, Hannah and Annabel Hubner, Virginia VanHanken, and Maggie and Lucy Doyle; sisters, Judy Guest (Gordon) and Janet Brumley (Paul) and numerous nieces and nephews. Special thanks to Elizabeth Wanjiku and Sarah Kunihiro for their loving care in his final years.

A family only service was held at Boston Avenue United Methodist Church. In lieu of flowers, donations to Project TCMS (<http://tcmsok.org/online-payment/tcms-foundation/>) or Boston Avenue United Methodist Church Missions (<https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/bostonaveumc>) would be appreciated.

# Comments

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“ Heaven is a better place with John. He was simply the best!

**bill donahue** - December 01, 2020 at 08:29 AM

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“ Dr. Phillips saved my life. He was so kind and a very good man and doctor. Thank you.

**Muriel Dietz** - October 06, 2020 at 06:14 PM

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“ I first met John as an orderly at SJMC in 1986. He was kind, generous and supportive to all of us hoping to one day practice medicine. In 1987 he was on the admission committee to OU College of Medicine. There is no doubt in my mind that he played a critical role in my admission. I will always be grateful. He was a skilled surgeon and excellent clinician. More importantly, he was a gentleman.

**Bill Watson** - September 25, 2020 at 03:20 PM



“ John was my best friend throughout high school. We parted ways in college when after my 2nd year I left school to go into flight training in the Navy. John was a good man and a great friend. Miss you Johnnnny.

**Ralph Pate** - Yesterday at 02:59 PM

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“ John Phillips was the most admirable fellow intern and resident at Saint John Hospital in Tulsa. He and Jane made us feel welcome moving from Philadelphia in 1968. I knew first hand his wonderful bedside manner and super surgery skills. But it was his humanity that came through when we happened to visit our mutual mentor and friend, William Jacobs, MD on his deathbed. John, you will be greatly missed. You have made an enduring contribution to Oklahoma, Tulsa, and to the profession of surgery. You have raised a wonderful family, With all our love, Kay and Dan

**Daniel Duffy** - September 21, 2020 at 09:48 AM

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“ John was a friend and student of mine since 1968. I entered the practice of general surgery in Tulsa and he was an intern at Saint John. We spent many days together in the emergency and operating rooms. I had done my general surgery residency at Parkland in Dallas, then to the Army in RVN then to Tulsa. John questioned me about how to become trained in surgery at Parkland, then Navy got him. We communicated fairly often and he stayed the course to Dallas and when his service ended, he was lucky as I was to be chosen to enter and learn. He was happy and used the following years wisely and came to Tulsa to become an outstanding person, parent, doctor, surgeon, and partner of Bob Melichar and I was constantly proud of him. I remained close for a long time where I was entertained and proud of our relationship.

Jerry Gustafson

**Jerry Gustafson** - September 20, 2020 at 11:42 PM

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“ I'm not a family member but a friend with Jennifer there daughter, who is our neighbor. But in ways i feel part of the family, seeing the bad and good of life. I know that each one of Dr. Phillips daughter's will always keep the memory or there father close, and will never forget how he has made an impression on there lives. Mrs phillips, the wife will always have the great memories they shares together married.

**David korem** - September 20, 2020 at 11:19 PM

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“ I have so many wonderful memories of Dr. Phillips and consider myself & my family so fortunate to have known him and grown up in Tulsa with his 3 beautiful daughters. Of course his medical knowledge & surgical skills were out of this world, but it was his bedside manner that set him apart. He was always so calming and had a smile that would like up a room (even the OR) & his southern charm was the icing on the cake.

I remember when I was 9 months pregnant with Niemann and we had to rush Josh to the hospital in the middle of the night with a severe pain in his stomach. Turns out he needed to have his gall bladder removed. Of course, Dr. Phillips came to the rescue and performed the surgery. While in recovery, Dr. Phillips came to check on Josh. Josh looked him straight in the eye and said, “Dr. Phillips, thank you so much, you saved my life. Have you ever seen anything this bad in your medical career?” It was all Dr. Phillips could do to hold it together and not crack up laughing. I imagine he removed thousands of gall bladders over the years. Of course he replied to Josh and made him feel like he beat all the odds and then looked over at me with a wink and a smile.

Another memory that I have of Dr. Phillips was that he loved sports and always supported Edison HS sports & events during our childhood. He was always so friendly and happy to see all of his daughters friends. He just made you feel good!!

The past years have been hard and I will never understand while someone that dedicated his life to fixing & healing others was dealt an unfixable disease. But I do know that his legacy will long live on in our community. Sending all my love to Jane and the entire Phillips Family. Thank your for sharing one of the greatest Docs with all of us! Love, Johnna

johnna walker - September 20, 2020 at 10:44 PM

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“ Jan and I send our heart felt condolences to Jane and the Phillips family. I first met John when he became a board member for Blue Cross and Blue Shield. I can't express enough my admiration and appreciation of John's counsel and support as a board member but more importantly his friendship. He had a way of making you feel like a life long friend and we valued his time and commitment to the company. As a board member we trusted John's medical expertise and his business acumen and he made many contributions to the company. Over the years we traveled and dined many times with John and Jane and thoroughly enjoyed our time with them. John always had a funny story to tell and we always got around to talking cattle and country life. I think John was really a cowboy at heart. John was compassionate and had a huge heart. When I lost both of my kids John reached out to me and I'll always remember his kind words and encouragement. For that I will always be grateful. Jane, I know these past few years have been hard on you and John and you are in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you for sharing John with us and if there is anything we can do for you please let us know. RIP Dr. John.

