



Dr. George T. Anast

June 9, 1929 - June 28, 2021

After a brief illness, Dr. George Anast died surrounded by his family on June 28, 2021. He was 92 years old.

George Thomas Anast was born June 9, 1929, to Thomas and Anna Anast in Joliet, Illinois. He grew up in Joliet, graduating from Joliet Township High School and Joliet Junior College. George went on to graduate from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and in 1950 began his training at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, graduating in 1954.

He served his country as a physician, stationed at Naval Hospital #16 in San Diego, California. He was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1959 and returned to the Chicago area to complete a residency at the Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children.

In 1960, George joined J.D. Farrington, MD in orthopedic practice in Chicago. This partnership would chart the trajectory of George's career in emergency medicine and ultimately led him to Minocqua, Wisconsin.

George was one of the early pioneers of emergency medicine and was involved in the first training sessions for ambulance drivers that would lead to a formal curriculum for Emergency Medical Technicians. He was active with the Committee on Injuries of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons

and was one of the authors of the first edition of *The Emergency Care and Transportation of the Seriously Ill and Injured*, which served as a standard text for EMTs.

One of George's most important accomplishments was the development of a post-graduate course for emergency department nurses. This effort led to the establishment of the Emergency Department Nurses' Association. He was enormously proud of his work on the behalf of ED nurses. Another was his research published with colleagues that demonstrated the utility of sound velocity to determine fracture healing.

In 1972, George and Velta moved to Minocqua and he took over Dr. Farrington's orthopedic practice. For his first several years in the Northwoods, George was on call 24/7/365 and claimed to be the only orthopedic surgeon between Minocqua-Woodruff and the North Pole. He provided first class medical care to area residents and was an advocate for local healthcare. George worked to develop new services to augment the hospital's. Notable among these was Northwoods Rehabilitation Associates, which offered physical therapy and other rehabilitation services.

Ultimately, George retired from clinical practice to serve as CEO of Howard Young Medical Center, where he ushered in a period of strong growth, leadership, and renewed commitment to the community.

George's interests were wide-ranging and he mastered anything he undertook. A lifelong sportsman, he was an excellent skeet shooter—breaking a perfect 25 into his 90s. He shot his last round of skeet only a couple of weeks ago and bagged a doe with a crossbow last fall.

He took up motorcycling when he was 65 and rode twice to Alaska from Wisconsin. George loved to motorcycle tour and he and Velta crisscrossed

most of the western U.S. on their Honda Goldwing. He also ventured to Europe for a BMW motorcycle tour with good friends.

For many people, George was best known for his professional-grade photography. He always had a camera with him wherever he went. He made the transition from film to digital easily and loved photographing wildlife-- especially sandhill cranes, snow geese, and bald eagles. He shared many of his bird photos and videos on Facebook, always providing interesting educational commentary.

As the winters grew longer and their circle of dear friends narrowed, George and Velta became winter residents of Tucson, Arizona, where they made many new friends and "family." They seamlessly adapted to desert life and George found new shooting buddies. But it was summers in Minocqua, sitting on the porch or dock watching the sunset with Velta and a glass of wine, that he cherished the most.

A man of exceptional intellectual depth and breadth, he had a wicked sense of humor, no tolerance for mediocrity, and was on occasion known to lose his temper. He was a quiet philanthropist, generously giving to local organizations and, often, to individuals. His most important philanthropic effort was a recently endowed annual scholarship fund to a private school in Tucson for children of Hispanic descent.

George was preceded in death by his parents; an infant brother, Stavros; his daughter Melissa Ann Paige; his mother-in-law; three brothers-in-law; a sister-in-law; and too many friends and colleagues.

Left to hold a lifetime of memories close are his beloved and devoted wife of 48 years, Velta, daughter Adrian (Tim Wright), son Jason (Cleo),

grandchildren Ryan and Melina, two sisters-in-law, four nieces, three nephews, and many “adopted” daughters and nieces.

AVE ATQUE VALE

Bolger Funeral Home is providing cremation services. Private interment will be in Joliet, Illinois later this summer.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Minocqua Country Club on Sunday, August 1, at 4 pm. All are invited. A separate Celebration of Life will be scheduled in Tucson this fall.

