

Obituary



CHARLES P. SHOEMAKER, JR., MD,

(1937–2024), was a 1959 alumnus of Amherst College. He graduated from Albany Medical College and did his internship and residency in general surgery at The Yale-New Haven Medical Center. After completing his training, he entered the Navy in 1969 under the Berry Plan and served at the Naval Hospital in Newport, RI, and for a year in Vietnam on the Hospital Ship, USS Sanctuary. On his return to the island and discharge from the Navy in 1971, a life-long love of sailing prompted him to accept an offer to join The Aquidneck Medical Associates. He remained affiliated with that group practice for the remainder of his medical career, retiring in 2005 after 34 years.

Dr. Shoemaker, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons (FACS) was, throughout his surgical career, on the staff of the Newport Hospital, where he served tenures on various committees and as Chief of Surgery and president of the medical staff. He was also a delegate for many years to the American Medical Association and a member and officer of the Rhode Island Medical Society and its president. His interest in the integrity of his profession spurred him to become a founding member and officer of The American College of General Surgery. Care for his patients, maintenance of the highest standards of surgical care and access to quality medical care for all were his highest goals.

He was an avid sailor and devoted to one design racing. His Ensign, Challenger, was a fixture in Narragansett Bay racing for over 50 years. He added his Shields, Hawk, in later years and raced both competitively. Over those years, he won many local, regional, and national regattas, but it was the competition and camaraderie with others who shared his devotion to the sport



that mattered to him most. For 50 winters, he unfailingly participated in the Sunday Frostbite sailing out of Newport Yacht Club. He was a member and former Commodore of the Newport Yacht Club and member of the Ida Lewis Yacht Club, and he raced in their seasonal series and in team racing on the Bay and in England and Ireland. He encouraged and taught many young people to sail and supported the founding of Sail Newport to expand access to sailing and to foster

a love of the sport in the broader community.

In retirement, he was elected to the Newport School Committee and served several terms as its chairman. Education was a high priority for him, and he worked for better schools and opportunities for Newport's youth. In this capacity, he discovered that many children entered school unprepared to learn. His research uncovered a way forward. In consultation with the Harlem Children's Zone in New York City, he started the Baby Steps program in Newport to teach parents of children from birth to age three how to interact with their children to prepare them for successful learning. That program continues under East Bay Community Action Program.

Dr. Shoemaker is survived by his wife, the Reverend Stephanie Shoemaker; his children, Elizabeth and her husband, Kedar Relangi, of Los Altos, CA; William and his wife, Janet, of Solomons, MD; Becky Zorovic of Norwood, MA; five grandchildren and his brother, Robert W. Shoemaker of Glen Rock, NJ, and sister, Barbara H. Way (Tony) of Dallas, TX.

Memorial donations may be made in recognition of his contributions to Baby Steps, <https://www.ebcap.org/programs/baby-steps-newport/> or to SailNewport <https://sailnewport.org/> ❖