

# Ed Williams

Sunday, July 5, 2015

Dr. Charles Edwin "Ed" Williams, 85, died Thursday, July 2, 2015, at his home in Cape Girardeau from complications related to Parkinson's disease.

For many years, Ed was a familiar sight running on the streets of Cape Girardeau. An accomplished ultrarunner, his exploits were recounted in the best-selling book "Born to Run," as well as being featured in the August 1999 edition of Gentlemen's Quarterly.

He was particularly proud of being the first 70-year-old to complete the arduous Leadville Trail 100, a 100-mile ultramarathon in the Colorado Rocky Mountains.

Born in Oil City, Pennsylvania, in 1929 to Charles and Jesse Williams, Ed spent his boyhood engaged in hunting, fishing and other outdoor pursuits in the backwoods of Pennsylvania. He also was active in the Boy Scouts, attaining the rank of Eagle Scout.

After graduating from Cranberry High School in 1946, Ed earned a bachelor of science degree and eventually a master's in geography from Pennsylvania State University, occasionally taking semesters off to pursue a career in professional baseball.

While he never made it to the major leagues, playing baseball helped fund his education, and it was while playing for the Williston Oilers in North Dakota that he met his future wife, Patricia Shemorry. The couple married in 1957.

Following shorter teaching stints at the University of Arkansas, Southeast Missouri State University and the University of Wisconsin, as well as earning a Ph.D. from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois,

Ed returned to Cape Girardeau in 1963 and joined the faculty in the earth science department at Southeast, where he remained until his retirement in 1995.

In addition to competitive running, Ed enjoyed collecting stamps and chess.

He leaves his wife of 58 years, Patricia Shemorry Williams; two daughters, Kathleen Williams Fisher and Wendy Williams Marberry; a grandson, Jacob (Marissa) Marberry; a granddaughter, Mariah Fisher; a nephew, Luke Cano; and beloved rescue dachshund, Oscar.

A memorial service will be held at 5 p.m. today at Christ Episcopal Church, 101 N. Fountain St. in Cape Girardeau.

The service will be preceded by visitation with the family at 4 p.m. in the parish hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, [michaeljfox.org](http://michaeljfox.org), or the Bollinger County Stray Project, [bcstrayproject.org](http://bcstrayproject.org).

The family wishes to thank Southeast Hospice for its skilled care and kind support.

Announcement courtesy of Ford and Sons Funeral Home.

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