



## Robert Thomas Ferris DDS, PhD

April 14, 1937 - October 1, 2020

Robert Thomas Ferris, DDS, PhD, age 83, of Deltona, passed away Thursday October 1, 2020. He was a graduate of Spring Hill College in Tennessee, Emory University Dental School (DDS), and Ohio State University (PhD). He practiced periodontics in Altamonte Springs and Deltona for 40 years, was very active in Florida dental advocacy and served as President of the American Academy of Periodontology, the national organization for his dental specialty.

He was an avid reader, loved by his patients for his caring and his humor, and was a great story teller. He donated his time to a number of local societies and charities, including Rotary International, and taught for many years at the University of Florida dental school in Gainesville. More recently he devoted a great deal of time and effort to rescuing abandoned animals with his wife Jennifer Corey.

He is also survived by his two children Leah Marie Yankus, PhD (Atlanta, GA) and Robert Louis Ferris, MD, PhD (Pittsburgh, PA), and 5 grandchildren. His brother Charles Ferris, lives in Orlando with his wife Cindy.

Donations in his memory should be sent to St. Jude Children's Hospital. <https://www.stjude.org/>

The family of Dr. Robert Thomas Ferris invites you to leave a message of condolence on the Tribute Wall created in his memory.

# Tribute Wall

RT

“ Our condolences to Bobby's family. We loved him. We miss him. He was "the real thing"!

*Ron Tarrson & Camille Canzone*

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**ronald tarrson** - October 30, 2020 at 09:27 PM

AG

“ I was colleagues of Bob at Ohio state and we shared lots of hours of discussions on our respective thesis research,played volley ball in his courtyard .He had great sense of humor and love his profession. He was devoted to his profession and spent significant time and donations to American dental association.We cherish his friendship.Dr.Abdul Gaffar

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**Abdul Gaffar** - October 26, 2020 at 02:18 PM

EB

“ Bob and I were contemporaries both in age and our entry in Periodontology. He was easy to like and very enjoyable to be around. He had high standards and was a great teacher. He will be missed by all who knew him. May his memory serve as a blessing for all.

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**Erwin Barrington** - October 13, 2020 at 04:47 PM



“ *Godspeed to Bob and condolences to Jennifer... as well as to Bob's children.*  
*Bob was a great man... and more important to me at least, always amusing -- both on purpose and sometimes accidentally!*  
*Gilia and I have missed seeing him in recent years and are very sad at his passing.*  
*Be well and aloha all.*

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**Michael Rethman** - October 13, 2020 at 03:08 PM

DA

“ *To hear of Bob's passing brought back many thoughts of pleasurable memories of our times serving together in multiple venues. Bob is truly an icon in periodontology and leaves a powerful legacy in the profession. Our thoughts and prayers flow out to Jennifer and the Ferris family.*  
*Don and Jessie Adams*

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**Dr. Donald Adams** - October 13, 2020 at 01:49 PM

DS

“ *Bob was a leader among leaders in periodontics. His gift was to investigate, take a stand, and provide the data to support that stand. As such, he rose through the ranks of our profession. Bob never looked at an easy way. He looked at the best way. Even in retirement, Bob continued to serve our profession inspecting dental offices to assure compliance with the highest standards. His legacy serves as an example of a level of service that we can and should strive for.*

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**Dr. Lee Sheldon** - October 12, 2020 at 04:34 PM

GD

“ I served as a director of the American Board of Periodontology with Bob. We were very close and he will be missed by all of us who served with him on the board. Very unique person who loved periodontology with a passion. Jerry Drury

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**Gerald Drury** - October 12, 2020 at 04:27 PM

JB

“ I was As I was a patient of Dr. Faris for 43 years and enjoyed going to him even though I am not very fond of normally going to a dentist he was funny and kind and I will miss him I also in like Jenny and would like to talk to her if she would call me then

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**janet buchanan** - October 12, 2020 at 12:57 PM

DP

“ My husband first went to Dr Ferris in 1979 and never quit. He was recommended to us by our periodontist in Illinois. When we moved here, little did we know his office was a couple of blocks from our house and when he moved to Deland my husband drove there every 6 months to his office. He was such a great Dentist and helped my husband's teeth so much. He always had a smile and a funny store to tell. Even though I wasn't his patient I would go to Deland with my husband and he always came out to the waiting room to say hello to me and wish me well. He was such a intelligent man and a great assess to his profession. Our hearts go out to his family and especially Jennifer. He will be greatly missed by everyone that knew him. God bless

*Sincerely,Deanna and Ken Pell*

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**deanna pell** - October 11, 2020 at 02:32 PM

FA

“ Soon after we first arrived in Orlando, July 4, 1976 I introduced myself to some of the local dentists. One such dentist said to me that perhaps the most important dentist I should meet should be Bob Ferris. He was right. We had dinner with Bob very soon after that. The food was great and his wit and humor pervaded the evening as we discussed sports, politics, philosophy and of course dentistry. Our friendship grew from that day forward and Bob and I would continue to meet after work on many occasions for our important "life's workshops." We became good friends and a powerful trust ensued. Bob was a mentor whose direction had influenced my career. His character and larger than life persona provided many wonderful lasting memories. My wife, Judy, and I will miss Bob. He has lived a great life, raised outstanding children and encouraged countless dentists to exceed all expectations personally and professionally.

