



Mark Leslie Shope passed away peacefully to Heaven on Oct 9, 2012, at home in Tacoma, Wash. With his wife, Kelley, and close friend and Partner, Dr. Bob Bigler, by his side. Mark was born on Jan 11, 1951, in Kansas City, Missouri. He attended Ruskin High School, graduating in 1969, before enlisting in the Air Force.

Following training at Sheppard AFB in Texas, he served a tour in Vietnam and then earned an appointment to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, where he graduated with honors in 1975. He was then selected to attend the University of Missouri's School of Medicine in Columbia, Missouri.

Mark completed his residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Travis AFB in California and then served at Yokota AB in Japan. He went on to Elmendorf AFB in Alaska. While there, Mark began a lifelong love of flying, earning his private pilot's license and buying his first of many airplanes. In 1989, he moved to Auburn, Wash. And entered private practice at Valley women's Healthcare. Mark was a well-respected

physician and he had a real passion for his work and found great joy in developing wonderful relationships with his staff, his patients and their families.

Mark was an intrepid traveler and an avid outdoorsman. His quest for adventure had no bounds. We traveled extensively with our friends and family all over the world! He went three different times and brought back a myriad "souvenirs" and some crazy stories, which we loved to hear, again and again.

Between his work and his travel, Mark found much joy and solitude at his cabin in Alaska, and thought of it as his "home away from home." The cabin was a great place to eat, drink and be merry, and to enjoy plenty of fishing adventures with family members and friends.

Mark also had a passion for the game of golf and counted among his greatest thrills the opportunity to play at Pebble Beach, Calif., and later, with his friend and Partner, Bob Bigler, at the famous birthplace of golf, The Old Course at St. Andrews in Scotland.

Mark was well loved and respected by all who were fortunate enough to know him. He touched so many lives and left an exceptionally rare legacy of respect and professionalism, love of family and God, unfaltering friendships and boundless generosity to so many. We will never forget the lessons he taught by the example he set. He appreciated and lived each day to its fullest, he cherished his family and friends; he had fun and lived well. Mark excelled at that, and was a man of character, integrity and grace.

Despite the very difficult battle he faced early on, Mark made a decision to move forward with his life with a sense of optimism and courage. He demonstrated incredible bravery with each passing day, knowing that ultimately his time on earth would end. We count ourselves very fortunate to have known him, to have spent time with him, to have basked in the warmth of his great smile, and to have loved him so dearly. We will treasure our memories and our love for you forever, in our hearts, our minds and our souls.

Services with full military honors were held on October 24, 2012, at the Air Force Academy Chapel with interment at the USAF Academy Cemetery. Donations in Mark's memory may be made online, to the Melanoma Research Foundation.

*Kelley Shope, Wife of Mark Shope | December 2012*