



Murray Reid Blair Jr

July 13, 1928 - February 20, 2010

Vischer Ferry, N.Y.—Murray Reid Blair, Jr., of Vischer Ferry, New York, 81, beloved husband of Karen R. Hitchcock, passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 20, 2010 at St. Peter's Hospital, Albany, New York, surrounded by his loving family. Dr. Blair was born on July 13, 1928 in Somerville, Massachusetts. He was the son of the late Murray Reid Blair, Sr. and Olga (Purdy) Blair.

Dr. Blair graduated from Somerville High School and Tufts College. He received his Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from Tufts University School of Medicine, and joined the faculty there in the Department of Pharmacology.

Dr. Blair had a lifelong commitment to the improvement of medical education in the United States. He was appointed a Visiting Professor at the University of Buffalo School of Medicine as Coordinator of the Project on Medical Education, and was instrumental in the design of a new curriculum at the Medical College of Virginia, where he was appointed Associate Professor of Pharmacology and also served as Acting Dean of Medicine. Throughout his career, he was a committed teacher and mentor to hundreds of health care professionals.

Dr. Blair was also a talented and innovative research scientist who was appointed Director of Research and Development at Astra Pharmaceutical

Products, Inc., an international pharmaceutical company. During his tenure of eleven years, he pioneered several revolutionary techniques for designing, testing and evaluating new local anesthetics and anti-arrhythmic drugs. Prior to Dr. Blair's work, microcomputers had not been fully exploited in pharmaceutical research. His work in developing these computer-based analytical tools greatly advanced the field of drug development. Dr. Blair's foresight also led to the introduction of pharmacokinetics in pharmaceutical research. This new approach to determining the metabolic pathway of every new drug is now widely used across the industry.

Following his career at Astra, Dr. Blair was recruited by Tufts University School of Medicine as Associate Dean for Administration and Finance, where he was instrumental in expanding the basic sciences in the medical school, and integrating them into a new School of Veterinary Medicine. His work was pivotal to the success of this new educational program at Tufts. He was named Acting Dean at Tufts School of Medicine and later asked to lead the newly-established Sackler Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. As the founding Dean of this new college, Dr. Blair led the faculty in the development of policies and programs which ensured its ongoing success.

In fact, at his farewell party before leaving to assume the Associate Vice-Presidency for Academic Affairs at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Dr. Blair was accorded the honor of being named the "Action Dean" by the department chairmen of Tufts Medical School.

Much loved by students, faculty and colleagues, Dr. Blair had a major impact on medical education in this country and the quality of pharmaceutical research.

In his retirement, Dr. Blair served in the Board of Trustees of Albany College of Pharmacy, and was the Director of Research and Academic Programs for the Institute for the Advancement of Health Care Management at the School

of Business at the University at Albany, State University of New York. He was also a committed volunteer consultant to a number of health- and technology-related small businesses. He was appointed to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Hazardous Waste Disposal Commission, and was a consultant to numerous health-related governmental agencies. He also was a member of the boards of many environmental and heritage organizations, including being appointed Co-Chair of the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway Committee, part of the New York State Scenic Byways Program.

Murray was also a published poet, an avid reader and writer, an accomplished wood carver, and an amateur historian. Known affectionately as “The Mur,” his love of conversation and debate was legendary. He was cherished by his many friends of all ages; he was worshiped by his dog Max. Murray touched and changed many lives. He will be so deeply missed.

He is survived by his loving wife, Karen R. Hitchcock, and his beloved three children, Susan (Thomas) Sartori of Northboro, Massachusetts, Scott (June) Blair of Hingham, Massachusetts, and M. Reid Blair III of Bedford, Massachusetts; five grandchildren, Laura, Elisabeth and Mark Sartori, and Megan and Chloe Blair; one brother, Curtis Purdy Blair. He was predeceased by his brother, David Purdy Blair, and his sister, Carol Sawtell.

Murray’s family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to the many caring doctors, nurses, technicians and staff members at St. Peter’s Hospital, who supported him in his courageous battle during the many difficult weeks of his final illness. His wife and family also extend their deep thanks for the care and support extended to them during this difficult time.

Friends and relatives are invited to a memorial service in celebration of Murray’s life which will be held on Thursday, February 25 at 11 a.m. at the

Christ Community Reformed Church, 1010 Rte. 146, Clifton Park, N.Y. 12065.

Friends and relatives are also invited to call at the McVeigh Funeral Home, 208 No.Allen Street, Albany, N.Y. 12206 on Wednesday, February 24 from 4-7 p.m.

Contributions, in lieu of flowers, may be made in Murray's memory to the Murray Reid Blair, Jr. Founder's Prize for Excellence in Translational Research at the Sackler Graduate School at Tufts University, a prize being established to honor Murray's long commitment to his students and excellence in research and medical education. Checks should be made out to Tufts University and sent to the Office of the Dean, Sackler School, 136 Harrison Avenue, Boston, Mass. 02111.

