



Dr. Schales L. Atkinson

January 17, 1938 - May 4, 2021

Schales Lukie Atkinson was born to James Luke and Ollie Ethel Atkinson in a one room house with no running water or electricity on January 17, 1938. He died May 4, 2021 at his home in southern Oklahoma just north of Elmore City. His mother, a school teacher, made sure her son got an early education, having him start Kindergarten at four. Fast forward to the 1950's and he was at the University of Arkansas in a chemistry lab where he met his future wife, Mary Lucille Wray. He and Mary Lu were married June 27, 1958 while he was a student at Tulane University School of Medicine. Their first child, Sarah Diana, was born while he was at Tulane. When he graduated from Tulane Medical School he was commissioned into the US Navy as an Ensign as the Navy had paid for his medical education. He and Mary Lu were stationed in Pensacola, Florida; Newport News, Virginia; and Groton, Connecticut while he served. While in Newport News in 1962 the Cuban Missile Crisis happened and Mary Lu was evacuated to Arkansas where their second child, James Wray, was born. To be there for the delivery Schales raced to Arkansas through the dead of night, breaking many records for speed on the 18-hour trip. Once his commission ended Schales started his residency at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Nashville where Mary Elizabeth and Schales Lucille were born.

His first private practice was in Monroe, North Carolina, but proximity to family was important so they pulled up stakes and moved to Oklahoma City where he began a 25-year practice in Ob/Gyn with the Oklahoma City Clinic. He was

the Ob/Gyn Department chair at Presbyterian Hospital for years, was a Clinical Professor at the OU Health Sciences Center where he taught innumerable residents, and pioneered gynecological laparoscopy in Oklahoma City.

Two houses, numerous dogs, gerbils, cats, baseball and softball games, dance recitals, boy scout meetings and campouts (including a trip to Philmont in 1980) and countless swim meets were the fabric of their lives all those years in Oklahoma City. Schales was proud of his involvement with James's Boy Scout Troop and the Last Frontier Council for whom he conducted camp physicals and from whom he received a Silver Beaver award. He also loved the 1929 Model A he had reconstructed from parts found in a barn. He was adamant about women's reproductive rights, and was a staunch supporter of Planned Parenthood.

Mary Lu passed away in 1993, and Schales moved to a house in New Castle, Oklahoma from which he could fly his airplane on the private airstrip. A longtime friend, Suzanne Poston, and her children shared time and memories there as well. He opened a solo practice in New Castle for a number of years. In 2000 he became Medical Director of Southern Oklahoma Resource Center in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma, a residential home for people with significant physical disabilities. He loved being able to care for the residents and contribute to this community. Here he met his second wife, Rosemary Blakey. They were married Valentine's Day 2003.

After the SORC closed in 2012, Schales was a medical director for Hospice of Oklahoma County. In 2012 Schales and Rosemary built the home of their dreams, designing and watching its construction on land owned by Rosemary on a small lake north of Elmore City. Rosemary died in 2013 after 10 wonderful years together. Schales decided to stay in the area, having come to love the wide-open spaces that may have reminded him of Arkansas. Bobby Blakey, Rosemary's brother, became a dear friend, and was his tour guide for a return trip to the rural life of his youth. (But he also enjoyed taking family and friends to the local BBQ restaurants and treated visitors to these local haunts

at every opportunity.)

He was chair of the Garvin County Democratic Party, a member of the Pauls Valley Rotary Club where he volunteered for their gardening projects, volunteered for the Pauls Valley Chamber of Commerce, and enjoyed visiting with family, friends and neighbors.

In addition to Mary Lu and Rosemary, Schales was preceded in death by his parents, his son James and his brother-in-law Chris Wray. He is survived by his daughters Sarah Atkinson, MD; Mary Beth Stephens; and Schäles Nagle; his brother-in-law Bobby Blakey and his wife Donna and their children, Becky Wooster and Greg Blakey; his brother-in-law Alan Wray and his wife Vanessa; his sister-in-law Diana Farrell and her husband Mike; his sister-in-law Rockye Wray and four grandchildren: Bennett, Weston, George and Anna Lee. Schales was also blessed with a special relationship with his cousin Janie Wiltshire.

The family is eternally grateful for the kindness, generosity, and loving care Schales received from Jan Bowerman, Susie Dehart, Ariel Gilliam, and Arlita Brakefield. As his health declined they were always there to ensure his comfort and every need.

The family is being served by Wooster Funeral Homes. A memorial service is planned for 10:00 a.m., June 12, 2021 in Oklahoma City. You may send a condolence to the family at www.woosterfuneralhomes.com.

Memorial contributions can be made to Scouts BSA, Planned Parenthood, the Garvin County Democratic Party, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Previous Events

Memorial Gathering

JUN 12. 10:00 AM (CT)

Cowboy Hall of Fame
1700 NE 63rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Tribute Wall

JP

“ *Schaless Atkinson was brilliant, kind, and dedicated to assuring his patients the best health care available. He adored his family and was generous with his friends. His children and grandchildren were in his chats with anyone who would listen. He was generous with himself to friends, family, and patients. We will miss him.*

Janice and Charles Perino - May 17, 2021 at 12:40 PM



“ *Dr. Schaless L. Atkinson*

November 12, 2022 at 02:44 AM

KO

“ *Schaless was truly an extraordinary man and an extraordinary physician; he was truly invested in each patient and provided heroic compassion in every situation and for all people. I dearly loved this man and offer my sincere condolences to his family. Kathy Onley*

Kathy Onley - July 30, 2021 at 01:57 AM

CB

I loved your dad reminds me of my own clueless of dealing with your own

cheryl brison - March 17, 2025 at 09:14 PM

KR

“ *He was also Medical Director at Area Of Life Hospice in Sulphur Okla for short period of time Great man Fly High Sir Karon Mae Rankin RN*

Karon Mae Rankin RN - July 07, 2021 at 07:27 PM

RQ

“ Schales was a very devoted Physician; admired and trusted by his patients. He had many talents and pursued many hobbies but Family and Medicine were at the top of his priorities. We shared many long hours together. We will miss you ! Godspeed, Joy and Roger Quinn

Roger Quinn - June 07, 2021 at 04:05 PM

CB

“ I met Schales 41years ago. I was referred to him from another Dr who told me if anyone could help me have a baby it was Dr Schales Atkinson in OKC. He performed his magical procedure and less than a year later, our beautiful baby girl, "Schalie", was born!

