



John Gayden

MAR 16, 1944 - OCT 5, 2018



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Dr. John Overton Gayden, husband, father, grandfather, mentor and friend to many, died on October 5, 2018 at the age of 74 after a long struggle with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Known as “Jack” to everyone who loved him, meaning nearly everyone who met him, he was born in Maxwell Field, Alabama on March 16, 1944, the fourth of five children born to Anne Dickinson and Hamilton Virgil Gayden. He grew up in Nashville, riding horses at Travelers Rest and playing at the Governor’s Mansion with a young Bob Clement. He spent many summers at Camp Hy-Lake with his brothers, where at a young age he was taught to appreciate and be a good steward to God’s creation, a passion that stayed with him for the rest of his life. He graduated from Peabody Demonstration School in 1962. A star basketball player and member of that school’s “1,000 Point Club,” Jack would go on to play basketball for the University of Mississippi, where he majored in Biology and was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. In 1964, he married, Dixie Douglas, of Nashville, TN, and after graduating college, he worked for her father’s company, Dixie Wire, from 1966-1968. He attended medical school at the University of Tennessee from 1968-1971, with an internship at the University of Tennessee and Baptist Memorial Hospital from 71-72 and a residency at the University of Tennessee from 72-75. From 1975-1977, he served as a Major in the medical unit at Ireland Army Health Clinic in Fort Knox, Kentucky, then returned to Memphis to join the medical practice, Maury, Adkins, Graves, and Sanford, until 1985 when he and Dr. Henry Leigh Adkins – with help of Robert Burns and ten loyal employees – started Memphis Obstetrics and Gynecological Association, PC. Under his direction, the small practice expanded to include four locations, twenty-seven providers, and established offices near every labor and delivery unit in the East, North/Bartlett, Germantown, and Southaven markets. It is now the largest private provider of women’s healthcare in the Mid-South. In 1982, he married Dr. Evelyn “Lynn” Wilkerson, of Memphis, TN. They



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remained together for thirty-six years. Throughout his life, his passion for the outdoors only grew. An avid hunter and conservationist, he spent many early mornings at Five Lakes Hunting Club. He was a life member of Ducks Unlimited and Shikar Safari Club and even helped publish an outdoors magazine, "Waterfowler's World." For years, he served as a board member on the Tennessee Wildlife Federation and was voted Chairman in 2013, changing the nature of the position from a largely ceremonial role to one that propelled the organization forward, both in reputation and in capacity to affect change. His leadership facilitated the Federation reclaiming its title as the leading conservation organization in Tennessee. Living life for others is what drove "Doc" to become a physician. He loved and practiced medicine until health issues forced his retirement. Thousands of babies were brought into the world by his hands, a world made better by him being in it. He joined the Sunrise Prayer Group in recent years, and it brought him closer to God. In his retirement letter to his patients, he summed up his outlook succinctly: "Life is a gift, and what you do with it is what you give back and ask for nothing in return." We would like to thank the family of the organ donor, whose loss gave "Doc" six more years of life while asking for nothing in return. We will always cherish those years. His brother, William "Dick" Gayden, preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife, Lynn; his four sons, John Overton Jr., Richard Douglas (Rebecca), Henry Dickinson (Catherine), and Walker Bolton Gayden; his two granddaughters, Timberlynn and Dixie Gayden; and his four remaining siblings, Judge Hamilton "Kip" Gayden, MacGavock "Mac" Gayden, Joseph "Joe" Gayden, and Ida Ezell. A service will be held on Saturday, October 27 at 11 a.m. at Second Presbyterian Church, 4055 Poplar Ave, Memphis, TN. 38111. Visitation will be held from 9-11 a.m. at the church. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to Tennessee Wildlife Federation, 300 Orlando Ave, Nashville, TN. 37209, or a charity of your choice. Arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38119 (901) 767-8930. "Celebrating Life... Behind the Stone Wall".



Tribute Wall

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LF

Laura Forbess posted:

Dr. Gayden delivered my daughter in 1989. I had never seen him before and was a nervous wreck. His funny bedside manner immediately eased me. It was a difficult birth, but she was healthy with no concerns. I continued to see him for my annual exams until he retired. I wonder at times, if anyone else had delivered her, would it have been the same. I am eternally grateful to Dr. Gayden and will miss him. Love and prayers to his family.

June 3 at 11:08 AM

VS

Victoria L Shirey Sanders posted:

Dr. Gayden barely delivered my youngest. When he broke my water, I asked if he was going to be there to deliver Amanda and he said heck yes! I was afraid it'd be after hours and he wouldn't be on call. It was around 3:15 pm that afternoon and he was paged when I was ready to deliver. He was talking between his office and Baptist East in the tunnel. Another doctor was called in and had just sat down to deliver Amanda. I was so relieved he was there to deliver Amanda, which was 32.5 years ago. He was such a sweet man. I just googled him and read he had passed.