To leave the family a special message on their Guest Book; obtain a Memorial Card or directions; or share a photo or E-Card with them, please visit www.mcveighfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Service

FEB **25**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Christ Community Reformed Church
1010 Rt 146
Clifton Park, NY

Tribute Wall



“ *McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Murray Reid Blair Jr*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - February 20, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Murray Reid Blair Jr*

October 08, 2023 at 09:24 PM



“ *Dear Karen,
We feel so blessed to have known you and Murray, and to have had you as our neighbours for even a few short years. Murray was one of a kind - a generous, warm, funny, wonderful man who gave our 3 boys an amazing opportunity to experience their first jobs. More than that, you both opened your home and hearts to us. We are so sad for you Karen. It is good to know you have so many good friends and family to support you. You are in our thoughts. Margie and Dom###imported-begin##Margie McKenzie and Domenic Lombardi###imported-end##*

March 06, 2010 at 10:00 PM



“ Karen. I was most saddened when only very recently learned of the passing of your husband. Know that my heart goes out to you and your family in these difficult days. He will obviously be missed terribly but know you can take comfort in the wonderful memories that will never be taken away from you. I have thought about you often since your departure from our Exec Heads table and am sorry that we haven't kept in touch. Know that my best thoughts are with you. I do miss your intellect and collegial friendship. My greatest sympathies to you. Bonnie###imported-begin###Prof. Bonnie Patterson###imported-end##

March 03, 2010 at 05:02 PM



“ Murray, you will forever be missed in our lives. I know that in someway you will always be with us. With loving memories, Carolyn###imported-begin###Frederick & Carolyn Wellington###imported-end##

March 01, 2010 at 09:37 PM



“ Murray, a man so loved by everyone who met you. We will miss you greatly, and we wish Karen well.

Love always,

Tom and Claire###imported-begin###Tom and Claire Prudhomme###imported-end##

March 01, 2010 at 02:42 PM



“ Dear Karen,

I was very sorry to hear about Murray. Please accept my deepest sympathy.

Judith Barlow##imported-begin##*Judith Barlow*##imported-end##

February 28, 2010 at 10:27 AM



“ Dear Dr. Hitchcock,

Please accept my sympathy on Murray's passing. I am sure his memory will be for an abiding blessing.

Sincerely,

Ellen Blake##imported-begin##*Ellen B. Blake*##imported-end##

February 27, 2010 at 12:15 PM



“ Dear Karen and family,

Please accept my deepest condolences at this time of Murray's passing. I consider myself so fortunate to have known and worked with Murray. I always found him so engaged, so full of good ideas and so ready to lend his considerable leadership skills to new initiatives. He contributed so much to our University at Albany community (as did you) by bringing his wealth of knowledge and expertise to our just developing health related programs.

I sat next to Murray at several dinners, some so beautifully hosted at your own home. I remember that he was such a great conversationalist and I was the beneficiary of his erudition in the mystery novel genre of literature.

With deepest condolences,

Lynn##imported-begin##Lynn Videka##imported-end##

February 27, 2010 at 10:15 AM



“ With my deepest sympathy, Bob Burge##imported-begin##Bob Burge##imported-end##

February 26, 2010 at 04:05 PM



“ Louise joins me expressing our sympathies at your loss. Murry was such a presence in the community, he's passing can only be all the more a loss to you. We wish you our best from Florida. Regret we could not be with you and our mutual Albany friends.

Best

Bob##imported-begin##Robert and Louise Maurer##imported-end##

February 26, 2010 at 03:42 PM



“ Our condelences on the loss of my cousin, Dr. Murray Reid Blair Jr.. We read about this in the Boston Globe yesterday, while stopping on our way to Florida. Murray's dad was my mother's brother. (Nellie Isobel (Blair) McCordick). Our address is 130 Arbour Brook Lane, Fredericton, NB Canada, E3B 0C4.##imported-begin##Vivian and Avery McCordick##imported-end##

February 26, 2010 at 12:05 PM



“ It was so sad to read of Murray's passing. A truly remarkable life that was well lived.
My deepest condolences to the family and to friends.##imported-begin##David Parker##imported-end##

February 26, 2010 at 08:47 AM



“ Hi Karen:

I am so sorry to hear about Murray's passing. I have thought about him often since the last time I saw you both. He is one of a kind and will be missed in ways that only those that came to know him, even if only a little bit, will understand. He was so supportive and generous with his intellect and respected others ideas. And, he was especially supportive when it came to you. He mentioned to me more than a few times just how proud of you he was and it resonated from him when he said it - too. My thoughts are with you, and God Bless. Remember, the journey has not ended, but only begun. Please feel free to contact me - even if only to talk.

