



Dr. Richard Margoles Hirshberg

November 20, 1931 - January 27, 2021

Dr. Richard Margoles Hirshberg passed away on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 in Covington, Louisiana. He had lived in Houston, Texas since 1954 having moved to Covington shortly before his passing to be with family. He was born on November 20, 1931 in Springfield, MA to the late Irving Hirshberg and Eva Margoles Hirshberg.

Richard is survived by his loving wife Jacklyn Sonnier Hirshberg of 45 years; daughter Eva Hirshberg Heintz and son-in-law Dr. Jay William Heintz; mother in law Martha Lane Sonnier; and beloved granddaughters Sadie Lee Heintz, Lucy Richard Heintz and Harper Tuesday Heintz.

Dr. Hirshberg practiced neurosurgery in Houston, Texas for 30 years. Caring for his patients and alleviating their pain was his life's work and passion. He often referred to his calling to medicine as a "magnificent obsession." Dr. Hirshberg lived a life of true service dedicated to the care of others.

Dr. Hirshberg completed his undergraduate degree at Brandeis University graduating Cum Laude with distinction in Biology in 1953 followed by a year of graduate studies in biochemistry at the University of Massachusetts. In 1959 he received a degree in medicine with honors from Baylor University College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. Dr. Hirshberg completed a surgical internship at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri and a residency in neurosurgery at Baylor College of Medicine and Columbia University in neuropathology. He was a Lieutenant in the Naval Reserves from 1955 to 1972.

Dr. Hirshberg was the Clinical Chief of Neurosurgery at St. Joseph's Hospital in Houston from 1964 to 1990. He was Chief of Staff at St. Joseph's from 1984-1985. The mission of the Sisters of Charity at St. Joseph's Hospital was near and dear to his heart. He was the chief of the neurosurgery residency program at St. Joseph's Hospital from 1964 to 1993 and truly loved training the next generation of dedicated surgeons.

From 1964 to 1993 Dr. Hirshberg was on the staff of The Methodist Hospital, Hermann

Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital, Texas Children's Hospital, and M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston, Texas.

After his retirement in 1993, Dr. Hirshberg spent time writing, researching, and speaking on the topics of pain as well as "shaken baby" syndrome. He developed a midline myelotomy procedure for the alleviation of pelvic cancer pain involving a novel pathway in the spinal cord.

Richard treasured his many friendships in Houston and around the country and world. He leaves a legacy of compassion, service, and love that will never be forgotten.

The family will hold a private memorial service. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Dr. Richard Hirshberg may be made at Baylor College of Medicine. Please donate online at <http://www.givebmf.org/hirshberg-memorial>.

E. J. Fielding Funeral Home, Covington, LA, is in charge of arrangements. Please Share a Memory on the Tribute Wall at <http://www.ejfieldingfh.com>.

Comments



“ My daughter, Amanda Miles was born on March 23, 1973. She had many birth defects. Our pediatrician said she would only live three days. We were introduced to Dr. Hirshberg a few days later. He felt she might die on the operating table. She repaired her cranial bifida condition. He also did five or six more surgeries. She is the joy of our lives. She is 48 years old and serve on community non for profit boards. Several years ago she was awarded the Volunteer of the Year for the City of Alvin....all to Dr.Hirshberg. Judy Zavalla 832-724-4353; jzavalla1@att.net

Judy Zavalla - July 28 at 04:02 PM



“ What an outstanding person. I knew per the St. Joe association and friends. I just learned today. Well...

R K - March 19 at 11:55 PM



“ Richard was a dear friend and an inspiration. He was caring and always had an encouraging word. I met Richard in 1999 at the IASP in Vienna, Austria. We continued our friendship and he even attended my wedding. Richard was such a brilliant and special person and friend. He is in my prayers and thoughts, also extended to Jackie, Eva and the family. with Love Rhonda and Chris

Rhonda Moore - February 24 at 03:35 PM



“ Mrs. Hirshberg and Eva-
Having worked with you and Dr. Hirshberg for many years, I want to offer my condolences at his passing. He was pleasure to work with and always a kind gentleman to me.
God bless you,
Mary Gillespie CPA