April 10 at 4:26 PM

AC

Aaron Corbett posted:

Dr. Gayden is a man I will never forget. He was full of life lessons and good advice. He took my brother and I hunting when we were younger. He taught me things like: eating garlic before basketball games to use your bad breath to get guys off you & how everyone thought he could drink a lot cause he drank Gin and Tonic and after a few it was only Tonic. He was a very inspirational person in my life, that left an everlasting imprint. He will be truly missed! Prayers to his family.

November 19 at 6:38 PM



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TR

Trisha posted:

Jack Gayden was a remarkable man. He was a bright light at Baptist Hospital from the moment I met him at Baptist on Union. He treated everyone at the hospital with the utmost respect whether you were in environmental services to the CEO. He was kind to every employee. Whether you were his patient or someone else's patient he cared for you. I will never forget him. He gave me so much as a friend, confidant, and Physician. I will always remember his loving caring ways through breakups with boyfriends and fiance' to when I got married, had my child, buried my parents and specifically his guidance as my sister went through her stem cell transplant in Nashville. As bad as he felt at the time, he talked me through all my questions about the logistics of Vanderbilt and who to I talk to about everything. He never judged anyone because he let you know he had never walked in your shoes as he told you exactly what you should do, which always made sense and made you laugh. Life will be tough without Jack around. I will pray for all of you as you go through life without him around. You will always have his spirit and all the "Jackisms" . Live life, laugh a lot and love each other. From the lessons of Jack.

October 27 at 8:29 AM

SJ

Susan Jones posted:

To know Dr. Gayden was to love him and I sure did. He was a great man and I was privileged to be called one of his cousins, for which the word when used by him held a very special place in my heart. Today we celebrate his life with deepest love, thankfulness and the fondest of memories. My thoughts and prayers are with those that he held closest to his heart.

October 27 at 3:25 AM

HW

Harvey Wilker posted:

We were playing East High School and the gym was packed. Jack & I were on a fast break. Jack was guarded by Bill Boner and he just crossed the center court line. Jack teased Bill with the ball out in front of him and Boner went for the steal. Jack then dribbled behind his back and Boner went for the fake. Jack went in and scored the layup. When I turned around and went back up the court on defense, Boner was still looking for his "jock strap." I can still see this today. We won the game. Condolences to all of his family and friends.

October 25 at 9:42 AM



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MP

Marty Parks posted:

Dr. "Jack" Gayden was a doctor who invested in his patients. I am grateful to have been his patient since I was a teenager, and am honored that he was the one who guided me through the joys of delivering my three sons, the pain of loss, as well as many other medical issues. He made me feel as if we were lifelong friends and he always took the time to listen, guide, and LAUGH! We laughed a lot! We formed a great rapport as we talked about faith and family, and I always looked forward to seeing him. I considered him my friend. He made a huge impact on my life and my family and he will truly be missed. Rest easy, Dr. Gayden. You were one in a million!!!

October 19 at 1:27 PM

PB

Pat Bibb posted:

I am so sorry for your loss. Jack delivered both of my sons in the mid eighties. He also guided me through my miscarriages in such a spiritual way. I have never forgotten that. Jack hunted ducks and doves several times with my husband, and was so much fun to be around. May God be with you all in your time of sadness.

October 17 at 8:54 AM

MT

Monica Allen-Taylor posted:

I will never forget the first time I at Doctor John Gayden. I had just turned 19 years old and had been rushed to the emergency room at Baptist East because I was miscarrying my first baby. I was very scared and didn't really know what was happening at the time he was the doctor in my group that was on call and it was the first time I met him. He got very close to me face-to-face almost nose-to-nose and he had my face cradled in his hands and he looked into my eyes and said, "Your baby is in Heaven now." Although I would be forever heartbroken his sweet kind words and gestures stayed with me and called me at the moment. AND because of that I change doctors in the group and he became my Dr and he delivered my daughter Angela. He told me about a doctor in Nashville that I could use because we were moving and I hated to leave him. It was about 10 years later I saw the doctor gave me again when I was visiting family in the hospital. I was walking across the parking lot leaving the hospital and he was going inside. He stopped me and asked how I was doing and he called me by name after all those years, I thought it was remarkable that he remembered me. I will never forget him. He was dear to me. God bless his family. God bless John Gayden.

October 16 at 12:32 PM



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BF

Beverley Felts posted:

I am so sorry for your loss. Dr. Gayden was the most amazing doctor! The world was a better place because of him. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers.

October 16 at 7:50 AM

MW

Mike And Owessa Williams posted:

Mike and Owessa Williams John, so sorry for your loss!

