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Leslie Lamar Wilkes, Jr., MD died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on Saturday, April 4, 2020.

He was born in Quitman, Georgia, October 2 nd , 1940. He attended Quitman public schools, the University of Georgia, and the Medical College of Georgia, and received his MD degree in 1965.

Dr. Wilkes completed an internship and year of surgery residency at Charlotte Memorial Hospital. In 1967 he received a commission in the US Navy, and spent a year at sea as Ship's Surgeon aboard the aircraft carrier USS Randolph. In 1968 he served as Ward Medical Officer at the US Naval Hospital in Charleston, S.C.

After release from active duty, he finished his residency in orthopedic surgery at Wake Forest University and did a fellowship year in arthritis surgery at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland). In 1972 Dr. Wilkes began his orthopedic surgery practice in Savannah, GA. He practiced in Savannah for over 40 years, and was the first surgeon in Savannah to perform a modern hip replacement. He was one of the first surgeons in Georgia to perform arthroscopic knee surgery. In all, he performed about 15,000 operations.

He was certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery, and was active in the following organizations: The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, the British Orthopaedic Association, The Society of Hip and Knee Surgeons, the Arthroscopic Surgery Society of North America, and numerous state societies. He was active in the Saint Andrew's Society of Savannah (Past President), Past President of the Scottish Games, Society of Colonial Wars, Sons of the Revolution, the Military Order of the Stars and Bars, and the Rotary Club of Savannah. He was a member of the Cotillion Club, Chatham Club and the Oglethorpe Club of Savannah. He was a man of great humility, kindness and deep faith - always reaching out to others. He was a devoted member of Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church, where he served in many capacities for over 40 years; he cherished his Wesley family.

Dr. Wilkes continued a lifelong interest in medical education. He served on the adjunct faculty of the Medical College of Georgia for many years, and he organized a group of former American and Edinburgh Fellows into the Edinburgh Orthopaedic Club – the purpose of which was to sponsor a Scottish registrar to visit the USA each year and to attend the American Academy of Orthopedic

Surgeons Annual Meeting. For many years, Dr. Wilkes hosted several medical students from the University of Glasgow (Scotland) to come and study in Savannah. Saint Joseph's/Candler Hospital graciously supported this program.

He was active in the Medical College of Georgia Alumni Society and served on the Board of Directors for many years and as President in 1996. He received the Savannah's "Best Doctor" award numerous times, and the Georgia Medical Society awarded him the Health Care Hero Award in 2010 as well as the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012. He served on the board of the Georgia Medical Care Foundation (now Alliant Health Solutions) for over 30 years and was President 1997-1999. In 2014, he was elected Volunteer of the Year for Arts and Culture by the United Way of Savannah. He was also honored in 2019 with the Senior Citizens, Inc "Leader, Legends, and A Life Well Lived" Award. For several years, he enjoyed his work as a photographer with our Veterans for Honor Flight Savannah.

He was an avid photographer beginning in high school and continuing throughout his life. He had numerous exhibitions and publications. He was very active as a volunteer photographer for Hospice Savannah, Inc. and volunteered as their photographer for their Family Photography Program and also their Veterans Program. It became a big part of his life - he considered his work a "Mission."

Above all, his family was the joy of his life. He and his wife Ge-Juan were inseparable. He loved her with all his heart. He cherished his grandsons, and enjoyed spending time with them and attended countless soccer games, school functions, and chorus concerts.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Leslie Lamar Wilkes and Rachel Blackwell Wilkes. He is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Ge-Juan Hood Wilkes and their son Leslie Lamar Wilkes III (Lisa), and two grandsons, Connor Albright Wilkes, and Davidson Edward Wilkes. Brother in law, Gordon Palmer Hood and Charles Wayne Hood (Sandra); niece Natalie Hood Stone (Kyle); Nephew Justin Hood (Logan). All of Basalt, Colorado. Sister in law, Marcelle Hood Fulcher of Thomson, Georgia; Niece Mary Dawn Street (Bob); Great nieces Oliva and Laurel Street and Great nephew Sterling Street.

A private family burial is planned with a Celebration of Life at a later date.

The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church, 429 Abercorn Street, Savannah, GA, 31401 or Hospice Savannah, Inc., 1352 Eisenhower Drive, Savannah, GA, 31406.

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