



ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL  
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MEDICAL STAFF BRIEFS



A PUBLICATION FROM THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER AND CHIEF OF STAFF

## The Enduring Legacy of Ralph E. White, MD, 1910 - 2010

**Ralph E. White, MD**, a friend of St. Joseph Hospital for six decades, passed away on August 12 at the age of 100. His extraordinary contributions of time and treasure to St. Joseph Hospital (SJO) have left an enduring legacy.

Dr. White deeply enjoyed being a family doctor, and developed a close rapport with all of his patients and their families. He made \$15 house calls at a time when Orange County's population was just 130,000, retiring in 1976, after three decades on the Medical Staff.

Dr. White's undergraduate and pre-med studies were completed at Santa Ana and Whittier Colleges. Dr. White attended the University of California, Berkeley, for his medical degree. He returned to Santa Ana in 1936 for his internship and residency at Orange County General Hospital (now UCI Medical Center). While there, Dr. White worked under internist Milo Tedstrom, MD (who admitted St. Joseph Hospital's first patient in 1929 and became Orange County's first internist and cardiologist), and they remained friends until Dr. Tedstrom's passing.

His affiliation with St. Joseph Hospital began in 1946 when he returned home from military duty after WWII to start his own medical practice in Santa Ana. Dr. White recalled that his specialty was "the skin and all of its contents." He once estimated that he delivered 1,500 babies during his medical career, and he watched the SJO's Medical Staff grow from about 200 to 1,000 doctors.

In his retirement, Dr. White volunteered for 32 years. Until recent months when his health was failing, he continued to work two days a week, handling the banking needs for the Gift Shop. He and his wife, the late Eleanor White, amassed more than 24,000 hours of volunteer service over 32 years.

In addition to his contributions as a physician and volunteer,

Dr. White bestowed generous funding that furthered the mission of St. Joseph Hospital. He said that he gave to the hospital, "for the privileges they have extended to me throughout my practice and for the care and concern given to me and my late wife, Eleanor, through her long illness." His gift in 2003 to benefit the Patient Care Center was in the form of a charitable annuity. It remains the largest gift ever made by a retired physician, and the largest single annuity ever created throughout the entire St. Joseph Health System. He went on to make a six-figure gift in support of The Center for Cancer Prevention and Treatment that was among the three largest gifts in that capital campaign.



For his lifelong service and transformational giving, in 2004 Dr. White received the Spirit of St. Joseph Award, the highest honor awarded by the St. Joseph Hospital Foundation.

Dr. White's friends in the Foundation fondly referred to him as a "national treasure," and say they will miss him dearly. Anyone wishing to make a donation in honor of Dr. White may contact Carolyn White in the St. Joseph Hospital Foundation at 714-347-7900.

# In Memoriam



*Dr. Ralph White during his years of medical practice.*



*Dr. White and his wife, Eleanor, were devoted St. Joseph Hospital volunteers.*



*Attending the Sister Frances Dunn Legacy Society Luncheon along with Dr. White, from left standing: Warren Johnston, MD; Marilyn and James Padova, MD; and Chief Medical Officer Raymond Casciari, MD.*



*Dr. White with Lawrence D. Wagman, MD, Executive Medical Director of The Center for Cancer Prevention and Treatment (CCPT). Dr. White's gift helped build the CCPT.*



*Dr. Ralph White enjoyed time with friends Robert Ball, MD (center), and Milo Tedstrom, MD. Dr. Tedstrom admitted St. Joseph Hospital's first patient, and Dr. Ball's grandfather joined the staff in the hospital's opening year. After Dr. White's passing Dr. Robert Ball shared, "Ralph was a truly outstanding individual - physician, supporter of St. Joseph Hospital both in service and financially, and a true friend of his patients and his medical colleagues. He will surely be missed."*



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St. Joseph Hospital   
ST. JOSEPH  
HEALTH SYSTEM

1100 W. Stewart Dr.  
Orange, CA 92868

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