

WEEKLY DENTAL UPDATE



SPECIAL EDITION

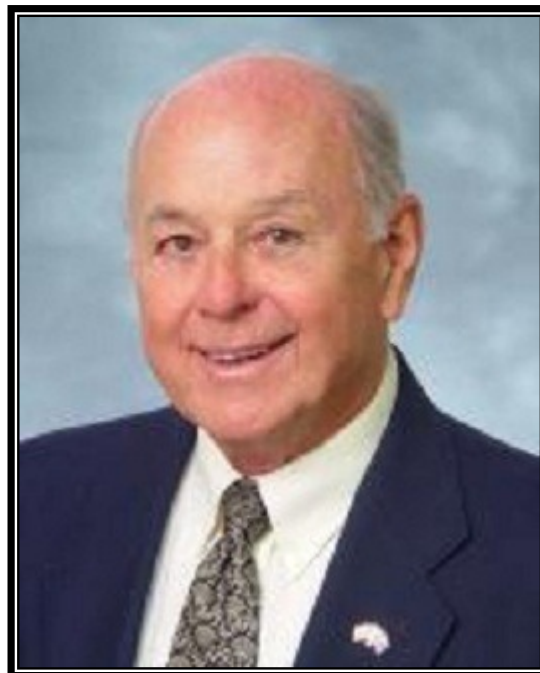
13 May 2021

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Passing of a Shipmate

PASSING OF CAPT CHARLES CUNNINGHAM DC, USN (RET)

Shipmates, it is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of Captain Charles (Chuck) Cunningham, DC, USN (ret).

Charles (Chuck) Joseph Cunningham, D.D.S., passed away the morning of May 3, 2021 in Littleton, Colorado at the age of 88 while surrounded by his loving children. CAPT Cunningham was born in Dyersville, Iowa on the front porch of his family's home. His family moved to La Crosse, Wisconsin at the beginning of World War II where he attended Holy Cross Primary School and later graduated from Aquinas High School in 1951. CAPT Cunningham attended St. Thomas University in St. Paul, Minnesota before transferring to Marquette University where he completed his pre-dental education and received his D.D.S. in 1957.



Upon his graduation from Marquette University Dental School, CAPT Cunningham entered the U.S. Navy Dental Corps and had numerous assignments in the Navy including Great Lakes, Japan, San Diego, Naval Air Station Alameda, California, and the Naval Hospital Portsmouth, Virginia. His last military assignment was at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, where he was also a consultant to the White House for his dental specialty.

Following his retirement from the U.S. Navy Dental Corps, CAPT Cunningham accepted an appointment as an Associate Professor at the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry. He and his family lived in Lexington, Kentucky for 14 years before he accepted a Professorship at the University of Florida College of Dentistry in 1991. CAPT Cunningham retired from full-time teaching in 1996, and became a Visiting Professor of Endodontics at the University of Florida College of Dentistry and taught part-time in the Endodontic graduate program until 2019.

CAPT Cunningham was a lifetime member of the American Dental Association, American Association of Endodontists (AAE), Florida Dental Association, American College of Dentists and International College of Dentists. He served as President of the AAE and the American Board of Endodontists. In 2019, he was honored on the AAE website. [When Giving is More Than Writing a Check | American Association of Endodontists \(aae.org\)](#). During his Navy career, he was active in numerous local and state dental associations. He lectured throughout the United States and in Europe and Mexico.

CAPT Cunningham was honored both at the University of Kentucky and the University of Florida as the clinical Teacher of the Year. He also received the lifetime *Edgar D. Coolidge* award, the highest award presented by the AAE for outstanding contributions during his professional career to dentistry, the Endodontic specialty, and the community at large. Following his retirement from the Navy, he was awarded the “Civitem” award for outstanding leadership in service to the Navy, dentistry and patriotism at the Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland.

CAPT Cunningham was active in many community activities throughout his life, namely the Boy Scouts of America, the Lexington Irish Society, Queen of Peace Catholic Church, and Catholic Charities of Gainesville. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. Family highlights include Christmas reunions at one of the children’s homes and summer gatherings at the family cabin on Long Lake near Eagle River, Wisconsin.

CAPT Cunningham was preceded in death by his loving wife Anita Carol (Pelot) of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. CAPT Cunningham and his wife were happily married for over 53 years. He is survived by three wonderful children, son Charles and wife Sandra of Santa Barbara, California, daughter Shannon of St. Petersburg, Florida and daughter Kelly and husband Roger of Littleton, Colorado. Six fantastic grandchildren, JorDann, Christopher, Daisy, Katherine, India, and Nicholas, and one great-grandchild, Martin, make up the remainder of his very close-knit family.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Queen of Peace Catholic Church and Catholic Charities, both in Gainesville, Florida. A Catholic vigil and prayer service was held for Dr. Cunningham on May 8, 2021 in Littleton, CO. He will be interred, along with his wife, at Arlington National Cemetery. The following is a link to a memories wall. [Charles Cunningham, D.D.S. - Littleton, Colorado, Ellis Family Services - Memories wall \(tributearchive.com\)](#)

Rest in Peace Captain Cunningham.

RICK FREEDMAN
RDML, DC, USN
Chief, Navy Dental Corps