



## Dr. Bruce William Brient

August 25, 1939 - June 10, 2021

Fly-fisherman, adventurer, storyteller, and beloved general surgeon, Dr. Bruce William Brient passed away on June 10, 2021, at the age of 81.

Dr. Brient was born on August 25, 1939. He grew up in Kansas City, MO, the son of Percy Alfred Austin Brient, a traveling salesman, and Bessie Oneida Steward, a devoted mom and real estate agent who raised him singlehandedly after his dad passed away when he was 12. He was the first in his family to go to college, graduating from the University of Kansas on a track scholarship and going on to complete medical school there. He was the first medical student west of the Mississippi accepted into the Duke University residency program. After three years at Duke, he finished his residency at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

He was drafted into the Army and served for two years in the Office of the Surgeon General as a Lt. Colonel despite his general disdain for rules and regulations. At one point, he was reprimanded for ice skating in uniform.

After the Army, he taught transplant surgery as an Associate Professor at Shands Teaching Hospital before starting his own surgery practice in 1981. He built a successful practice at what was then Alachua General Hospital and later joined the Surgical Group of Gainesville at North Florida Regional Medical Center. He loved his patients and they loved him. For him, making rounds was as much about making new friends -- learning about his patients and sharing stories -- as it was about delivering great medical care. He would often round until late in the evening, and it was not uncommon for him to spend more than an hour with a single patient.

On office days, his exam room was almost always overflowing, and patients would be waiting until well into the evening. He was not apologetic about running late, but, rather, he assured his patients that when he saw them, he would give them "as much time as it takes." And he always did. He was one of a kind, and he loved his job and his patients so much that he continued operating until he was 80.

Outside of work, his life was fueled by adventures. When he wasn't speeding around town in his red Corvette, he hiked the Milford Trek in New Zealand, fished virtually anywhere there are fish, hunted geese, and skied every year until he was 79. Tragically, he was not able to make his long-anticipated trip to ski Alta for free at age 80 due to the COVID-19

pandemic. His true passion and favorite place was the Bitterroot Valley in Montana, to which he traveled every summer for more than 40 years.

Dr. Brient is survived by his wife of 21 years, Collette (“CJ”), with whom he shared many of his adventures and a passion for food. In addition, he is survived by Carol Brient, his first wife and the mother of his three loving children and their spouses, Paul Brient and Cathy Scholz of Wayland, MA, Scott Brient and Tina Gravenstein of Roswell, GA, and Carrie and Brian DeFoe of Bainbridge Island, WA, his eight grandchildren, Tyler (20), Josh (18), Daniel (18), Isabella (16), Thomas (15), Lukas (15), Zachary (11), and Willem (8), and the countless patients he touched during his more than 50 years practicing medicine.

A celebration of life gathering for Dr. Brient will be held on July 24, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. at the Gainesville Woman’s Club (2809 West University Avenue).

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Cancer Society.



# Comments

---



“ Dr. Brent was a wonderful sole. I was a patient of his and he was ALWAYS full of smiles and stories. I looked forward to my appointments! I recently heard of his passing and my heart broke. I will always remember his words of wisdom about having the correct running shoes and the proper way of planting your foot while running! Prayers and comfort are sent to his family. He will be greatly missed. I owe him so much gratitude for being a big part of my journey becoming healthy. God Bless him.

**Chanda Butler** - July 15 at 07:34 PM

---



“ He will be missed. He was an awesome guy. He loved me and my husband Gary&Cynthia Terry and we loved him. Always keep a smile on his face. Always greeting me with a kiss. Sleep on Dr Brient you will be missed but never forgotten. We've shared many years together at AGH. Sleep on my brother.



**Cynthia Terry** - June 30 at 08:25 AM



“ When I first met Dr. Brient, I thought he was rude and uncaring. After talking with him for a few minutes I found out that he was the most kindhearted and concerned man as well as doctor that I have ever encountered. Dr. Brient was straight forward in advising me about what I needed to do to prepare for my surgery. I had my surgery and Dr. Brient called me from his home to check on me and I was able to call him as needed also. I enjoyed my visits with Dr. Brient because he genuinely cared about my health. He is resting with our father in Heaven. We needed him hear but God needed him more. You will always be remembered.

