



Dr. Arthur Thomas Matte

July 1, 2015

Dr. Arthur Thomas Matte, died early Wednesday morning, July 1, 2015, surrounded by his children and grandchildren after battling esophageal cancer. Art was born in Gallup, NM, on Election Day November 2, 1926 and was named after the Democratic incumbent Arthur Thomas Hannett. He grew up on the rough and tumble streets of Gallup's north side to Italian immigrant parents and was slinging newspapers at six years of age. In high school, Art was a phenomenal athlete and led his team to a state football championship his senior year as an all-state halfback. Graduating a semester early because of WWII, young Matte enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served on the U.S.S. Pensacola as a laundryman until the war's end, and then returned to New Mexico upon discharge and then attended Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM. In 1950 Art married the love of his life, Edith Mae Fattor, and together they moved to Omaha, NE, where he enrolled in Creighton University's Dental School. When Art graduated in 1954 he and Edye made the decision to move to Albuquerque and make a life for themselves and their young family.

Art and Edye were founding members of the Holy Ghost Parish and School. They were also founding members for a soon to be built St. Pius X High School, because of their strong conviction of a good Catholic education. Dr. Matte was a member of various clubs and organizations such as Kiwanis and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, as he built his dental practice and contributed to his community.

Art was mostly in his element when he was surrounded by his family. He loved telling stories of his growing up tough during the Depression, his high school triumphs, his Navy days, in addition to his college and dental school shenanigans and exploits. He was most proud of teaching his grandkids and great-grandkids to say “Papa” as their first word. Being of Italian descent he relished the closeness of family, Italian food especially polenta and imbibing on occasion or two, or three.

Art always loved sports and fishing. He was an avid golfer until late in his life when fifty years of stand-up dentistry had aggravated his back enough to end the golfing days. In 1973, when the high school he helped found was in financial straits, he and other St. Pius X advocates created a strategy to keep the school solvent known as “Project 73”. All nine of his children and many grandchildren graduated from Pius, but his pride and joy for a Catholic education lay in his dental school alma mater – Creighton University. Art was instrumental in getting over fifty New Mexico students into Creighton undergrad and/or Dental School. He was very proud that six of his 9 children attended Creighton.

In 1990 Dr. Matte was awarded the Alumni Merit Award for the school of Dentistry and his wife, all nine kids and their spouses travelled to Omaha to watch him accept the prestigious honor. Some years later he initiated an endowed scholarship for New Mexico students to attend Creighton undergrad. In his later years he loved to read and every morning did the crossword puzzle with a cup of hot coffee. Whether you knew him as Doc, Art, Dad, Uncle Art, or Papa, you were immediately drawn to him by his charm, humility, honesty, frankness and sense of family. His humble (poor) upbringing and desire to succeed allowed him to overcome adversity and shape his progeny for two generations at least!

Dr. Matte was preceded in death by his parents, Guiseppe (Joe) and Mary Matte; wife, Edye; and grandson Andrew Kneafsey. He is survived by his nine children and their spouses, Lynn and Steve Gibbs, Debbie and Mark Rhoten, John and Lynn Matte, Tom and Rebecca Matte, Mary and Jimmy McIntyre,

Laurie Matte and husband, Tim Kneafsey, Gina and Kent Seacat, Lisa and Steve Johnston, and Tina and Jason Klumb; 21 grandchildren, Leah (Blake) Gibbs Ramsey, Lara Gibbs, Jake Gibbs, Ryan (Adele) Rhoten, Maegan (Jeff) Rhoten Paulson, Dustan (Sara) Rhoten, Hannah (Keith) Rhoten Busch, Amy Matte, Katlyn (Jason) Matte Robbins, Matthew Matte, Sarah Beth Matte, Kevin (Katie) McIntyre, Jaime (Zack) McIntyre Zakrewski, Jennifer (Shawn) McIntyre Tollison, Nicholas Kneafsey, Emmalee Kneafsey, Kylee (David) Seacat Miller, Michael Seacat, Garrett Johnston, Matte Klumb and Rylee Klumb; great-grandchildren, Noah and Ella Ramsey, Maggie and Molly McIntyre, Paisley Paulson, Mariah Paulson, Makenzie Paulson, and McKinley Robbins. Also surviving are many nephews and nieces and brother-in-law, Victor Fattor.

