

Stephen Dickinson Russell, DDS

Birth: 10/31/1941

Death: 2/7/2017

Service Information:

Services will be held Sunday, March 5, 2017, 3 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Olympia, 1224 Legion Way SE, Olympia, WA 98501.

Memorial donations may be made to the Olympia Union Gospel Mission Free Dental Clinic, 413 Franklin St. NE #A, Olympia, WA 98501.

Stephen "Steve" Russell passed away peacefully on February 7, 2017, in Olympia, Washington. He was born on October 31, 1941, to Louise and Harry Benn Russell, in Long Beach, California. A 45-year resident of Olympia, Steve was raised in Elma, Washington, and graduated from Elma High School in 1959. He attended the University of Washington, earning a BS in Zoology in 1962 and a DDS from the School of Dentistry in 1966. On August 28, 1966, Steve earned a commission in the U.S. Army and served his country during the Vietnam War as a medical officer, providing critical dental and health care for thousands of soldiers, while based in Korea. Captain Russell separated from the service on June 2, 1972, earning the National Defense Service Medal for his honorable achievements. Still in the U.S. Army Reserves, Steve started private practice dentistry in 1968, working for Daniel C. Sullivan, DDS, where he fell in love with Ms. Emma J. Peyton, Dr. Sullivan's dental assistant and niece. He and Emma married on September 20, 1969 in Walnut Creek, California. In 1972, they settled in Olympia, where he started his own practice. Steve soon earned a reputation as an excellent clinician who showed great compassion for his patients. He was also a wonderful teacher and boss, creating exceptional loyalty in those whom he employed. Steve was a frequent volunteer dentist at the Union Gospel Mission of Olympia, where he provided vital dental care to less fortunate families and the city's homeless. He also served on the dental faculty at South Puget Sound Community College Dental Assisting School, where he mentored the next generation of dental care providers. Steve was a compassionate humanitarian, and a sincere, humble man, whose easy manner garnered life-long friendships and frequent casual conversations with perfect strangers. A loving husband, and father to four children, he was their unbreakable foundation on which they grew in life, imparting devotion to family, character and independence, and pursuit of spiritual and emotional fulfillment. Steve's greatest pastimes were horseback riding, snow skiing, mountaineering, and simply being out in God's creation. He was an avid reader and loved history. He valued principled living, hard work, loyalty, and devotion to God. His community memberships included the Thurston/Mason County Dental Society, Church Council at the Church of the Living Water, Olympia Mountaineers, Capitol Riders Backcountry Horsemen, and First United Methodist Church.

Steve is survived by his beloved wife, Emma J. Russell of Olympia; children, Luke A. Russell (CDR, U.S. Navy) and Cheri, Ben P. Russell (LCDR, U.S. Coast Guard) and wife Jennifer, Steve D. Russell (D.D.S.) and wife Katie, and Bethany A. Russell; ten grandchildren, with a granddaughter on the way; brothers, Barry Russell and wife Carrie, Scott Russell and wife Mitzi, Chip Augustine and Carol, Rusty Russell and wife Margina. He was predeceased by his father, Harry Benn Russell and wife Judy; mother, Louise Arbutus Dickinson Russell Augustine; and much loved stepfather, Dragon Charles "Chuck" Augustine; grandparents, Nellie and Howard Dickinson, James B. Dickinson,

Harry Benn Russell Sr., and Rosa Rockwell Russell; and beloved aunts and uncles, Rozella and Lee Mouncer, and Bill and Janel Johnson.