We clearly remember helping him achieve the position of Second Vice President to the ADA. It was a joyous time and just one of so many of his accomplishments to his credit.

There is an emptiness in our hearts as we mourn this great man. We extend our sincere condolences to the Ferris family for their loss and wish to thank them for sharing their patriarch with us for these so many years. Frank and Judy Addabbo, Oct. 10, 2020

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**Frank and Judy Addabbo** - October 10, 2020 at 02:26 PM

DH

“ Dr. Robert Ferris influenced my professional and personal life in a great way. As a freshman dental student at Case Western Reserve in 1968 Dr.Ferris was a faculty member who assisted me during some very challenging times. A great teacher, mentor , counselor, I was very lucky to be a beneficiary of his wisdom and guidance-A wonderful person who will be missed.

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**Dr Hugh Habas** - October 10, 2020 at 08:17 AM

MR

“ I have known Dr. Ferris for over 50+ years serving with him on AAP committees and a close friendship. He was an extraordinary clinician and politically active in very many positions. He will be missed by many and my deepest sympathy to his family.

*Marvin Rosenberg, D.D.S.*

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**Marvin Rosenberg** - October 09, 2020 at 04:39 PM

DB

“ Bob was a giant among men in the field of dentistry. He was an advocate for periodontics and dentistry throughout his entire career, a personal friend and one who will be severely missed in our profession. God Bless.

*-Tyler Baldock*

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**Dr. Tyler Baldock** - October 08, 2020 at 03:24 PM

RR

“ Patty and I are very saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Bob Ferris. I knew him personally as an inspirational teacher and mentor, an incredibly knowledgeable and accomplished advocate for the dental profession, and a loyal and supportive friend and colleague. Dr. Ferris will be greatly missed and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family. Ray and Patty Rogers

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**Ray and Patty Rogers** - October 08, 2020 at 10:18 AM

RJ

“ There have been a handful of people who truly influenced my life, and Bob was one of those. I will always be grateful to have been able to call him friend. I was always in awe of his professional abilities, both clinically and in the selfless way he devoted his time to our dental organizations, but my most important memories are much more about the person. I was lucky enough to laugh with Bob, cry with Bob, and muddle through this wonderful thing we call life with him. His intellect and insights always made for wonderful conversations, his humor for delightful distractions, and his caring and humanity as reminders of why we are on this earth. Bob was one of the “good guys”, and I will miss him deeply.

*Rick Chace*

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**Richard Chace jr** - October 08, 2020 at 09:48 AM

GB

“ Jane and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Bob. We will always remember the wonderful evenings we spent with Bob at our home in Baltimore. Our blessings and prayers go out to Jennifer and the entire Ferris family. Jerry and Jane Bowers

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**Gerald Bowers** - October 07, 2020 at 05:39 PM

BT

“ Bob was a great mentor to me. He encouraged me to get involved in organized dentistry and always had a kind word to say. He was well-respected in the dental and periodontal community and will be greatly missed. May he RIP

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**Beatriz E Terry** - October 07, 2020 at 05:22 PM

DB

“ Thanks to Bob for being the emergency contact for both my son and daughter while they attended Stetson University. My son shared the love of history with Bob. His greatest gift to all of us was being a mentor. I gained from his advice often, as did many others. I have a feeling he is still doing that.

*David F. Boden, D.D.S., M.S.  
President-elect, Florida Dental Association  
And fellow periodontist*

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**David Boden** - October 07, 2020 at 04:49 PM

JG

“ Bob Ferris was someone you could place in a category called "My Most Unforgettable Character". His devotion to the art and science of dentistry will never be forgotten. He was a generous, thoughtful, and perceptive gentleman with a very quick (and sarcastic) sense of humor. Always funny, always insightful, always humble. My sincerest condolences to the family. Dr. Jane Grover

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**Jane Grover** - October 07, 2020 at 04:21 PM

MF

“ Dr. Robert Ferris was truly an iconic figure in dentistry. Something he earned as an educator, philanthropist, clinician and willing mentor to many.  
I feel blessed to have known him and lucky to be have to called him my friend. I benefitted I'm so many ways from his mentorship and guidance.  
We are all a little better off because of of the ways he touched us. His humor and humble demeanor made it easy to love him. The void created by his passing will never be filled.  
Rest In Peace my friend.

