



Walter Hopkins, M.D.

June 30, 1923 - June 17, 2011

WALTER J. HOPKINS, M.D.

Walter Jones Hopkins, Jr., known to most as "Hoppy," went to be with the Lord on June 17, 2011 at Heartfelt Manor in Roswell, New Mexico at the age of 87. He was born June 30, 1923 in Ft. Worth, Texas to Walter Jones Hopkins, Sr. and Anna Theresa Bauer.

It was the loss of his father from appendicitis, when Hoppy was 8 years old, that charted his course towards medicine, but there were a few bumps in the road before achieving his medical degree in 1955 from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. Hoppy's mother contracted tuberculosis rendering her unable to care for her two children; therefore, Hoppy and his younger sister, Ora Mae "Dinkie," were raised in the Masonic Home in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Following his graduation in 1941 from the Masonic Home High School, Hoppy enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was trained as a Naval Aviator. He was assigned to Torpedo Squadron Four (VT-4), about which a book has been written. This Squadron was one of the Navy's most remarkable and effective airborne combat units during WWII as documented in the book. His Squadron served three tours of duty; one in the Atlantic on the USS Ranger participating with the British Home Fleet; one on the USS Bunker Hill in the Pacific starting with strikes on the Philippines; and the third on the USS Essex ending with the invasion of Okinawa. During his last tour of duty, he narrowly escaped death aboard the aircraft carrier "Essex" when it was hit by a Japanese Kamikaze

plane. Following 3 years of active duty as a Lieutenant, Hoppy was honorably discharged from the service. He then enlisted in the U.S. Naval Air Reserves serving from 1945-1961. For his patriotic service, Hoppy received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Navy Air Medal, American Defense Ribbon, Pacific Theatre Ribbon with three stars and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with two stars.

While in college, Hoppy met Florine Newberg and they were married June 6, 1947 in Ft. Worth, Texas. He earned his B.A. degree in education in 1949 from North Texas State Teachers College in Denton, TX . Hoppy and Florine moved to Lovington, New Mexico where Hoppy took a teaching and coaching position at Lovington High School. He left Lovington in 1951 to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a doctor after being accepted to medical school. Following his internship at Harris Hospital in Ft. Worth, Texas, the Hopkins returned to Lovington in 1956 and Hoppy began his family medicine and surgery practice. Hoppy was an active member and officer of numerous local, state, and national medical organizations over the years. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church and the Masonic Lodge #46. Hoppy served on the Lovington School Board for 8 years.

Hoppy remarried in 1969 to Gail Campell Marsh. They moved to Picacho, New Mexico where they resided at Casa Linda for a number of years. While living in the Hondo Valley, Hoppy changed his specialty to Emergency Medicine and he staffed E.R.s in cities throughout Southeastern New Mexico and West Texas. While living at Casa Linda, he was struck by lightning in 1988. Hoppy and Gail moved to Lubbock, Texas in 1995 where he established an occupational medicine practice until retiring in 2005. At that time, they returned to Lovington, New Mexico where Gail lost her battle with cancer. Hoppy's last four years have been spent with family in Roswell, New Mexico. Hoppy was preceded in death by his parents, sister, wife, and first grandchild, Shayna Leigh Hopkins-Puma. Those left behind to cherish his memories are Florine Hopkins Matthews and their four children: Michael Hopkins; Mark Hopkins and his wife, Sharon; Anne Puma and her husband, Bob; and Gail

Butler Shadix and her husband, Bob; Grandchildren: Olivia Hopkins and her fiancé, Aryon Hoselton; Daniel Hopkins; Ariel Hopkins; Andrew Hopkins; Jini Puma and her husband, Eric Rice; Kristi "Cissy" Puma; Scott Puma; Ben Butler; Kelley Butler and her husband, Jared Ford; LEEANNE SHADIX and her husband, Robert Graf; Sandy Shadix and her husband, Michael Back; Kenda Collins and her husband Cris Giron; Kera Collins and her husband, Donald Fresquez as well as great grandchildren, extended family members, and lifelong friends.

The staffs of Heartfelt Manor and Vista Care are extended a special thank you for the exceptional care, support and love showered on Hoppy and his family. Hoppy will always be remembered by his family for his zest for life; his spirit of adventure; his love of mankind and animals; and his dedication to the service of others. Please take a moment to share your thoughts and memories with the family in the online register book at andersonbethany.com.

Hoppy was cremated according to his wishes and will be interred at a future date in the DFW National Cemetery in Dallas, Texas. In lieu of flowers, friends may send memorials in his honor to the Lovington High School College Scholarship Fund sponsored by the Class of 1969. Contributions may be made online or remitted directly to either the New Mexico Junior College or Eastern New Mexico University designating such memorial funds to the LHS Alumni Scholarship. More information is available at <http://web.me.com/rphillip/LHSScholarship>.