An old work freind;

Katarina##imported-begin##Katarina Holbrook##imported-end##

February 25, 2010 at 04:09 PM



“ Sadly I cannot make it to the service. Please know that my thoughts and prayers with you. I have wonderful memories of Murray and will never forget my time with you both.

Always remembered, forever missed.

Love Allie##imported-begin##Allison Abrams##imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 10:55 PM



“ Karen,
I had hope to convey my condolences personally, but it just wasn't possible. After speaking with you last Friday, I was saddened to learn that Murray was gone. I know you were devoted to each other and that you will miss him dearly.
I hope you find comfort in the support of family and friends and the knowledge that many others will miss him.
With deep sympathy.##imported-begin##Francine Frank##imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 04:39 PM



“ Karen:
My heartfelt sympathy to you and the family on the loss of Murray. I express this also on behalf of the St. Lawrence University and WMHT extended families. I am so glad that I had the opportunity on a number of occasions to meet and have a variety of conversations with Murray . He had such broad interests and would make me laugh. He will be missed for his medical work, wit and outgoing personality. Joe Richardson##imported-begin##Joseph P. Richardson##imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 02:13 PM



“ Karen: I am so sorry for your loss. I wish I could visit with you later today or at the services but unfortunately I am in Boston. I did not know Murray, but I am sure you are very proud of all of his work in medical education. I am appreciative of his work because I now have a daughter in medical school who I am sure has benefitted from his leadership.

Our prayers are with you.##imported-begin##George F. Carpinello##imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 01:29 PM



“ Curtis:

Long time no hear. Sorry to hear about the loss of your brother, Murray. Where are you these days? Would be great to catch up. Drop me a line.

Herb##imported-begin##Herb Mower##imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 11:06 AM



“ Karen,
Erin and I send our sincerest condolences to you and your family. May you find comfort and peace in each other, with friends, and the wonderful memories.
You are in our thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Brian & Erin COOKMAN##imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 09:06 AM



“ *Scott and Family,
My heartfelt sympathies to you and your family on the passing of your father and grandfather. I read of his life and he was truly accomplished. While I never knew him, I guess that his proudest accomplishments were all of you.*
Warmest,
Mitch###imported-begin###Mitchell Roberts###imported-end##

February 24, 2010 at 08:51 AM



“ *Aunt Karen - Uncle Murray was an amazing person and I will miss him deeply. You are in my thoughts and prayers.*
Love, Cassie###imported-begin###Cassie Nelson###imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 09:42 PM



“ *Dear Karen,
Ernie and I were very sad to read of Murray's passing. We wanted you to know that we are thinking about you and your family during this difficult time, and we send you our deepest sympathy.*

Linda and Ernie Scatton###imported-begin###Linda Scatton###imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 09:14 PM



“ *We are sorry we cannot be there with you. We are thinking of you. Murray was a great man and he will be missed.*
Love, Jake and Mitch###imported-begin###Jacob and Mitchell Harter###imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 08:40 PM



“ Aunt Karen- I'm sorry that I can't be there with you right now but I will miss Uncle Murray very much. I love you and am thinking of you.

-Lindsey##imported-begin##Lindsey Nelson##imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 06:04 PM



“ Dear Karen,
I am so sorry to hear of Murray's passing. May your memories of your time together sustain you through this difficult time.

With much love,

Eunice##imported-begin##Eunice Bloomquist##imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 04:55 PM



“ Kiki and I will always remember Murray as full of life and full of fun. Our deepest sympathies to Karen and the rest of his family.

Fred Volkwein##imported-begin##Fred and Kiki

Volkwein##imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 04:36 PM



“ Dear Aunt Karen,
We are so sorry we cannot be with you right now. We will miss Murray and always remember him fondly. It's good to know that so many friends and family are with you now. You are in our thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Tom and Sharon

Harter##imported-end##

Harter##imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 03:54 PM



“ Karen,

We were very sorry to learn of your loss. May the peace that comes from the memories of your life together comfort you during this difficult time and in the days ahead.##imported-begin##Judy and Stuart Madnick##imported-end##

February 23, 2010 at 11:01 AM



“ *Dear Karen - We're deeply saddened by Murray's passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and we send our sincere condolences. Murray certainly was someone you would not forget - bright, dynamic, gregarious, and articulate. His contributions to higher education are a lasting legacy and we were fortunate to have known him personally.##imported-begin##Sorrell & Lorraine Chesin##imported-end##*

February 23, 2010 at 09:48 AM



“ *Karen, From the Board of Directors and Staff at KEDCO, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time.##imported-begin##Jeff Garrah##imported-end##*

February 23, 2010 at 09:26 AM



“ *i would like to extend my condolences to you Karen Hitchcock and your whole family during this sad moment. Thank you for all you and your husband have given the nation with your dedication to education. peace and lots of big hugs. elba##imported-begin##Elba Matos##imported-end##*

February 23, 2010 at 08:18 AM