

A Moment of Silence for Conrad Matz, Jr. (1931-1997)

DR. MATZ INSPIRED MANY (AND ALL HIS CHILDREN) TO BECOME
CHIROPRACTORS

Russell Gibbons

Eulogy by Russell Gibbons, editor emeritus, Chiropractic History

MONROEVILLE, Pennsylvania -- Conrad F. Matz Jr., DC, according to many colleagues and patients, may have inspired as many as 100 young men and women to take up chiropractic as a profession. But those he was most proud of were his three sons and two daughters who followed him to the Palmer College of Chiropractic and are now in practice.

Dr. Matz, 66, died of complications from prostate cancer on August 5, the week his alma mater was celebrating its centennial as the first and oldest of the chiropractic colleges. "He was a loving, caring practitioner," said Dr. John Talarico, a Pittsburgh chiropractor who met Dr. Matz early in life and followed him into the profession. He estimated that upwards of a 100 may have done the same, many of them in practice in western Pennsylvania.

A graduate of Palmer in 1951, after a year at Penn State University, he returned to Pennsylvania where the new law required pre-chiropractic credits, which he obtained at Seton Hill College. He entered the U.S. Army during the Korean war, serving as a medical technician, before returning to Pittsburgh in 1954.

His first solo practice in a small office in Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania involved 12-15 hour days and 6-7 day weeks, according to Dr. John Matz, one of his sons, who recalls the family stopping at the office on the way to church on Sunday mornings.

"We all helped out at the office," said his eldest son, Conrad III, who with his two brothers and two sisters would follow his father into chiropractic. At one time there were as many as seven Matz clinics in the Pittsburgh area, all connected with the senior Matz or with his children. "None of us were pressured to become chiropractors," he recalled, "but we all knew how much he enjoyed the profession and it was an easy career path for us to choose."

Conrad III was the first of the children to graduate from Palmer (1975), followed by John (1980), Nancy Matz Thiel (1981), S. Scott Matz (1983), and Linda Matz-Scott (1994), the youngest of the chiropractic siblings. Scott and Linda practice in Missoula, Montana; the others continue in the Matz clinics in the eastern Pittsburgh suburb of Monroeville and Murrsyville.

Dr. Matz was involved in the affairs of the Pennsylvania Chiropractic Society (now the Pennsylvania Chiropractic Association) and its Pittsburgh area district. During the profession's centennial in 1995, he acquired an old adjusting table (circa 1914). The table went on display at the University of Pittsburgh during the annual meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine, which had a chiropractic section for the first time that year. He was also involved in commemorative activities for the 100th anniversary of the chiropractic profession in Pittsburgh.

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