Arrangements are under the direction of Anderson Bethany Funeral Home and Crematory.

Tribute Wall



“ *Walter Hopkins, M.D.*

December 29, 2022 at 05:26 PM



I had the privilege of working with Hoppy in the ER at St Mary's Hospital in Roswell NM. He was one of the finest people I have ever met. Amidst the trials of emergency care, he never lost his dignity or composure. I learned a lot from Hoppy and very grateful that he was in my life. RIP old friend.

KEVIN WALSH - August 04, 2023 at 01:55 AM



“ *Gail, I was so sorry to hear about Hoppy. He made a very intense time in my life much better when he was my doctor for a time in Lovington. I was a typical teenage diabetic who hadn't learned about all the disciplines of taking care of myself and he helped me to add humor and hope to my situation. I am so glad to have reconnected with him a few years ago at Peach Tree where my mom was. I just returned from Roswell where I have been for a month taking care of my mom. She broke her hip in three places and we are actually looking into Heartfelt Manor in case we need it. I hear it is a great place. Again, I am so sorry about your dad but know he is in a better place. He was a great man. Love, Maggie Hewett Ingram*

Maggie Hewett Ingram - July 28, 2011 at 04:50 PM

CM

“ Such a beloved man and physician. He was my doctor during my first marriage and I grew up following his children through school. Before he retired from his practice in Lovington, he delivered my son, his last delivery, on august 9th 1975. It was an emergency c-section and he saved my life, as well as that of my son. Later when he began to travel from E R to E R, my son then not quiet 2, had an earache. Who did we run on too but Hoppy in the E R. He quickly grabbed up my son, took my young daughter by the hand and marched up and down the hall telling everyone "They were HIS babies". It really caused a commotion. I will never forget him, I know he is in heaven with the greatest physicians. With Honor cathy burt matthews

Cathy Burt Matthews - July 08, 2011 at 09:22 PM

BB

“ As with so many other members of the "greatest generation,"it was not until I'd read the obituary that I knew about Dr. Hopkins' life before he was our family doctor--and not least his military service. But my dad always liked him very much--they both coached and taught in Lea County at the same time, and evidently even played some basketball together as well. For me, Dr. Hopkins personified elegance--and I think the same could be said about all his family.

Barry Brinker - June 28, 2011 at 09:40 AM

IA

“ Sending our love and sympathy. Oh, what memories we have of all the Hopkins family. Happy ones. Out at the sand dunes. At our ranch with food and games. And Gail getting sick. So Hoppy came out every night for three nights and gave all seven of us shots so we would not get sick. And Mark at the Jr. College. Others saw us eating together and heard us talking about the sand hills--I sure did have a lot carrying my books hoping to get an invite... And Gail going with us to Almgordo when we had to go to a Wedding at the Airbase.. And the many hours Hoppy spent taking care of all our medical needs. If any of you are ever in Lovington--you have to come by to see us. We live in town at my mother's house. Much love and best wishes, Jack and Irma Lee Aduddell & family 522 W. Ave. A Lovington, N.M. 88260 575-396-3517

Irma & Jack Aduddell - June 26, 2011 at 02:01 PM

SH

“ I was one of Hoppy's students at Lovington High School. He was a great teacher, down-to-earth, a friend to all and an inspiration to me. He left a giant foot print on this earth.
Shirley Collier Hooper-Garcia former NM Secretary of State

Shirley Hooper-Garcia - June 25, 2011 at 06:35 PM

JS

“ Gail & Family, We extend heartfelt condolences on the death of your Dad.....it is never easy to lose a parent, but knowing he is with the Lord must give you peace.
We love you and thank God for bringing you into our lives.

Jerri & Bill Sparks - June 24, 2011 at 02:49 PM

CC

“ I worked with Hoppy several years at LRH ER. I was an EMT/FF with the LFD. He was always willing to explain medical problems, treatments, and the whys and hows of A&P. Great man. Great Doc. Thru his support the LFD and HFD expanded the level of care in the field. His actions touched countless lives and thru those actions the future generations. Ms Joyce Gombar (NMJC Professor) and I remembered some of the times spent working with him. My prayers for the family. Ms Gombar sends her prayers also. Cecil Castle RN.

cecil castle - June 23, 2011 at 12:39 AM

PC

“ I remember Hoppy always had a smile. My parents really liked him. He made great contributions to our hometown of Lovington. I am sure one of his greatest source of pride was the Hopkins kids. Sympathies to your family.

