



## Mr. Robert Earl Williams, Jr., DMD, MA

September 28, 1945 - May 3, 2019

### Obituary of Robert Earl Williams Jr., DMD, MA

Robert E. Williams Jr., orthodontist and educator by profession, lifelong participant in and advocate of Scouting, and beloved husband, father, and grandfather, died suddenly on Friday May 3 at his home in Towson, Maryland. He was 73 years old.

He pursued all his interests with deep passion, attention to detail, and dedication to quality. In his orthodontic practice, Dr. Williams applied the rigor of a scientist and the insight and touch of an artist. He enjoyed orthodontia because he saw it as a way to help other people improve both their health and self-image. He built a thriving private practice from 1983 until 2015, with offices in Baltimore, Ellicott City, and Bel Air, Maryland serving diverse populations. He took great satisfaction in ensuring the highest quality of his work and its lasting results. His work with the Kernan Hospital cleft palate clinic extended this dedication. His professional affiliations included the American Association of Orthodontists and Mid-Atlantic Society of Orthodontics (MASO), for which he served as board member and editor of the MASO journal for the last 17 years.

An educator as well as practitioner, Dr. Williams served on the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry from 1977 until his death. An

Assistant Professor in the late 1970s and early '80s, he maintained part-time status as a Clinical Associate Professor after he opened his practice, and continued to teach weekly seminars for the rest of his life. He enjoyed the challenge the clinic posed both to stay current in his techniques and pass them on to new generations of aspiring orthodontists. To improve his skill as a teacher, he earned a Master of Arts in Education from the University of Maryland Baltimore County in 1983, and he proudly appended "MA" to "DMD" in his business correspondence.

Bob, as family and friends knew him, brought the same enthusiasm and dedication to his personal life. His marriage with Karen, his wife of 52 years, was recognized for the depth of their love for each other, dedication to family, happiness, and enthusiasm for travel. Their yellow cottage in Towson, formerly the caretaker's cottage for Duncan Black's estate Fellowship, draws compliments from passers-by for the care and attention to both house and yard. He worked with the deliberate skill of a craftsman in all tasks he undertook, from routine home maintenance like bleeding radiators to elaborate projects like designing and building an elevated "treehouse" for his son, Gareth, which remains a favorite refuge for his granddaughters 40 years after its construction.

His love of Scouting, instilled by his mother and uncle, continued through his entire adult life. An Eagle Scout and recipient of the Order of the Arrow and Wood Badge, he served as Assistant Scoutmaster and Scoutmaster of Troop 5 of the Baltimore Area Council in the late 1980s and early 1990s. As Scoutmaster, he led a contingent of Baltimore area scouts on a two-week trip to Japan in 1988, part of the Sister Cities exchange program with Kawasaki, Japan. The trip included a successful summit of Mt. Fuji, and he often quoted the Japanese proverb "A wise man will climb Mt. Fuji...once." He also volunteered at the district level, and recently played an integral role in the move of Troop 729 to Towson Presbyterian Church.

A member of the congregation of Towson Presbyterian Church for more than 35 years, he served as an elder and deacon. He particularly enjoyed work with confirmation classes, as he did other mentoring opportunities, and approached his faith and theology with both hope and critical consideration of his faith. He believed in the good the church could bring to the community, and participated in multiple mission efforts, including work at a children's home in rural Kentucky and building houses in villages in Honduras.

Bob Williams was born in Braddock, Pennsylvania to Dr. Robert Earl Williams Sr. and Dr. Jean Allen Williams. He grew up in Erie, Pennsylvania, and graduated early from Fairview High School to attend the University of Pittsburgh beginning in spring semester 1963. He finished undergraduate studies in three years, and enrolled in the Pitt dental school. He completed his orthodontic residency at the University of Oregon. He served in the U.S. Army from 1971 to 1977, including tours on Okinawa, Japan and in Augsburg, West Germany, before earning an honorable discharge at the rank of Major. He and his family settled in Towson, Maryland, where they cultivated many friendships and built a life rich in love, laughter, learning, and service to the conviction that one man's hard and careful work can help make the world a better and happier place. He planted many trees in the shade of which he will not stand, but his touch will be felt for generations to come. He was and is deeply loved; as he himself loved deeply.

He is survived by his wife, Karen, of Towson; brother, Dave, of Randallstown; son Gareth and daughter-in-law Amy of Silver Spring, and granddaughters Catrin and Hannah.

A memorial service will be held at Towson Presbyterian Church on May 18, 2019.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks for donations to Towson Presbyterian Church or the Baltimore Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

MAY 18. 1:00 PM (ET)

Towson Presbyterian Church  
400 W. Chesapeake Avenue  
Towson, MD 21204

# Tribute Wall

KD

“ I worked with Dr. Williams a number of times over many years while at the American Association of Orthodontists. I always admired the calm and respectful way he approached some very difficult issues. He never failed to gently teach, through his actions, appropriateness and respect. His presence elevated the atmosphere. I'll miss seeing him and speaking with him, and learning from his example. His dry humor and contagious laugh, shared so many times in so many places over the years, will be greatly missed and remembered warmly.

*Kevin Dillard*

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**Kevin Dillard** - May 09, 2019 at 07:57 AM