



Neftali A. Martinez M.D.

February 19, 1939 - June 19, 2020

Neftali A. Martinez, M.D., age 81, passed peacefully after a long struggle with lung and heart disease on June 19, 2020 at his residence in Lewes, DE, with his wife, Carolyn, by his side. Nef, as he was known to family and friends, was born in Mandaluyong, Philippines on February 19, 1939, son of the late Benjamin S. and Josefina A. (Ayeras) Martinez.

He grew up poor but determined and was able to finish up medical school with the help of sacrifices made by his blacksmith father. Nef graduated from Plaridel High School (Mandaluyong - Rizal, Philippines) and received his medical degree from the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines. With the help of a benefactor in 1967, he was able to afford the opportunity to immigrate to the United States. He arrived with \$300 in his pocket and the promise of an internship at Northeastern Hospital in Philadelphia, PA. Afterwards, he did his general practice residency at Maryview Hospital in Portsmouth, VA where, in 1968, he met the love of his life, Carolyn, who was a hospital volunteer at the time. Nef did his pediatric residency at the Medical Center of Delaware in Wilmington, DE, and liked Delaware so much he never left.

In 1972, with Carolyn at his side, Nef created a successful private pediatric practice in New Castle County. He found so much joy in treating children and had many patients that were of the third generation. Nef loved interacting with his patients and purposely would not overschedule appointments so he had ample time with each and every one of them.

Nef was a member of the Medical Society of Delaware, the Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Medical Association. Over the years, Nef was a parishioner at St. John the Beloved (Wilmington, DE), St. Mary of the Assumption (Hockessin, DE) and St. Jude the Apostle Catholic Church (Lewes, DE).

Nef and Carolyn were married for nearly 51 years. Together they proudly built the family home in Hockessin, DE where they resided for nearly 30 years. Carolyn was Nef's rock. She was his right hand throughout life and helped bridge the cultural divide from traditional

Philippine heritage to American culture. With Carolyn at his side, Nef was able to fully enjoy the practice of pediatrics while she handled all the back-office paperwork, and everything related to running the business. They made a great team in everything they did.

Nef adored his 4 grandchildren who all called him “Grandpa.” He loved history and enjoyed quizzing them on all sorts of trivia. He was a terrific violin player and loved nothing more than playing the ukulele, harmonica or just banging pots, making noise, and dancing with them. There was nothing better than Dr. Grandpa taking care of all their belly aches and boo-boos.

Dad believed education was the key to success in life and something that could never be taken away from you. He sacrificed a lot for his education and was determined to provide the same for his children, which he did. Nothing made him prouder than being able to provide more opportunities for his children than he had as a child and he instilled that same desire in Jen and Jeff to provide his grandchildren even more opportunities.

Nef was an avid reader of the Wall Street Journal and any DIY books he could get his hands on. Nef loved gardening, a craft he learned from his father who grew orchids in the Philippines. He enjoyed camping and fishing, which he learned in the Boy Scouts and later shared with his wife and children. Nef especially loved to pier fish on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. After retirement he traveled around the United States, Europe and Asia and loved exploring the world with his family.

Doctor Nef was a simple man who found value in everything because he came from nothing. Dad was always finding unusual ways to reuse things, so he saved all sorts of things. There wasn't anything he couldn't fix without superglue, duct tape or twine. It pained him to waste food because growing up they had very little. His favorite food without a doubt was anything Carolyn cooked (though he seldom would admit it). Carolyn taught herself how to make lots of Philippine dishes for Nef and spent a lifetime perfecting them.

You always knew where you stood with Dad. He told it like it was and spoke his mind always. He knew so much about so many things; Dad won nearly every argument or wore you down trying.

Much is expected of the oldest males in Filipino families. His was no different, as he was called to help support his family back home financially and sponsored several family members for United States citizenship. Nef was a generous man and never said no to his family in need.

In addition to his parents, Nef was preceded in death by his sisters: Adoracion Roque and Visitacion Sabile. Nef is survived by his loving wife of 51 years, Carolyn (Collins) Martinez of Lewes, DE; his daughter, Jennifer (Martinez) Larmore of Wilmington, DE and her husband Matt; his son, Jeffrey Collins Martinez of Inez, TX and his wife Cara; his four grandchildren: Madison Larmore, Bailey Larmore, Dane Martinez and Dominic Martinez. He is also survived by his siblings: Herminia Martinez of Wilmington, DE, Zenaida Solis of Manila, Philippines, Bienvenido Martinez of Manila, Philippines, Josefina Martinez of Wilmington, DE, and Levy Martinez of Wilmington, DE; and his many nieces and nephews all over the world.