Paula Howell Christo - June 23, 2011 at 12:07 AM

BH

“ Brian as a Roswell Fireman would come into St. Mary's ED where Hoppy and I worked. During those years we worked many long hours and shared a lot of laughs. We lost contact with Hoppy after St. Mary's closed but we will always fondly remember him. Carrie and Brian Hecht Fort Worth, TX

Brian and Carrie Hecht - June 22, 2011 at 09:46 PM

JD

“ *Walter J. Hopkins, M. D. was my classmate in medical school and dear friend for these nearly 60 years, and I honor him for his lifelong stouthearted courage and his profound and genuine goodness and generosity of spirit. In his simple, honest, straightforward and honorable way, he always intended to help and serve others, and that made him an exemplary person and the best kind of physician. He was a noble human being and he did so much good with his life. I feel blessed to have known him.*

Joel H. Feigon, M. D. - June 22, 2011 at 08:44 PM

NM

“ *Uncle Hoppy was always such a joy to be around. He had such a zest for life and always had a smile on his face. We will miss you, Hoppy!!! Have fun with Dinkie!*

Nancy McGray - June 22, 2011 at 05:47 PM

GW

“ *Dr Hopkins delivered my son many years ago. His compassion, sense of humor and love for everyone was an inspiration to me to become an RN. He will be missed by many. May fond memories comfort you at this difficult time.*

Gail Wier - June 22, 2011 at 03:45 PM

JG

“ *I grew up with your children in Lovington in the 50's and 60's. You were always very kind and a great family doctor.*

John Garlington - June 22, 2011 at 12:08 PM

BW

“ We knew him a long, long time as you well know. Sorry for all of you.

Betty and Wade - June 22, 2011 at 12:02 PM

JW

“ I was fortunate to call Hoppy "coach" at Lovington High School Class of '54 and even more fortunate to call him my "doc" for many years thereafter as well as working with him on a daily basis in the E.R.'s while on the NMSP. A wonderful man and a great great friend. He will be so missed.

Jerry "Bud" Wood - June 22, 2011 at 11:57 AM

SS

“ I worked with Hoppy in St. Mary's Er in Roswell. He was a wonderful man and great physician, he will be dearly missed.

Sharyn Smith-jensen - June 22, 2011 at 11:52 AM

LE

“ Please accept my condolences. Dr. Hopkins will be missed and I'm sorry I didn't take time to share these memories and others with him. Do ya'll remember coming to the house so Hoppy could vaccinate all 5 of us kids? He lined us up, took care of business, and then we played - at the time it was so worth it - having playmates at the ranch - yahoo! He stitched us up, set broken bones and watched over us when we had measles, mumps, chicken pox and flu. He was also the ER doctor when I was in a car accident. I was so glad to see someone I knew!!!
Thanks for letting me share some of these memories with you. My prayers are with all of you.

Lolly Schenck Emig - June 22, 2011 at 09:41 AM

NC

“ I was so sorry to hear that Dr. Hopkins had passed. He was my doctor for many years and delivered both of my daughters. After a work accident I called him at home and he met us at his office to stitch my husband's fingers. He never complained a bit about having to leave his family to do it. He will be greatly missed by many.

Nina Campbell - June 21, 2011 at 04:23 PM

JH

“ I am so sorry for your loss and I am also very sadden. Dr. Hopkins was my doctor from when he first started his practice in Lovington. I was fortunate enough to also get to work with him later in both the hospital in Lovington and then later in Hobbs. What a wonderful Physican and man. You have been so fortunate to have had him in your lives these many years. I know I feel blessed to have known him. He will truly be missed by more people than you will ever know.

John Hines - June 21, 2011 at 08:02 AM

JM

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family. May God surround you with His love at this time. Dr. Hopkins was not only a good physician but a good friend.
J.B. and Rama Magers

J.B. and Rama Magers - June 20, 2011 at 06:46 PM

GP

“ Hoppy will be missed, he delivered my sister and my oldest son....he had the best sense of humor and joy for life!!

Gloria Matlock Padilla - June 20, 2011 at 06:40 PM

PP

“ Mike, Mark, Anne, and Gail.....I am so sorry for your loss. Your dad was a great man. May your memories and love for each other comfort you. My prayers are with you all. God Bless, Pam

pam payton pitts - June 20, 2011 at 05:00 PM

PP

“ Mike, Mark, Anne, and Gail.....I am so sorry for your loss. Your dad was a great man. May your memories and love for each other comfort you. My prayers are with you all. God Bless, Pasm

pam payton pitts - June 20, 2011 at 04:56 PM

JR

“ From Arizona ..to the family of Walter "Hoppy".. I well remember our times together and have great memories of our friendship * When we lived in Lovington..and He was our "Doctor" Sympathy to Flo and his family...

