

Minute 11-20-22:01: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Memorial minute for Peter Schantz.

Peter Schantz was born on October 22, 1939, in Camden, New Jersey, to David Schantz and Ada Mullineaux Schantz and died July 26, 2022, of Alzheimer's disease. He channeled his childhood love of animals into a yearning to become a veterinarian. At the University of Pennsylvania, Peter's undergraduate degree in anthropology, in his words "Opened my mind to the world in all its cultural diversity." After his first year of vet school, he spent a summer working for the California Department of Health investigating an infectious disease of poverty and became interested in a career in public health. Ascribing to the "Peace Corps mentality" he was concerned about poverty and disease that inhibited development in large parts of the world. Convinced that veterinarians could have an impact, he completed a PhD in veterinary epidemiology and pathology at the University of California, Davis under the guidance of Calvin Schwabe, DVM, PhD who became a lifelong friend. After 4 years stationed in Argentina with the Pan American Health Association, he returned to the US in 1974 as an epidemiologist with the Centers for Disease Control. His service with the Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service spanned many countries, from Mexico and Ecuador to Nigeria, to China and Tibet, as well as the US. "I have had one foot in the veterinary arena and one foot in the human medical arena" he said of his career tracking, preventing, and treating zoonotic (animal-to-human) diseases.

Peter was a gifted athlete in high school and college, a key member of both the Quaker football and wrestling teams at Penn, receiving the Scholar/Athlete award his senior year. He was an athlete his entire life enjoying karate, running, skiing, bicycling, even rollerblading and snowboarding.

As a child Peter attended the Lutheran church with his family. Peter's mentor, Dr. Calvin Schwabe, became a close friend and was a member of Haverford Friends Meeting. On visits to see him, Peter learned about Friends from him. He began attending the Atlanta Friends Meeting with Mary Bartlett after their marriage in 1999 and his quiet grounded presence enriched our meeting.

Friends and family celebrated Peter's life and mourned his passing in a memorial meeting for worship on October 22, 2022, on what would have been his 83rd birthday. He is remembered for his lively curiosity about all life, always open to new experience, and for his quiet humility. His colleagues at CDC spoke of his dedication to being a tutor and mentor, always generous with his time and fully present. His appetite for life included an appreciation for food especially grazing on anything available including dog biscuits. His grandson recalled his grandfather making him 'special pancakes' on visits, special because he loved the time they enjoyed together. One of his daughter's shared a favorite passage from Albert Camus that guided Peter's life.

"In the midst of hate, I found there was, within me, an invincible love. In the midst of tears, I found there was, within me, an invincible smile. In the midst of chaos, I found there was, within me, an invincible calm. I realized, through it all, that in the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer. And that makes me happy. For it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there's something stronger-something better, pushing right back."

In addition to his wife Mary Bartlett, Peter is survived by his children Aimee, Erica, and Brendan; brother David; sister Susan; stepsons Cody and Zach Smith; and grandchildren Tanner and Piper Wise, and Reid and Maddie Smith. Although Peter has passed on, his quiet but strong spirit lives on in the many lives he touched.