All services will be held privately on June 25, 2020.

Please sign the online guestbook located on the tribute page.

Comments



“ Carolyn, so sorry to hear of the passing of Dr. Martinez...Both my daughters were babies at Your Office..Julie & Christen.....Doctor had a way with both of the girls.....We were so blessed to have him & you at the office...I would often see both of you at the Pike Creek Acme where is worked....We will keep you in our thoughts.....Dr. Martinez left us way to soon....Our prayers are with you..
Chris Pollinger

Christopher Pollinger - July 08 at 03:01 PM



“ To the Martinez Family, our sincere condolences to all of you and prayers and thoughts are with you at this time. We are very thankful that we had the pleasure of sharing some very nice times with Nef and the Family. Nef, we know you were a very caring and loving person and we know you are with the Lord watching down on us.

Bob & Carol Cavallero



Carol Cavallero - June 29 at 01:47 PM



“ Dr. Martinez was my pediatrician until I aged out 35 years ago. He was always so kind and caring. I knew I was in good hands with him and remember all visits ended with a dum-dum lollipop. My sincere condolences to his entire family.

Kim Clark - June 28 at 11:25 PM



“ Jeanne De Luca is following this tribute.

Jeanne Luca - June 28 at 06:41 AM



“ My thoughts and prayers go out for the Martinez family. He was a gentle, caring, and brilliant man. Worked at General Division in "primie" and after would sit and just be a joy. And, my sons too were so disappointed when they could no longer go to him, as they had aged out. I'm sure you have wonderful memories and laughter for such a wonderful human being. Rest in peace Doctor Martinez. Jeanne De Luca

Jeanne De Luca - June 28 at 06:37 AM



“ I had the privilege of knowing Dr Martinez thru my job as a nurse in the OB unit at The General division n at CCHS. Everyday that he rounded on his newborns, he was a pleasure to work with. He took the time to greet the nurses, and to learn our names.He was fun, and appreciative of our care for his patients n always had a smile.
i always enjoyed his anecdotes of medical experiences n just day to day tidbits of what made him smile.
learning now that he played many instruments, especially the violin was a surprise, but explains his gentle smile n joy for living.
Very sorry to hear that he has past, but thank you for "lending" Dr Martinez to us..he was well- liked and highly respected.
Many prayers for you, his family=his greatest legacy
Gale Duncan RN

gale duncan - June 26 at 07:40 AM



“ Dr. Martinez cared for my 3 sons, starting in 1974, with the birth of my first. He was a kind and patient man and so helpful to the first time mom. I am so sorry for your loss. He left such a legacy!

Debbie Maichle
Now living in Cape Coral, FL.



Deborah Maichle - June 26 at 06:37 AM



“ Kathleen Herlehy-Douglass lit a candle in memory of Neftali A. Martinez M.D.



Kathleen Herlehy-Douglass - June 26 at 12:22 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Interment



Parsell Funeral Homes & Crematorium - June 25 at 04:34 PM



“ Do as i say, not as i do thank you for all the wonderful memories.

Rose Solis-Hidalgo - June 25 at 06:09 PM



“ Until We Meet Again, Tito Nef!

We love you!

To Tita Carolyn, Jennifer and Jeffrey, our thoughts and prayers of healing and peace are always with you and the entire family.

From your family in Manitoba, Canada - Raquel, Popo, Allen & Anton (Martinez-Ador)

Maria - June 25 at 07:34 PM



“ Well done my good and faithful servant... Your life is over... but your journey to our heavenly father has started... we will never forget you... we love you... rest in peace...

Lutzie Coronado - June 26 at 12:12 AM



“ No words to express how we felt losing a very good man, who from the start has been a part of our lives together with his wonderful and supportive wife Tita Carolyn. Tito Nef have left us with good and lasting memories, family gatherings, travelling in Palawan, Bohol, Corregidor and other places to see the beauty of his home country. We will never forget you Tito Nef. And i will never forget when my mother was pregnant and about to give birth, she had the best doctor attending in the delivery room...his brother, Dr Neftali Martinez. We know you have done well and it's time to go home to your maker... again thank you for the love and you will always be in our prayers.