Jane Collins (Mrs. Ralph) - June 20, 2011 at 02:24 PM

KA

“ I was so sorry to hear of your loss. Dr. Hopkins was a wonderful person, he had the ability to make you feel safe and the gift of making you think you were the only patient. Dr. Hopkins delivered my son Terry in Lovington. I drove from Hobbs to see Dr. Hopkins as he was referred by Dr. Randall Briggs. Years later Terry and I saw him at St. Mary's. I told Terry that is the doctor that delivered you. We spoke with him and he said "oh that's stinky." Again, the nack for making you feel you were all important. He was a people person and as you know never met a stranger. May God give you peace at this time. Karolyn

Karolyn Anderson - June 20, 2011 at 02:22 PM

DR

“ *Dr. Hopkins was my Dr. when I was young. He made a great and lasting empression on me as a child. What a great man, he will be deeply missed.*

Donald Ragland - June 20, 2011 at 12:49 PM

BJ

“ *Mike, Mark, Anne and Gail,
Please accept my sincerest condolences on the loss of your dad. I have lots of good memories of your family during our "growing up" years in Lovington. I know Hoppy will be missed by so many folks.
Becky Purcell James Sarah Purcell Tindall*

Becky James - June 20, 2011 at 10:31 AM

LZ

“ *Dr. Hopkins delivered me at the Lovington hospital in 1967. Even though our paths never crossed from that day on, he was part of a blessed occasion for me and my family. My prayers are with the entire family.*

Linda Zinn - June 19, 2011 at 11:57 PM

CS

“ Mike, Mark, Anne, and Gail,
I'm sad for you to lose your dad. He was a wonderful, wonderful,
man and he made a difference in so many folks lives in Lovington. I
remember once, breaking my arm at a gymnastics meet. I knew my
parents would not be happy with me...but Hoppy being the team
doc, fixed me up with a cast and sent me home, and my parents
didn't have to deal with it. I was so thankful to him for that and never
forgot it.
In heaven there is no more sorrow, no more suffering, and no more
tears. It's always light because of God's glory. God bless you all.
Cheryl Collins Staten

Cheryl Collins Staten - June 19, 2011 at 09:49 PM

KK

“ Our heart goes out to all of you. I can't remember a time that your
Dad was not around. Spent all of our lives growing up with all of
you. Take care of each other, seems to be the only thing that helps.
Yours, Kim, Kip and Kit for the Kerby's

Kim Kerby-Dickman - June 19, 2011 at 08:50 PM

EC

“ As a Roswell Police Officer I had lots of contact with Dr. Hoppy, in
the ER at St. Mary's, I came to love and respect this fine man. We
will miss you and Gail. Our prayers and many blessings to the
family. My wife is from Lovington, and knew Dr. Hoppy there also.
God Bless you all. Love Ed and Laura Carpenter

Ed and Laura Carpenter - June 19, 2011 at 07:43 PM

DM

“ The news of Dr. Hopkins death brought great sadness to me this morning. He was a fine man and although most of my memories of him are from my childhood they will always be with me. My thoughts and prayers go out to all the family. Best wishes always, David

David L. Minton - June 19, 2011 at 06:52 PM

BW

“ We are so sorry for your loss. Hoppy was one-of-a-kind; never a dull moment when he was working ER. Almost every Paramedic/EMT/Nurse who worked at St. Mary's knew him and everyone of us have stories to tell. He will be fondly remembered and greatly missed.

Bill & Kathy Wells - June 19, 2011 at 06:23 PM

WC

“ Dear Hopkins Family--I wish to extend my sympathies on the loss of your beloved dad and a friend of LHS. To Anne, I hope you are well. I am sorry.

Winona Bennett Cross - June 19, 2011 at 04:29 PM

RH

“ Hoppy was our family doctor and friend for several years in Lovington, NM and Roswell, NM. He delivered 2 of our children and will always hold a warm place in our hearts and memories. Ron & Ava Hinkle

Ron & Ava Hinkle - June 19, 2011 at 03:39 PM

JC

“ *What a great guy - I have fond memories of Dr. Hopkins and his family. Praying for the family in this time - how many lives did he touch and positively affect while on this ole earth - countless!*

Jim Campbell - June 19, 2011 at 02:38 PM

BP

“ *I am so sorry to hear of Hoppy's death. He took excellent care of our family and was such an asset to the community. My deepest sympathy goes out to his entire family. Barbara Blackmon Patterson-Skeen*

Barbara Patterson-Skeen - June 19, 2011 at 02:33 PM

MB

“ *I spent some years babysitting the four children of Florine and Hoppy's. They lived 2 houses down from my family in Lovington on Gore St. I have so many fond memories of the family. My sincere condolences go out to the family. May the Good Lord wrap you in comfort and caring. I would love to hear from any of you that remember me from those days in the late 50's and early 60's. God Bless you all. Maudene Bledsoe Baird*

Maudene Bledsoe Baird - June 19, 2011 at 02:32 PM