



Mr. John Winslow "Doc" LedBetter MD

June 6, 1929 - March 3, 2011

John Winslow "Doc" LedBetter, MD, 81, of Asheville, departed this life to encounter the next March 3, 2011 after an extended illness while being cared for at Clare Bridge Memory Care Center.

John, or "Doc" (as he was lovingly referred to by many a boy scout he fostered) was born in 1929 in Portsmouth, Virginia. John's father (Dow) hailed from Mt. Gilead, North Carolina and his mother (Helen) was a New Englander from Massachusetts. John spent summers as a camp counselor at a Boy Scout camp in Winchester, Virginia. This is when John fell in love with the mountains.

John graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in Portsmouth, Va., and then went on to attend Wake Forest University and Bowman-Gray Medical School in Winston-Salem, N.C. It was in Winston-Salem that he met and married his wife Gwenda. They went on to Ann Arbor, Michigan where John studied neurology under the tutelage of Russell de Jong at the University of Michigan. This helped to satisfy his curiosity about the brain. John and Gwenda spent two years in Wichita Falls, Texas, to fulfill service to the U.S. Air Force. Then it was back to Michigan to finish up John's residency. John came to the mountains of Asheville to join two neurosurgeons Van Blaricom and McKeel in 1959 as the only neurologist. Therefore he became, so to speak, the founder of neurology in Western North Carolina. The family then

consisted of Gwenda along with daughter, Becky and son, Bob and, born in 1961, daughter, Carol.

He later left the practice with Van Blaricom and McKeel to form Mountain Neurological. In his works as a physician John was known for his gentle nature, his empathetic listening skills and his art of intuitive diagnosis. Sometimes patients would come to John just to be listened to. John lived his convictions with a strong sense of fairness supported by his faith in God and a strong sense of compassion, ethics, and service. These characteristics existed in both his medical practice and his scouting.

Soon after arriving in town John joined Boy Scout Troop 8 at First Presbyterian Church as Assistant Scoutmaster. Hundreds of boys traversed through the ranks of Troop 8 with Doc leading many a back-packing trip. He probably knew every camp song ever written. Doc was dedicated to the guiding of young boys into becoming responsible men. There was a famous winter trip to Mt. Celo when Doc came home with frostbite that occurred while he tried to make a hot drink for a young shivering boy.

John served as elder for First Presbyterian Church. He had served as president of the Buncombe County Medical Society and was selected "Outstanding Physician of the Year" in 1979. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Order of the Arrow, received the Silver Beaver award, and was named a James E. West Fellow in scouting. In 2001 the dining hall, LedBetter Lodge at Camp Daniel Boone, was dedicated to Doc for his work with the scouts.

John is survived by his wife, Gwenda E. LedBetter of Asheville; daughter, Rebecca LedBetter of Fletcher, N.C.; daughter, Carol L. Holder and husband, James, of Spartanburg, S.C.; and son, Robert B. LedBetter and wife, Celia Caldwell, of Missoula, Montana. John's four grandchildren include: Kimberly M. Patterson of Columbia, S.C., Katherine W. Patterson of San Francisco,

Calif., and Molly Holder and Daniel Holder, both of Spartanburg. Survivors also include sister-in-law, Jackie S. LedBetter of Newport News, Va.; and nieces, Elizabeth L. Martin of Shallotte, N.C. and family and Kathryn L. Tester of Boone, N.C. and family.

John is preceded in death by his brother, B. H. "Boots" LedBetter.

The memorial service for John will be held at First Presbyterian Church in Asheville at 11 AM on Friday March 11, 2011. The Rev. Margaret Torrence will officiate. A reception will follow in Gardner Hall. Private interment will be at Riverside Cemetery.

John believed in and supported many causes that expressed his beliefs and convictions about life.

Memorials may be made to the following:

Camp Daniel Boone (c/o Daniel Boone Council of the Boy Scouts of America)

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Alzheimer's Association

United Negro College Fund

The family would like to express heartfelt thanks to the staff at Clare Bridge Memory Care Center who offered loving care and support for John. The family is also very grateful for the companion care for John provided by Judy Lunsford for almost 5 years.

John was a loving husband, father and grandfather, a dedicated physician, nature enthusiast, hiker, storyteller, sailor, and a spiritual man who lived life with intention, inspiration and insight. The world is a much better place because John was here.

Condolences may be sent through the website www.morrisfamilyfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Riverside Cemetery

53 Birch Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Tribute Wall



“ *Morris Funeral & Cremation Care created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. John Winslow "Doc" LedBetter MD*



Morris Funeral Home - March 03, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ *Mr. John Winslow "Doc" LedBetter MD*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Doc was an essential role model for me as I moved through young adulthood. I cherished my experiences with him in scouting and also as I explored Medicine as a career. I drew from his example as I searched out the course of my life. His stories around the campfire were priceless experiences as a boy. He demonstrated great respect for young men by listening to their thoughts, which helped to build their confidence . I know that my life (and many many others) has been better from knowing Doc.*

David Habel - March 15, 2011 at 08:37 PM



“ *All of my thoughts and prayers go out to the Ledbetter family. Your love and generosity to the youth of the First Presbyterian Church in Asheville in the early 1970s made a difference in so many lives.*