Lutzie Coronado - June 25 at 08:18 AM



“ Goodbye Kuya Tally, I'll be missing you. I love you Kuya.

Carolyn, thank you for everything that you've done for my brother.



Bienvenido - June 24 at 08:24 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear that Dr. Martinez passed. I remember him well and I know that he will be deeply missed. When people ask me why I became a nurse, I always tell them it was because of my pediatrician. He was the one that encouraged me to go into nursing. I still saw Dr. Martinez when I started college and I remember he joked about how I was taller than him! Every time I see dum dum lollipops, I think of his office. He took such great care of my family and I am so thankful for him. My thoughts and prayers are with your family.

Danielle Bleacher Coyne - June 24 at 07:09 PM



“ So glad that Uncle Nef was able to see Alexander as a baby and watch him grow into a little boy. He certainly had a way, Alexander always gave him his full attention, even at 3 months old laying on a kitchen counter! :) Reading all of these comments from his former patients has been so heartwarming, him and Aunt Carolyn truly found their calling in life and touched SO many others! So proud to be a part of this family. Uncle Nef will always hold a special place in our hearts. Lots of love to Aunt Carolyn, Jennifer and Jeffery.

Love- Martin, Julia and Alexander



Julia Collins - June 24 at 01:15 PM



“ To the Martinez Family,
I was sorry to read of Dr. Martinez's passing. He became my family's pediatrician in 1976 and my youngest was still with him until he retired. All three of my daughters always commented that they wished they were seeing Dr. Martinez any time they had a doctor's appointment after leaving his care. My daughters and I were sad when he retired, but are happy that he had retirement years to enjoy his family, hobbies and travel. He was a good doctor and a wonderful person. He and Carolyn always took very good care of us.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you,
Joan Crozier and family

Joan Crozier - June 24 at 10:25 AM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Neftali A. Martinez.



June 24 at 09:07 AM



“ Dr. Martinez was a special man. So caring, wise and salt of the earth. He cared for my two daughters and all my nieces and nephews. My daughters cried when they aged out. In fact, at 25 one daughter working in the ED saw him and begged him to take her back. I know you will all miss him but hope all the memories will help make you smile when you remember him. With Sympathy, Nancy Ragan

Nancy Ragan - June 24 at 06:37 AM



“ To our beloved Uncle Nef/Tito Tally
Thank you for all the fond memories we had everytime you and Tita Carolyn visit us in the Phil. The fun, the laughter, the unending chit chats we had every night over a bottle of beer or brandy with roasted chicken, peanuts, green mangoes and alamang (your favorite food that often gives you gout) on the side. Of course the videoke challenge and the way you dance so sweetly with your loving wife everytime we sing your most requested song "If I Sing You a Love Song". That was really awesome!
Thank you for your generosity, your words of wisdom and advices. We will miss you a lot!
Rest in peace now with our Creator... You've done so much and you've done it great!
We are so proud of you!
We Love You Tito Tally!

Tita Carolyn, Jen and Jef....our love and prayers are with you! God bless...
From: Bong, Millette, Mikka, Maris and Malia



Millette Martinez Medina - June 24 at 03:59 AM



“ To Mrs. Martinez-
I was so heartbroken to learn of the passing of your husband. I have such fond childhood memories of Dr. Martinez and visits to your office. He was truly a great man, a fantastic doctor, and a one of a kind human being. He will be truly missed by all those who knew him. Thank you for sharing him with so many children and their families for all those years.
My deepest condolences,
Jessica Founds (Gavin)

Jessica Founds - June 23 at 09:02 PM



“ Dear Mrs. Martinez,
When I was handed the paper today by my husband I was stricken with the most profound grief as if I had lost an uncle. Doc was not only my favorite doctor he was my kids favourite as well. I can still hear him telling me Tracey you're too old to see me now so you're going to have to find a family doctor now. I was 18 almost 19 when he told me this. I swear I wanted to cry. But it wasnt long before he was seeing my babies. He was so gentle and kind and I loved him dearly. You too were a big part Carolyn of the pleasant atmosphere in the office, as well as the way you and Doc interacted together. So when he said he was going to retire it broke my heart all over again. Till this day I have not found a doctor that comes close to Doc Martinez or an office as inviting as yours. He was one of a kind and they broke the mold after the Lord made him. Now my heart breaks again for you, the beautiful kind soul that you are. I want you to know that you and your family are in my heart, thoughts, and prayers. May God keep you in the palm of his hand and gives you all the strength to get you through your grief. Doc is certainly in a better place and he is definitely sitting at the Lords table and watching over you now. God bless Carolyn.
Love
The Price Family
Tracey Blair Price, Michael, Michael Joe, & Taylor