**Ron King** - September 20, 2020 at 07:07 PM

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“ My condolences to Mrs Phillips and the entire family. Dr Phillips taught me as a medical student nearly 30 yrs ago. I am grateful for the time and energy he invested in me. He made me a better doctor. I am certain I am only one of countless medical students he taught over his decades long career. As a result, his impact on patients and families extended well beyond those he saw directly. My very best wishes to all of you.

**Joseph Li** - September 20, 2020 at 03:25 PM

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“ I only met Dr. Phillips a handful of times but was immediately impressed by his radiant joy and genuine care for people. His spirit of positivity and compassion is something I recognize and admire in each of his beloved girls. Sending my deepest condolences and love to his entire, wonderful family.

**Stephanie Kern** - September 20, 2020 at 01:07 PM

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“ I knew Dr. Phillips through his daughter and my college best friend, Jennifer. Although I have several good memories of Dr. Phillips, I most treasure the memory of hearing him (in his distinctive voice) call Jennifer by his pet name for her, Jenny Girl. You could hear his love for her in his voice. I know he loved his girls so much and he along with Jane made them the strong, kind, beautiful women they are today. His legacy lives on through them and his beautiful grandchildren.

**Laura Kendall** - September 19, 2020 at 11:20 PM

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“ I did not know Dr. Phillips personally, but I am so honored to know one of his daughters and his granddaughters. He has left a beautiful, strong legacy in them and his mark on the world will live on through them. My heartfelt condolences to your family.

**Jennifer White** - September 19, 2020 at 11:10 PM

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“ Dr. John was a very special person who was friendly and outgoing. I met him in the halls of St. John's, in 1975, when my dad was in the hospital. It wasn't long before I found out that he was an avid Razorback supporter. After that, our friendship continued for 44 years. Although he was a "high-powered" surgeon, he never elevated himself. He was extremely knowledgeable, but he was also "down-to-earth."

Janette needed a second opinion about her mother's treatment, after she had been diagnosed with lymphoma. Dr. Phillips had done the surgery. So she and her mother went to talk to him. Dr. Phillips had an "ear for listening" and was very attentive. He was kind and compassionate and gave sound advice regarding her situation. He cared about his patients and was especially proud of his family.

Janette and I want to express our sincere sympathy to Jane and Dr. John's family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Jim and Janette Rogers  
Tahlequah, OK

**Janette Rogers** - September 19, 2020 at 09:50 PM

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“ Liz & Bill Allred purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Dr. John W. Phillips, Jr..



Liz & Bill Allred - September 19, 2020 at 02:28 PM

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“ Dr. Phillips was strong, compassionate, dedicated, loving person. He operated on and took care of many of my family, even me! Working for him in the office setting, was the best part of my nursing career. He made time for whoever needed it. I've quoted him many times, even now. My thoughts and sincere prayers for comfort are with Jane and the girls and their families. I love them all. Diane Dunn

Diane Dunn - September 19, 2020 at 01:48 PM

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“ I met Johnny about 1962 when my brother started dating his sister, Judy. We just connected from that day forward. When his Mother lived next to mine, If he found out I was flying in to see my Mom, he would take off work and come over to visit with his cute little dog that he loved a lot In short, I will miss him tremendously and wish his loving family well. PS If you ever need free dental advice, please call as I called him many times for his professional opinion. Charlie Guest

Charlie Guest - September 19, 2020 at 01:20 PM

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“ So many happy, childhood memories of Dr. Phillips. One of my favorites was our Senior Spring Break road trip to Florida. He was driving the lead car and I was driving with the girls behind. Everyone had fallen asleep and sweet Dr. P kept me on the walkie-talkie to make sure I was awake, alert, and calm. The most reassuring voice to guide me safely along. Always kind, gentle and supportive.

**Jennifer Maricle** - September 19, 2020 at 12:45 PM



“ John was one of the most dedicated people on earth!! Whether it was his medical profession, his family, his friends. My dad told me he wanted us to meet John Phillips, said he was the best young surgeons he had ever met at St Johns. My parents were neighbors so they had us all to dinner. That started a life long fun family relationships. Many trips to Florida with our families, football games, kids, grandkids and just fun times. The last few years have rough for John and his family. He is at peace now but will be missed by so many that knew knew him and loved him!!! Our hearts go out to his family and will keep all of his dear family in Our prayers. Love to all of you. The Rothlein's

**lesley Rothein** - September 19, 2020 at 01:16 PM

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“ Dr. Phillips, or Papa as I later knew him, was a source of light and joy. I met him professionally when I worked in healthcare. He practiced with integrity and commitment.

Then I became a patient and he was kind and engaged in my care. He made me feel safe and secure.

But my favorite connection was knowing him as proud Papa to Annabel and Hannah. Every member of our family sought him out at track and cross country meets because we loved his company. He always stayed to watch Sophie race.

I loved him; we all loved him. Although your pain is great and your family is suffering the hardest loss, please know that we are grieving with you. Wishing you peace and comfort during these difficult times.

**cheena pazzo** - September 19, 2020 at 11:40 AM

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“ We did not know "Dr. John " and his wonderful wife Jane until they moved across the street from us. Durning the last 3 1/2 years we have seen what real Love of Family is all about as shown by the special things his 3 daughters and their families did for Dr. John . In the first few years we noticed they would come enmass on a weekend day to take him out to eat--usually at a local Mexican place. As his disease progressed, it touched our souls to see his daughters and sons-in-laws and granddaughters come over almost every evening to take him for a long walk in his wheelchair. Dr. John's face glowed as he rode through the neighborhoods with his entourage--he so enjoyed every second of these outings--and he usually had on a Razorback ball cap so no one would get confused about who was his favorite team. We have been blessed to witness such love-- and to get to know Dr. John Phillips and his beautiful family!

**Barbara and John Turner** - September 18, 2020 at 05:40 PM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. John W. Phillips, Jr..



September 18, 2020 at 11:54 AM