October 15 at 2:13 PM

EN

Elizabeth N. posted:

So heartbroken. Condolences to his family. Dr. Gayden was the best doctor in the world. He delivered me in 1982 and then delivered both of my sons (2001 & 2005). His loss is felt deeply and his memory will always be a part of our family.

October 15 at 5:49 AM

PF

Patient/Friend posted:

God in life does not put many people on our path without a purpose. The purpose of Dr. Gayden in my life, honestly, he saved my life, and gave me, a purpose, a love for life, a love to give back to others, and love. He was a kind, honest, gentleman, and one of a kind. He lived life, lived to the fullest, and never looked back, always positive, always had the right words to express, always an ever present soul from God, that endured during the rough times too. His heart, was, truth, open, love, kind, and very humble. My life changed from the relationship with Dr. Gayden, he was life! Praise to God, the gift he gave so many. The sons he had, and all the babies his hands touched, along with being someone, who cared. Who loved life, and loved the outdoors. He loved his boys, and time with each one of them. God has him, he is home, and I look forward to the day I go home, and see him again, Jesus Christ, died on the cross, forgives us, we repent, and the gates to heaven open. He was a spiritual, Christian and his actions, showed his life, and belief in Christ. He shared Christ with me. Many were blessed to have him put on our path by Christ, and praise God, for his humble, love, and love for life!

October 13 at 2:55 PM



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LE

Lesa posted:

I had Dr. Gayden as my gyn from the young age of 16 until my 30's. He made me feel comfortable and I appreciated his caring attitude. My condolences to the family.

October 13 at 1:00 PM

TG

Teresa A. Gallagher posted:

DR.GAYDEN Such a wonderful person. I had been seeing him since 1985 age of 15 he made feel comfortable from the moment I met him. I didn't receive a letter from him letting me know he was retiring I only found out the next yr when making my yearly appointment that he had retired & I wouldn't see his face again. Over the y I have asked about him & how he was doing. He is missed alot but Heaven will have a special Doctor to help them out because he was so caring.

October 12 at 9:47 AM

BJ

Becky Jones posted:

What a wonderful man. I knew him as doctor. I enjoyed his personality and friendship. Heaven has a wonderful soul to join in the celebration. Prayers for his family.

October 11 at 9:32 AM

JK

Joe Krisle posted:

When Jack was an OB resident at UT in 1972 and I was a medical student doing my OB rotation there, he taught he how to deliver babies, and a few other OB-Gyn procedures. It was like we were friends from day one. I always enjoyed my interactions with Jack and will miss him, as will everyone else.

October 10 at 4:23 PM

TJ

Teresa Jennings posted:

This is so sad. Dr. Gayden was the "cream of the crop" and helped thousands of women in one way or another. I know because he helped me continuously from 1985 – 2013. I also know that even though we have lost him, Heaven holds him firmly and he is at peace.

October 10 at 2:20 PM



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CS

Carolyn H. Simpson posted:

He taught us how to live and he taught us how to die. Miss Craig's boys and girls became a family in the 5th grade. We watched Jack running down the basketball court , bouncing the ball , making a shot. One afternoon at our reunion he told us about a Glendale football game. He was the quarterback...not very big...the center was huge . We were on the 2 yd line and we needed a touchdown badly. Jim told Jack when I give you the ball hold onto my belt. Touchdown! We girls got to dance with him and roller skate with him at the Hippodrome. Boy, could he dance and boy, could he skate!We all loved our Jack!! And on Sept 16 at our final reunion most of us over the phone got to say good-bye and tell him how much we loved him!! Take care Jack —save some places for us. We will always love you so much and we will always carry you with us in our hearts!! Your Glendale Brother and Sisters.

October 10 at 10:23 AM

LM

Lisa Mccullar posted:

Dr. Gayden, you were one of a kind. SMART, Sweet, funny, compassionate and an all around southern gentleman. You made being a nurse a great job. I worked with you at Baptist East and I worked in your office as a phone nurse, you always made the day BRIGHTER with your wit. YOU will truly be missed. You are reaping your rewards in heaven...GOD BLESS you and your family.

October 9 at 2:55 PM

LD

Lewis R Gayden M.D. posted:

Cousin Jack and I reconnected in the last few years. We chatted regularly about everything from the Gayden Medical legacy to calling up a long beard turkey, plus many things in between.. He always found a way to lift me. I will miss him. Lewis Gayden M.D, first cousin

October 9 at 7:54 AM

VS

Vickie Sweeney posted:

The BEST doctor ever, so blest to have been your patient and friend. Prayers to Lynn and the boys, may God grant you comfort as only He can. Dr. Jack will be forever missed and loved.

October 8 at 9:55 AM



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Vernon posted:

So very sorry for your loss..John 5:28,29

October 8 at 9:00 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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