From that day forward, Dr Schales became a family friend. He came to many family get togethers. We loved hime and he loved us. He would've been so proud to meet Schalie's first baby due in a couple weeks. I'm sure he would've claimed "Grandpa rights"!!



Charline Beebe - June 04, 2021 at 01:39 PM

SD

“ I had the privilege to care for Doc the last eight months of his life at his home near Elmore City. I love him like a father. He was so kind and never complained, not once, although bed ridden the entire time I knew him. He was as much a blessing to me as I hope I was to him. I had the honor and privilege to be instrumental in conjunction with others to lead him back to Jesus in his final days. He shared with me his love for dancing and I look forward to sharing a dance with him some day Go Rest High On That Mountain (Vince Gill)! Susie Dehart

Susie Dehart - May 07, 2021 at 12:44 PM

KS

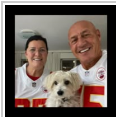
I was one of his many patients. I loved him dearly. I started seeing him when I was 13 years old. He delivered both of my children at Presbyterian Hospital in OKC where he also did my total hysterectomy in 1999. He was injured in the May 1999 tornado in Newcastle. He said I was his last hysterectomy since he had lost a finger in the tornado. He was in the hanger with his plane. I could talk to him about anything. When he retired in 2004 I was lost. He was also my mother's doctor who died from breast cancer in 1974. I have also been battling the same cancer. You were the BEST. May you fly high now you have earned your wings. Dr Atkinson you were one of a kind. Thank You. 💕

Kelly Senti - October 16, 2022 at 11:49 AM

AM

“ I had the pleasure of having a working relationship with doc and Rosemary for many years. They called me their work daughter. when my infant was ill with a severe ear infection, Doc and Rosemary came to my home and checked on her at midnight and he rocked her to sleep and sang to her. As soon as he began singing, she raised off his shoulder and whispered "shhhh, dont sing" and he erupted into laughter. Both were wonderful people and will be remembered fondly. My prayers and thoughts are with the family.

Amy Maxwell - May 06, 2021 at 04:02 PM



We send prayers of love and peace. Love, Fadi and Lisa

FadiandLisa Mashnouk - May 07, 2021 at 10:45 AM

JB

Schales will forever be in my heart! For 3 yrs he was my friend, confidant & sounding block. If I asked for advice, oh boy, would he ever give his advice! He always told me to just do the right thing. I will miss my friend always! He fought a good fight & passed peacefully. Rest In Peace Schales! May you bask in the love of Jesus for all eternity! ❤️

Jan Bowerman - May 10, 2021 at 09:53 PM

SG

*I worked with Schales for nearly 25 years at Presbyterian. He was my physician and delivered my daughter, as well as my mentor, or "tormentor" as he would jokingly say! He truly cared about his patients, and you could hear his laughter the minute he stepped off of the elevator! He was a dear friend even though it had been a while since we talked, I shall miss him always.
And, I was happily responsible for one of those cats for his daughters!
Fly to new heights, my friend!*

Shelley Gattenby - May 12, 2021 at 07:53 PM

MK

Drake joins me in sending our deep condolences to family members. Schales was not only the physician that cared for me personally through critical years and did successful surgery as well---he was a friend and mentor to our two sons, Drew and Carl through the Boy Scout Troop. He was there for the boys along with his son, James to receive Eagle Scout Award He and Mary Lou will be warmly remembered as dear friends during that period of our lives in Oklahoma before we moved away. May God grant you peace and love. We will not be able to attend the funeral, but our prayers are with you.

Margaret Keith, June 6, 2021

Margaret Keith - June 06, 2021 at 04:59 PM

SO

*Thirty-eight years ago Dr. Atkinson showed up at a parent-teacher meeting with a grin and a note for me. Tests had come through that afternoon revealing my long-awaited pregnancy. He couldn't wait to share...and to make my day.
Then following delivery when my husband and teacher friends were busy at school, leaving me alone in the hospital, he brought Mary Lu to keep me company while he made his rounds.
What a special person he was.*

Sue Oldham - June 07, 2021 at 08:34 PM

HM

Schales and I were the original Medical Officers when the USS James Madison, SSBN-627 (nuclear missile submarine) was commissioned. He was the Blue and I was the Gold crew doctor. He was onboard months before I arrived, and his mentoring was invaluable. Ave atque vale, Schales

Herbert L. Cares, M.D.

Herbert L. Cares, M.D. - June 16, 2021 at 11:22 AM

MA

I began working for Dr. A in May of 1990. He was a hoot, an excellent teacher, and a generous and kind boss. So many wonderful memories from those years. He encouraged me to return to school to get my teaching certificate (I already had an English degree), and he let me rearrange my work hours around my observation hours. I left Dr. A in August of 94, but he remains forever in my heart. Thank you for believing in me Dr. A. I love you forever, "Chico" (Michelle Ayers)

Michelle Merino Ayers - July 29, 2021 at 02:50 PM