A Rosary will be recited Thursday, July 9, 2015, 9:30 a.m., at Holy Ghost Church, 833 Arizona Ave SE. Mass of Christian Burial will be concelebrated after the Rosary. Entombment will follow at Gate of Heaven Cemetery and Mausoleum, 7999 Wyoming Blvd NE. In lieu of flowers, the family requests, if you so desire, a donation in Art's memory to El Ranchito de los Ninos Foundation, P.O. Box 2400, Los Lunas, NM, or Creighton University, Development Office, "Matte Family Endowed Scholarship", 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE, 68178, or to Right to Life, 2413 Wyoming Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Art will be greatly missed by all that knew him but we will fondly remember the amazing man that he was. He was one of a kind! A special thanks to Dr. John Guttman and also the wonderful people at Presbyterian Hospice.

Cemetery Details

Gate of Heaven Cemetery

7999 Wyoming Blvd. NE
Albuquerque, NM

Previous Events

Rosary and Mass

JUL 9. 9:30 AM (MT)

Holy Ghost Church
833 Arizona St. SE
Albuquerque, NM

Tribute Wall

SH

“ I spent many a day at the Matte house in the early 70's and I always felt welcome. Our family and the Matte's had many family members in the same grades at St. Pius and I really appreciated the warm hospitality all the family members had for me and my family. Dr. and Mrs. Matte--you will be missed and a thumbs up for the entire Matte family!

Steve and Teresa Heaphy

Stephen Heaphy - July 10, 2015 at 01:54 PM

KM

“ Our sympathy on the loss of Dr. Matte. We will keep all of you in our prayers.

Mike and Kathleen (Nason) McBride

Kathleen McBride - July 09, 2015 at 02:30 PM

SL

“ So sorry for the loss of a great dentist in our Albuquerque community! My family and I will miss Dr. Arthur Matte and his wonderful, caring skill and patience over the years. We are blessed to have his son, Dr. John Matte and his grand daughter, Dr. Amy Matte to carry on his practice. I will never forget the many times he lovingly kept me from pain, sometimes on very short notice! 'Papa' Matte was a blessing to all his patients.

Sara Livingston

Sara Livingston - July 07, 2015 at 11:56 AM

MF

“ *My sincere condolences to Lynn Gibbs and her family on the passing of Dr. Matte. My heart and prayers are with you,*

Mary (Billmaier) Flores - July 07, 2015 at 10:37 AM

MO

“ *With our deepest sympathy, Pat and Maryann Olguin and famiy*

maryann Olguin - July 06, 2015 at 02:54 PM

CJ

“ *"When you lose someone you love, you gain an angel you know." I am thinking of all of you as you celebrate your Dad's remarkable life and the memories you shared. With sympathy and prayers, Carol Sanchez Johansen*

Carol S Johansen - July 06, 2015 at 09:27 AM

JB

“ *Dr. Matte>> You Were a Great Man and Have a Wonderful FAMILY>> Rest in Peace>> John Boudreau*

John Boudreau - July 06, 2015 at 08:50 AM

KM

“ Dr. Matte was recommended to my father by Dr. Kruzick in Denver, before we moved to Albuquerque in 1962. From then on Art was our family dentist for many years, and then after he retired, his son John and later John's daughter Amy took up the role. The McCourt family, Robert, LaFaye - now deceased - and their children Vicki, Heidi and Kevin, and his children Ryan, Robert and Collette share the sorrow of all those people who knew Art, but retain the happy memories and bright smiles that he gave us.

Kevin

Kevin McCourt - July 05, 2015 at 04:48 PM



“ Healing Tears - All White was purchased for the family of Dr. Arthur Thomas Matte.



July 04, 2015 at 10:06 AM

DD

“ With out deepest sympathies
Anna Jean, Dean, Tracie DiGregorio



Dean DiGregorio - July 04, 2015 at 09:15 AM



“ *Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White*
was purchased for the family of Dr. Arthur
Thomas Matte.



July 03, 2015 at 12:08 AM



“ *On behalf of the French Family of Companies, we express our*
deepest condolences.

Dante Gutierrez-Zamora - July 02, 2015 at 05:23 PM