Sister-Kim Blair Gavin -- Doc saw her kids too as well as my Brother- Michael Blairs kids



Tracey Blair Price - June 23 at 08:37 PM



“ Dr. Martinez was my pediatrician as well as my entire extended family's pediatrician. He was a gentle, lovely, smart man. I ran into him from time to time after I had "aged out" of his practice and he always remembered me and asked how I was doing in school. I was never nervous to go see Dr. Martinez and always got a lollipop when the appointment was over. I know he will be missed by many. I hope your good memories bring you peace at this time. Sandy Pietlock

Sandy - June 23 at 05:09 PM



“ Bountiful Rose Basket was purchased for the family of Neftali A. Martinez.



June 23 at 04:03 PM



“ Nef was so much more to us than a brother-in-law, he was our brother. Bert loved Nef and called him "his Little Brown Brother". We had so many fond memories of the times we spent with my sister, Carolyn, Nef, Jen and Jeff. Now we have Madison, Bailey, Dane and Dominic. We are so blessed they are our family. Nef always thought of others. One year he and Carolyn came to South Carolina for a visit. One day I look outside and Nef is weeding a flower bed and then planted some beautiful azaleas. Every Spring when the azaleas bloom, I always remember Nef. He was always so kind and thoughtful of our children and then our grandsons. Our deepest sympathy to all the family.



Bert & Kaye Garrison - June 23 at 03:45 PM



“ To the Martinez Family,
Please accept our sincere condolences for the loss of Dr. Martinez. He was our sons Pediatric from infancy until the office closed at Meadowood. My husband and I were so grateful for his wonderful "exam room" manor. Dr. Martinez was an awesome and caring person who made us always feel like our son was his only patient for the day - spending as much time with us and answering all of our questions. The office staff was also reflective of his dedication to his patients as was Ms. Carolyn (wonderful lady!). It was with much sadness that we had to find another Pediatrician for our son. We were, and still are, very grateful for his kindness to and excellent care of our son, who is now 29 years old. We have never forgotten him. Just a wonderful person. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time.
Respectfully,
Lois, Dave and David Midash

Lois Midash - June 23 at 02:29 PM



“ Dr. Martinez was my pediatrician from infancy through teenager. He was a wonderful doctor with a very kind, gentle approach to care. I still remember visiting his offices, first on Linden Hill Road and later the one at Meadowood. Every appointment was okay, even the ones with (gasp) dreaded booster shots, as there was a lollipop waiting at the end.

We both had issues with pronunciation. As a toddler -- he was "Docka Tinez" and in turn would greet my mother as "Missy Wiki". We managed to get along in spite of that.

I could not have asked for a better pediatrician.

Reading his obituary, I now realize the effort he put worth to overcome challenges to get where he was. His was a life well lived. My sincere condolences to his family in this time of grief.

Rush Wickes - June 23 at 09:55 AM



“ Carolyn, Jeffrey & Jen,
I am so very sorry for your loss. I was so happy to have run into Doc about a year and a half ago. I truly enjoyed my time working for him. He was also my children's and a few of my grandchildren's pediatrician. I have not met many doctor's that cared about their patients the way he did. I'm sure he will be missed by many.

Karen Maichle - June 23 at 09:36 AM



“ Dr. Martinez was my pediatrician (almost 42 years ago), and I remember him and his wife so fondly. He always had a gentle voice and demeanor, would distract me from whatever needle he had to administer, and never let me leave without a lollipop! I remember the smell of the office, and the cartoons characters on the walls. I was never nervous to go to see Dr. Martinez, no matter what shot was due. He was my doctor long into my adolescence too, and I was reluctant to leave him. I've never had a better doctor since. He was a special man and wonderful doctor and I wish there were more men like him in the world. RIP, Dr. Martinez. My prayers to the Martinez family.

Laura Crozier - June 23 at 09:16 AM



“ Sending my condolences to the family. Nef - you will be missed.