**Darlene Hill** - July 16 at 12:27 AM

---



“ My husband Gene and I worked outside of the OR with Dr. Brient. We renovated his home. He told us of all the remodeling we did his most favorite thing was the French drain in his front entrance. No more flooding his entrance! Bruce was a character, always smiling and joking. He loved duck season and would have his gear all spread out in the living room ready to make his trip up North. Bruce was the one who got Gene to stop smoking after his cancer diagnosis. We not only worked for Dr. B, but we became close friends to him and his wife CJ. I hope your enjoying those charbroiled burgers in Heaven! Peace be with you my friend.

**Shelly and Gene Hye** - June 25 at 07:38 AM

---



“ I am so sorry to learn of Dr. Bruce's passing. He was an outstanding surgeon with a pleasant and outgoing personality. We first met him when my wife Joan Claire Cullman-Rosov required intervention for a tumor soon after we arrived in Gainesville from W. P. Beach in 2007. His skill was evident and he was always willing to spend the time explaining the procedure before and after. He operated on Joan at least 7-8 times over 9.years. Often he and I would have a discussion regarding science or biology at his office much to the consternation of CJ who managed his schedule. We, myself, my daughter Tamara Ruth and son-in-law David were always thankful for his concern and devotion to his patients.  
To CJ and his children and families we send our heartfelt sympathy and condolences. He will be missed by many. May his memory be a blessing. RIP Dr. Brient.                    Sadly, Dr. Ted Rosov

**Theodore J. Rosov, DDS, (ret)** - June 20 at 05:25 PM

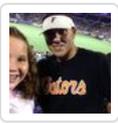
---



“ I was sadden to learn of Dr Brient’s death. He was one of kind, a legend, a great story teller, an excellent surgeon and and even better friend and colleague. I spent many a long night or a weekend in the OR with Dr. B. He always had a great story to tell and we would have to remind him to talk and sew at the same time. We had many a heated discussion at the OR board late in the afternoon when he would be trying to rearrange things so we could “slip” his patient in between two other surgeons. It’s hard to imagine a world without Dr Brient in it. Rest In Peace Dr B you will be missed. The great story teller has left the stage.

**Marcia Gillingham** - June 20 at 01:54 PM

---



“ Bruce was a legend to me. He was my father’s buddy and I went into surgery because of him. The biggest laugh I’ve had in my life occurred at a glacier lake in Montana as our families were huddled around a campfire and he was holding court. By far the best storyteller I have ever witnessed. I always looked at him as a proverbial badass. His kids are lucky he was their dad. His patients are lucky he was their surgeon. Gainesville is lucky he was their citizen. A truly colorful character. A great surgeon who saved my mom on more than one occasion. A closest friend to my dad. End of an era. I hope we meet up again somehow.

**Tim Childers** - June 17 at 08:34 PM

---



“ So saddened to learn of the loss of Dr. Bruce Brient on June 10. I knew Bruce first as my teacher and later as my colleague and friend. In my first memory of him he stands on the stage at the Communicore at the UF Med School passionately lecturing on breast cancer. Later, he taught me as an attending during surgery internship (where he exhibited remarkable patience for a surgeon). Then, for decades we remained colleagues at Shands, AGH, and NFRMC. He defended his staff and his co-workers. He enlivened lunch conversations in the doctor's lounge and regaled us with his stories. He had a unique sparkle in his eyes just before he would tell a joke, and he always kept the table entertained. I will miss his wisdom. He made the world a better place, and it is diminished with his loss. I hope I see ya later, Bruce!

**Steven A. Reid, M.D.** - June 17 at 08:01 PM



“ So very sorry to read of Bruce’s passing. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

**Rebecca Benton** - June 20 at 07:14 PM