If you wish to make a donation in George’s memory, please do so in any way that would have made him smile.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG 1. 4:00 PM (CT)

Minocqua Country Club
Minocqua, WI 54548

Tribute Wall

RD

“ I was 3 years old at the time of my accident in 1969 when a car hit me. I was taken to Ravenswood Hospital where Dr. Anast took care of me. I still have the \$10 hospital bill which I just recently found in my parents attic and that is how I came to know the wonderful doctor that treated me. Forever grateful, Rob

Rob D. - October 10, 2025 at 11:36 PM

CH

“ Dear family, I am a German physician and investor and shared a lot of nice emails with George around 2013-2015, we were discussing many technology stocks on the website of seeking alpha. I just wanted to write him today and find out how he was doing....so sad to see he has deceased. I will always remember him! He was amazing, honestly. A great character! Very warm regards, Chris

Chris - December 29, 2023 at 07:17 AM

LF

“ Dear Velta and Family - I just heard of the death of your dear George. What a loss but what happy memories of out time in the Northwoods. I still have the prize for being the lady winner at George's Duck Shoot. Ina Duks joins me in most sincere condolences. Loretta Foxgrover

Loretta Foxgrover - January 22, 2022 at 03:39 PM

GD

“ My husband is walking today because of Dr. Anast after suffering a broken pelvis and other injuries in a freak accident in late 1986. Dr. Anast told us my husband may not walk again, but did his best to find an expert in Minneapolis to repair the pelvis and provided excellent care when my husband returned to Howard Young postop. We are forever grateful. G. Dailey, Rhinelander

G. Dailey - July 28, 2021 at 10:06 AM

JM

I was his surgical resident in 1970 at ravenwood hospital in Chicago. He taught me orthopedic skills and knowledge and help me got into a residency program since then I have been practice orthopedic surgery for 40 years. I am deeply indebted to him. My best memory with him is taking me to a Resturant buy me a drink of cognac after helping him in operating room.

J R Lee MD

J R Lee MD - April 27, 2025 at 07:03 PM

CF

“ Dr. Anast taught me about hand shakes, eye contact, fireworks and buffalo burgers. I remember his bird photos, informed opinions and engaging personality. So much love to Velta in this time of mourning.

Colin Schussler Foral (Betsy's kid)

CS Foral - July 12, 2021 at 08:45 AM

JB

“ I first met George when we moved to Minocqua in 1973. We became friends and neighbors, sometimes eating dinner with him and Velta in his motor home on the shores of Trout Lake. I witnessed his straight (25) at skeet last year and shot with him on his last round of skeet.

Jim Bennett - July 03, 2021 at 04:14 PM

JD

“ *Velta and family,
We met George and Velta in Tucson AZ through the Sundowners social group. Over the last 16 years, we socialized and had very good moments together.
George and I shared the same specialty in medicine which led to interesting exchanges. Together, with cameras in hand, we enjoyed the migration of the sandhill cranes and shared photos. He was a much better photographer than I was.
George, we will miss you greatly. Our sincere condolences to the family.*

*Micheline and Jacques Dumont
Tucson, AZ*

j dumont - July 01, 2021 at 06:43 PM

DR

“ *Dear Velta, Anne and I were so sorry to hear of George's passing. I had so much respect for him and I have always enjoyed our visits with you both. Dr Anast was a man who had high standards in others and himself and I really appreciated that quality in him. Anne and I will never forget the fun we had at your dual 90th birthday party...we should all be so blessed to share that special occasion.
Best wishes always Velta, Kirby and Anne*

Dr Kirby Redman - June 30, 2021 at 09:55 PM

TB

“ Dear Anast family, Dr.George saved my life in the Summer of 73, I was hit head on by a car on my motorcycle, I suffered a compound fracture of my tibia, Dr Anast took my into surgery,repared my broken bones and helped on to play football,ski and all things I loved to do..

Rest in peace Dr.Anast, you were a god send to me, now it's your turn to rest..

Tom Bouchard - June 30, 2021 at 07:47 AM