Jill Eilert - June 23 at 09:07 AM



“ Martinez Family - I have chills right now with such fond memories of the many times I visited Dr Martinez with my children. The generations of children from our family that he took such great care of. (Pruitt's, Boone's, Shinn's). We loved Dr. M and Carolyn so much. I can't thank him enough for always seeing us, and being so "fun" in the office. It was actually a treat to come there. Your family was very much a part of our families. I often think of all of you, and have wondered about my buddy Jeff too. I will be praying so hard for you all. From the bottom of my heart, much love. Jamie Pruitt (Nick, Jeffrey, and Haley)

Jamie Pruitt - June 23 at 08:57 AM



“ Carolyn and family - So sorry for your loss. So many wonderful memories of Neftali from back in high school. Although I haven't seen him in years, I always thought about you two as I drove south in Route 1 past your neighborhood on my way to Fenwick Island, DE.



Matthew Simeone - June 23 at 08:37 AM



“ Thank you tito Nef for the wonderful memories. Well Done!!!



Rose Solis-Hidalgo - June 23 at 07:59 AM



“ Thank you Tito Nef for all the memories. We will surely miss you. We love you tito nef. #rip

Mervin Castañeda - June 23 at 02:08 AM



“ Rest in Peace, Ninong Tali! Our prayers for the whole family. Condolences from Dante Ayeras and family from the Philippines.



Dante N. Ayeras - June 22 at 10:27 PM



“ What a wonderful tribute to such a kind and caring man. Carolyn, I will always remember his hearty laughter. He had a way of talking to people about subjects that related to them.
I didn't know he played the violin. I have my Father's violin hanging in our living room; and banjo/ukelele downstairs. In the early days of NG, Nef always had the outdoor

fireplace burning and Carolyn had all the fixings for Smores. Such wonderful memories you and your family will cherish. Peace.

Cay Moore - June 22 at 09:25 PM



“ For sure, Dr. Martinez is giving Enrica a long overdue physical exam. The best pediatrician ever. Genuinely cared. He would not go on vacation with you all when she was in ICU which was very, very often. He would make a house visit on a regular basis so we didn't have to take her out to the office. Who does that? Nobody. Then, he refused to take payment for it. He would say, "Let me be a real doctor." And so he was - all under the wing and approval of Carolyn his rock and mentor who always held down the fort allowing him to do what he did. So grateful for both, but greatly saddened for the loss of a wonderful man. May God grant you all the grace to help heal the gigantic hole in your hearts.
Fondly,
Gilda and Robert Szewczyk

Gilda and Robert Szewczyk - June 22 at 09:17 PM



“ Carolyn my love and thoughts are with you and your family. Sorry I never met your special husband but thought about you and how things were going after we messaged.. Take care of yourself

Friend from your past
Kaye Gwaltney {Cookie}

Kaye Gwaltney - June 22 at 08:50 PM



“ RIP Neftali. I'll remember your Filipino cooking, playing the ukelele for your granddaughters, cutting a rug on the dancefloor for Jeff's wedding, and welcoming all of us Terp friends to your home in Delaware. You will be missed. - Tom

Tom Street - June 22 at 08:30 PM



“ boy did he ever cut that rug!!!!

Jen Larmore - June 22 at 09:17 PM



“ To the Martinez family- my deepest condolences. I just had to share with you how caring your father was as my children's pediatrician. My son Greg was in scouting & Dr. M always asked him how his progress was going. He encouraged him to become an Eagle Scout, which he did. Dr. M. attended Greg's Eagle Scout ceremony, which was so above and

beyond for a busy doctor! It really was so supportive to my son for him to be there. Dr. M was a special gentleman!

Sandie Gilbert-mom to Greg & Kelley

Sandie Gilbert - June 23 at 01:41 PM



“ I didn't have the opportunity of knowing Dr. Martinez but I am so impressed by his works & good deeds. What a wonderful man, father & Doctor. I'm certain he will be missed very much.

Susanne Messick - June 22 at 08:22 PM



“ If only we could have you back for just a little while, then we could sit and talk again just like we used to do. Now that you are back in the Arms of our Lord, you will be surely missed.
As what we always tell you, we will be forever grateful to you, and we will continue to make you proud.

It's hard to forget someone who gave you so much to remember. Rest In Peace, Uncle.

We love you, Tito Nef!

- Raquel, Popo, Allen & Anton



Maria Raquel - June 22 at 08:06 PM