Michael Ballew - March 10, 2011 at 12:21 PM

AM

“*Doc Ledbetter’s balance of pragmatism, enthusiasm, approachability and essential ethical fiber formed a steady touchstone through storms actual and figurative. While “Ledbetter Weather” certainly applied to the snow and downpours that we enjoyed on various scouting adventures, the truth was in Doc’s indefatigable response to such adversity. On one sub-zero February night on the rime ice of Ogle Meadows, while the rest of us hunkered down in our tents heating water on stoves for our freeze-dried dinner, Doc had built a beautiful fire and, with the wind whipping and icicles melting from his beard, was enjoying the fruits of his labor wearing a broad grin. I simply cannot imagine who I would be today without the benefit of Doc’s leadership, particularly when striving to emulate his ability to embrace and rise above adversity.*

Art Morris - March 08, 2011 at 10:20 PM

KC

“ *Family (Dillingham) Richards: We were delighted to release the grave site to your family so that John can join our son-in-law, the Russian artist, Vadim Bora.*

Gwenda has been a great love of ours from the time we became our lady of "Camelot" at ACT. We have followed her career in story telling ever since.

We share much together as fellow Presbyterians, lovers of mountains, former boy scout camp director and the belief that "no one is an island" we all stand together on this great planet we share.

Soon a monolith from the waters of Big Ivy Creek, sculpted by God, will stand on the grave site of Vadim. Again, we are thrilled to share this symbol with you as it represents all that John LedBetter, your family and our family loved.

We wish you God's Blessings as you morn and God's joy as your dear one continues his journey in God's grace.

Family Dillingham Richards (Irene, Ken and Vadim's wife, Constance Richards Bora)

Ken Irene (Dillingham) Richards and Constanc - March 07, 2011 at 04:26 PM

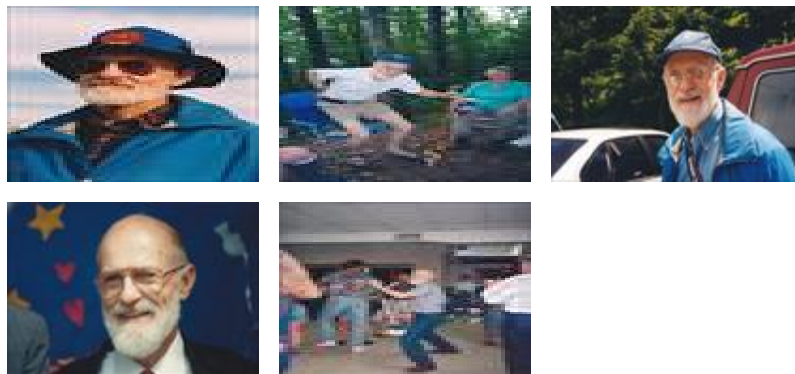
JB

“ *As a proud alumnus of Troop 8, I have fond memories of travelling with Doc on camping trips all over WNC in his yellow VW van outfitted with a special air horn and bicycle bell for effect. The weather never mattered to Doc. I remember camping with him when it was 110 degrees at Lake Hartwell, S.C., and when it was -8 with six inches of snow on the ground at Butternut Gap in the Pisgah National Forest. Doc served as a wonderful role model for all, and his passion for the outdoors and sense of mission for building boys into men was without peer. Some of my earliest lessons in leadership came as a senior patrol leader under Doc's tutelage. Doc will surely be missed, but he continues to lead the way with the wisdom and example he provided to generations of young scouts.*

Jon Broadbooks - March 07, 2011 at 01:05 PM



“ 27 files added to the album LedBetter Family



Morris Funeral Home & Cremation Service - March 07, 2011 at 01:02 PM

BB

“ my heart reaches out to you at this most difficult time. such a wonderful man, blessed with a wonderful family.



ben brasington - March 07, 2011 at 08:56 AM

JB

“ I have good memories of Dr. Ledbeter from my youth and talking with him when he was practicing medicine with my Dad. All the best to his family. He was well respected.

John Blaricom - March 07, 2011 at 07:34 AM

TB

“ My sincerest condolences to all the Ledbetter family. Dr. Ledbetter was a great leader and role model for all us young scouts and his joy of the outdoors and hiking were infectious. He will be missed.

Trent Blaricom - March 06, 2011 at 08:00 PM

FV

“ We just learned that John is no longer with us and we wanted to send our condolences to the family. Our years of practicing together were very enjoyable and we look back with fond memories..Sons Tom, Trent and Brian all learned the valuable lessons of scouting from John and he helped to shape their lives.
Freda and Dutch VanBlaricom

Freda Dutch VanBlaricom - March 06, 2011 at 06:15 PM

SP

“ To the Ledbetter family,I am so sorry for your loss.Carol,I haven't seen you since high school but have thought of you often.May your family take comfort in knowing that many lives were saved because of your fathers love of medicine and the gift God gave him to help others with the gentleness of the slightest touch.God bless all of you.

Sharon Pace - March 06, 2011 at 07:46 AM

SP

“ Sharon Pace lit a candle in memory of Mr. John Winslow "Doc" LedBetter MD



Sharon Pace - March 06, 2011 at 07:41 AM