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**Maxine Feinberg** - October 07, 2020 at 03:56 PM

DW

“ *Bob Ferris---A true leader in any endeavor he chose to pursue. As an educator, practitioner and philanthropist, he was a perfect guide for those who followed and, especially, to those who benefited from his subtle signals along the way. No doubt, his wonderful family is remembering his warm smile and kind words. As his friends, we're certainly doing the same.*  
*Our very best to all of you,*  
*Dave and Julie Whiston*

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**david whiston** - October 07, 2020 at 03:44 PM

DP

“ *Dear Ferris Family*  
*My sincere condolences for the great loss of precious Dr. Ferris. I was employed in his office in Maitland, Florida, for nearly a decade, starting in 1979. The lessons I learned in dental hygiene and patient care from a compassionate level is integrated in my years of experience because of Dr. Ferris's insistence on the Golden Mean of provider care.*  
*I last spoke with him when practicing in Taos, NM, three years ago. He asked me: did you teach dental hygiene?*  
*Yes, I replied.*  
*I could feel him smile through the phone.*  
*It wasn't about me teaching, but that his teachings were sent through another generation of students and into the core of the dental profession. I am glad to be a part of that legacy.*  
*Blessings to Bobby and Leah, and all that remember our wonderful times in celebration.*  
*Dianne (Shirazi) Petrale, RDH CPDH-NM, MEd*  
*Eden, NC*

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**Dianne M Petrale** - October 07, 2020 at 02:41 PM

DO

“ *Bob Ferris was a beloved mentor and provided much guidance to me personally during my first years as the Executive Director of the American Dental Association. He was admired greatly by his peers and respected by all. Dr. Kathy O'Loughlin*

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**Dr. Kathy O'Loughlin** - October 07, 2020 at 02:14 PM

GO

“ *The dental world has lost a giant!  
Bob, you will be missed but your legacy will endure.  
Rest in peace knowing you help the lives of so many.  
I will miss you my friend.*

*Dr. Gregory E. Oxford*

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**Gregory Oxford** - October 07, 2020 at 12:39 PM

EH

*My sincere condolences to the family of Robert T Ferris DDS, PhD .He was revered by so many. A giant among his peers. I worked for Dr.Ferris and with Dr.Ferris for over 11 years in the mid 70's & 80's. It was quite an experience and education and to this day those years still remains with me.Bobby,Leah and children I am so sorry for your loss .RIP RTF  
Ellie Halperin*

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**Ellie Halperin** - October 07, 2020 at 11:17 PM

AF

“ Robert (Bob) T. Ferris was a brilliant man who approached life with humility. He was a mentor to many people throughout his life, myself included. He was generous with his time, smart in business and philanthropic for causes he believed in with no real desire to hog the spotlight. Dr. Ferris had a sparkling wit, and enjoyed a good laugh even if it was at his expense.

*His professional activity spanned the entire spectrum of dentistry, both to his specialty of Periodontics and to the profession as a whole.*

*Bob and I began our relationship through activities with the Florida Dental Association. Over time it deepened into such a trusting friendship that he referred to me as his "other" brother which flattered me to no end. We spoke regularly about everything; things both important and unimportant.*

*In our last call, he talked about how proud he was of his children, Leah and Robert and of his grandchildren whom he so adored. He loved Jennifer for the care and attention she gave him during the time they shared. Bob knew what was important in this life and knew his was a life well lived.*

*He often said his hope was to leave things just a little better than he found them.*

*I know that he met that goal, and overshot the mark.*

*Finally, speaking of "over shooting" I believe Dr. Ferris is in heaven right now, finally able to work on his golf game.*

*Loved by so many, you will be missed.*

*Alan Friedel*

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**Alan Friedel** - October 07, 2020 at 12:30 PM

ED

“ Great leader and mentor for all Florida Dentists and will be missed by many. Donald Thomas DMD

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**E Donald Thomas DMD** - October 07, 2020 at 12:22 PM

RM

“*Dr. Ferris was a great man and a staunch advocate for the profession of Periodontics if ever there was one. He helped volunteer his time to not only help teach me as a resident many years ago, but was also instrumental in helping me open my first practice. My professional career would not be where it is today, without the help and support of Dr. Ferris. My condolences to his family and loved ones.*

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**Ryan Mendro** - October 07, 2020 at 11:31 AM