Mary Gillespie - February 09 at 10:09 PM



“ I had the good fortune of meeting Dr. Hirshberg at the Downtown Club at Houston Center, where he took lunch nearly every day, from what I could tell. I offered to help with his plate, as he was using a walker. I don't recall if he accepted (thereafter one of the staff was always helping), but we'd speak when I'd see him on subsequent occasions. He invited my wife and me to join him for lunch, which we did, his treat. He was such a gracious man. He really seemed to appreciate my interrupting his lunch, so I was never afraid to say hi. Lucy and I were saddened to hear of his passing. I treasure the memory of the brief visits we enjoyed from time to time. Thanks, Dr. Hirshberg!
Greg & Lucy Cain

Greg Cain - February 08 at 05:30 PM



“ Richard had a way of welcoming you to the table and settling in with an appreciation of your latest project, tour, or discovery. Of course, he liked to tell of his latest ROMEIO lunch group (Retired Old Men Eating Out) and sharing their discussions.

We were mesmerized by his stories about Eleanor Roosevelt and other interesting people about whom we've only ever read.

We remember seeing him with his supper group in the 360 Houston City Club restaurant enjoying conversation with old and new friends. He coped with canes and walkers as if they were nothing; simply enjoying the day - every day.

As stated in an old song "we will be seeing you in all the old familiar places"...you will be missed.

Ben and Trish Parrack

Ben & Trish Parrack - February 08 at 11:14 AM



“ I am so sorry to hear of the passing of a great neurosurgeon, Dr Richard Hirshberg. Dick (as I knew him) and I trained together as residents in neurosurgery at Baylor Houston in the early 1960's. Dick was an intelligent, hard working, inquisitive surgeon that would challenge you to do better. After completion of training I move to Beaumont, but was able to maintain a great relationship with Dick, often seeing each others patients. There are countless numbers of patients that benefited from his talents. My condolences and prayers to his family. Mark Kubala, MD

Mark Kubala, MD - February 07 at 04:40 PM



“ Our journey with Richard began when Ken, then the father of two young children, had a successful back operation under Richard’s skilled hands. Then Richard encouraged our idea to move to Courtlandt Place, a neighborhood his family and ours loved. What great times we had with neighborhood pumpkin carving events and our children at play on the shared esplanades. Caroline and I reminisced this afternoon about our visit to Louisiana where Jackie and Richard introduced us to the culture of Louisiana. She still cherishes the book he bought her at that time. I will miss our brief chats at the neighborhood Kroger; it was not unusual for us to reconnect in the grocery aisle. He was a man who gave much of his intellect, passion, and skill to others.

sallie gordon - February 07 at 04:38 PM



“ We, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of Dr. Hirshberg. Although I did not have the honor of knowing him personally, I truly felt I did as his name over numerous years was a "household word" among the Sisters and spoken with great awe and recognition! We were blessed with Dr. Hirshbeg's many years of ministry with us at St. Joseph Hospital which we owned in those years. Dr. Hirshberg was of course second to none in his field and yes indeed, medicine and its healing power was his "magnificent obsession"! Scores of individuals and families are grateful for that! May he now rest in eternal peace and be fully rewarded for the great good he has done. We know many of the Sisters whom he knew well and have gone before him have welcomed him, no barriers remain. Be assured of our prayers for Dr. Hirshberg and the family especially at this time and our immense gratitude for his many many years in our midst.

With our sympathy, prayer, and gratitude,
Sr. Kevina Keating, CCVI
Congregational Leader & all the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word

Sr. Kevina Keating - February 07 at 04:07 PM



“ May his memory be a blessing.

Joel & Debra Ruby

Joel Ruby - February 07 at 01:55 PM



“ Dear Jackie, Eva and family,

My sincerest condolences for the loss of your loving Richard. He was such an icon in the field of medicine and a cherished friend.

I hope you recall the great times we had together, not only at your home, but, at my Passover table.

Hugs and Love,
Lulu Kamin

Lulu Kamin - February 07 at 12:34 PM



“ Deep and sincere condolences to Richard's family.
With best regards,
Diane Novy

diane novy - February 07 at 12:22 PM



“ I worked with Richard for many years at St. Joseph and respected him very highly. I also shared discussions with him on different topics in which we were both interested, particularly our shared religion. He will be missed by all that new him.

Stanley Novy

Stanley Novy - February 07 at 11:19 AM



“ Unfortunately I did not have the pleasure of meeting such an amazing man but I do know one thing, he left behind such a kind and loving family. Eva, who I am honored to call my dear friend, thought the world of her daddy and will miss those daily calls. My heart is sad for those left behind but know that is memory and brilliant stories will continue and I look forward to continuing to learn more about him.



Amy Koons - February 05 at 06:57 PM