



Robert A. Morrow, MD

June 22, 2022

Robert A. Morrow, MD, 77, of Lake Ariel, PA, formerly of Allentown, passed away June 22, 2022 in St. Luke's Hospice House, Bethlehem.

A preeminent neurosurgeon in the region, Bob began in independent practice and was subsequently affiliated with Lehigh Valley Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital, Sacred Heart Hospital, and Main Line Health before retiring in 2015. Despite a towering career in medicine, Bob was famously modest about his many accomplishments. He took pride in being the medical director of Lehigh Valley Hospital's first Central Nervous System unit in the 1980s and serving as the Director of Neuroscience Services at LVHN. Bob prized teamwork with his staff long before this view was common in the field, routinely saying that no surgeon was anything without a good team of nurses and PAs behind them. A gentleman in every sense of the word, Bob (or "Dr. Bob" for those who insisted on using the honorific) was renowned for a technical excellence that was equaled only by his humble affability with patients and colleagues. He was born in Pittsburgh and raised in the rural area of Plum Borough, PA to Robert Christy Morrow and Virginia May (Schlarman) Morrow, who both instilled in him the value of an education, which they themselves had been unable to receive. This belief in education, and the responsibility that came with the privilege of receiving it, remained a defining trait for the 1967 Bucknell University graduate. He enlisted in the United States Navy, which paid for his medical school at Temple University, where he also met his future wife Phyllis (Smith). He then served as a lieutenant commander in the peacetime Navy on

Guam, an experience that fostered a love of travel that would continue throughout his life.

Bob's greatest love was his family. He is survived by his son Matthew R. Morrow of Allentown, daughter Catherine B. Morrow and son-in-law Greg Heller-LaBelle of Bethlehem, and sister Bonnie Simonetta, wife of Richard, of Columbus, Ohio. Bob's second greatest love, though, was the outdoors. An Eagle Scout at the age of 17, Bob's deep passion for the environment inspired him to retire to a nature preserve in Lake Ariel, PA after practicing medicine. An admirer of John Muir, Bob was never happier than when he was fishing or hiking, surrounded by the tranquility and beauty of the natural world.

Bob's technical excellence extended beyond surgery into pretty much any task to which he put his mind and hands. His precision and exactitude were legendary, whether the task was designing homes or unwrapping Christmas presents. His perfectionism in even the smallest tasks made for a delightfully confusing combination with his characteristic humility and steadfast refusal to treat himself as superior to those he came across. A voracious reader and student of history, he will be remembered by those who loved him as a man whose exceptional ability, mind, and character were inspirational in the most unassuming of ways.

Bob's family is honoring his wishes by not having public services, but those wishing to raise a toast to his memory can join his family and professional colleagues at the Colony Meadery South Bethlehem, 211 E Third St in Bethlehem, any time from 12-4pm on Sunday, July 3. Anyone who wishes to contribute to a memorial video can email photos or videos to info@seymourmac.com; please provide name and relation to Bob and use the subject line Bob Morrow Memorial.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in his memory to:

- The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club: <https://wildernessguardian.sierraclub.org/Pennsylvania/donation.php>
- Sierra Club Military Outdoors: <https://www.sierraclub.org/military-outdoors>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness - Keystone chapter:

<http://www.namikeystonepa.org/>

- Or, if applicable, use the funds to set up your family's advanced healthcare directive ("living will"), which anyone who knew Bob can tell you was a vital part of his professional and personal approach to dignified end-of-life care.

Previous Events

Celebration

JUL 3. 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Colony Meadery South Bethlehem
211 E. Third Street
Bethlehem, PA

Tribute Wall

JB

“ Dear Phyllis and family, I was so sad to read of Bob's passing. I am proud to have been a colleague, a patient, and daughter of a patient of Bob's. As an internist, I referred almost exclusively to Bob because he simply was the best! He didn't just have superb surgical skills, but he was kind and compassionate. He did surgery on my mom, and I still remember the kind words he spoke to both of us. When I had back issues, of course, I went to the guy who I thought was the best; and I always felt he cared and gave me sage advice, and did not recommend surgery. I'm sure you must have so many wonderful memories. It is my prayer that those memories and God's great love for you will see you through this sad, sad time. Blessings,
Judy McDonald MD Burkholder

Judy Burkholder - June 30, 2022 at 12:02 PM