



James L. Poindexter, MD

In Memorium

1931-2002



Dr. James L. Poindexter died September 15th in the tragic small airplane crash that also took the lives of our colleague Dr. Bob Wright and the pilot. He was 70 at the time of his death and still in active full-time gynecology practice.

Poin was raised and educated in Kansas City, Missouri before entering Yale University after high school. He graduated from Yale with a major in human culture and behavior, and went back to his home state to begin medical training at the University of Kansas. He graduated in 1958 and went on to his internship at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.

The army then assigned this young general medical officer to Stuttgart, Germany and two years later sent him at his request to Madigan Army Hospital in Tacoma, Washington, for his obstetrics and gynecology training. After residency he was assigned to Fort Ord, California, where he stayed until resigning from the service in 1967. Poin always felt the army took very good care of him, as his assignments attested to.

Poin came to Sacramento in 1967 to join an existing practice with a well-established practitioner, but after a short time he left to set up his own solo practice. He had a successful solo practice for many years, but when the opportunity came to merge his office with that of his long-time Kansas friend, Dr. Hal Ray, he took it.

Dr. Beth McClure joined this practice several years later. Eventually Hal decided to retire from clinical medicine and Beth and Poin joined their practice with Drs. John Whitelaw, Solon Barbis, Roger Mathews and Jeff Graham at Sutter Medical Group. Poin was a senior leader and role model for all the younger ob/gyns who joined the group in the subsequent years.

Throughout his career he was on the senior staff at Sutter Community Hospitals, where he served for two years as the chief of the ob/gyn service. He was instrumental developing the tertiary perinatal service at Sutter and prided himself on being part of a clinical department that had a well-deserved national reputation.

Poin had many interests outside of medicine, including golf, astronomy, reading, travel, cooking and computers. He truly had an insatiable curiosity about the world and delved deeply into anything that caught his interest.

Several years ago he expanded his interest in golf and travel by forming a group that he named D.A.S.T. that stands for "did anyone see that" — the cry of the amateur golfer when he has struck an errant shot. He and 30 or 40 of his best friends would travel to famous golf areas of the country annually for a week of camaraderie and golf. It was on the way back from the recent outing in Montana that the accident occurred that took his life.

His interest in astronomy led to the purchase of a high-powered telescope and numerous books on the stars and planets. He knew the names of all the constellations and planets as well as their locations. In his excitement, he often woke his kids in the middle of the night

to come look through the telescope at some fascination in the night sky.

Poin is survived by his wife of 49 years, Marilyn, who is a past-president of our alliance, and his children, Whit, Janet and Andréa, and seven grandchildren.

— John M. Whitelaw, MD

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