



Dr. Walter F. Atha

April 15, 1966 - January 21, 2026

Dr. Walter Fleming Atha passed gently away in his sleep on Monday, January 19, 2026, in Saint Michaels, Maryland. Dr. Atha was born on April 15, 1966 in Columbus, Georgia. He was raised in Rockmart, Georgia, and graduated from Rockmart High School in 1984. Walt attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and graduated from the University of Washington with a BFA in piano performance. He attended medical school at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, where he received his Doctor of Medicine Degree and completed residency training in Emergency Medicine at John Hopkins Hospital. Dr. Atha had a long and distinguished career in Emergency Medicine, and had recently retired as the Regional Director of Emergency Medicine for the University of Maryland Shore Regional Health.

Dr. Atha was preceded in death by his parents, Dr. John Atha and Barbara Odell Atha. He is survived by his husband, Dr. Joseph P. O'Neill and his siblings Donna (Mitch) Davitte, Karen (Kelly) Lynn, Ben (Tracy) Atha, Tomy (Cathe) Atha and numerous nieces and nephews.

Walt brought his love of music, people and life into all he did.

A funeral service will be held on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 2pm at Temple B'Nai Israel, 7199 Tristan Drive, Easton. Burial will follow at Oxford Cemetery.

For information regarding times and location for Shiva, please email Dr. O'Neill.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Walt's memory to Allegro

Academy (<https://form-renderer-app.donorperfect.io/give/allegro-academy-easton/annual-fund>), or GRREAT (<https://grreat.org/donatesupport/>)

Cemetery Details

Oxford Cemetery

Oxford Cemetery Rd
Oxford, MD 21654

Previous Events

Funeral Service

JAN 22. 2:00 PM (est)

Temple B'nai Israel
7199 Tristan Drive
Easton, MD 21601

Tribute Wall

MR

“ *Maryann Ruehrmund lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha*



Maryann Ruehrmund - January 27 at 02:00 PM

MR

Rest easy dear Walt. Your are musically magical to so many of us.

Maryann Ruehrmund - January 27 at 02:01 PM

JC

“ *All the Atha family were family to me. I love each and every one. Joan Cummings.*

joan cummings - January 27 at 01:26 PM

HC

“ *I have many fond memories of working with Dr Atha when he first came to Chestertown when the new ER was being constructed and we were operating out of the old ICU. Dr Atha was warm hearted, soft spoken and kind to every person he meant! Very smart, great doctor and leader, always happy to teach, and just had a gentle way with people. Thoughts and prayers to Dr Atha's family and loved ones.*

Holly Collins - January 27 at 09:55 AM

ST

“ *What a wonderful man and doctor he was. Kind and interested to all.
What a tremendous loss to the world.
My condolences to all.*

Sherri Taylor - January 26 at 07:43 AM

PW

“ *One of the best . Enjoyed working for him. Never afraid to be one of the group off the job. Christmas parties at his place will always be remembered. We will miss him and his endless stories about his travels. One of a kind great person*



Peter Wessels - January 24 at 07:28 PM

DM

“ *Debbie Merceron lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha*



Debbie Merceron - January 23 at 03:45 PM

DM

Dr Atha was missed by many when we didn't see him in the ER anymore. Always had a smile and nice words for everyone!

Debbie Merceron - January 23 at 03:46 PM

BS

“ Beth Strader lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha



Beth Strader - January 23 at 12:20 PM

CS

“ Walt was one of the kindest emergency physician I've ever had the pleasure to work with.

Carolyn Sutch - January 23 at 12:03 PM

SA

“ Sitting around a coffee table with Joe and Walt- often with a drink in hand- talking about the world (Walt was a man of the world).. about everything really.. count as such joyful memories. I will miss not having more of those moments together and Ill miss you.

Samit - January 22 at 07:00 PM

DG

“ Joe, I have such fond memories of you and Walter. I am so sorry for your loss.



Dee Gribbin - January 22 at 03:39 PM

JJ

“ Dear Joe -

I don't know how well you remember me, but I was a few years after Walt in residency at Hopkins, and I brought my family out to visit your place in Howard County several times before you moved out to the shore. I'd been thinking often of you both, and am heartbroken that I didn't manage to reconnect with Walt before his death. He was a dear friend to me, he was a role model as a doctor, and he was more overflowing with light and love and joy than anyone I've ever known. I'm deeply sorry for your loss, and I want you to know how blessed I feel to have had Walt in my life.

With love - Jules Jung

Julianna Jung - January 22 at 03:22 PM

ES

“ *Walt. I will miss you so much. I'm glad we stayed in touch and were able to see each other recently. Joe, my thoughts are with you and I'm here for you if you need me.*

Esti Schabelman - January 22 at 02:12 PM

LC

“ *Lori Collier lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha*



Lori Collier - January 22 at 02:11 PM

TR

“ Joe and family - Walt was such a wonderful person. When Hopkins started hiring PAs for the Emergency Department, he welcomed us as colleagues and was as dedicated to teaching us as he was to teaching residents and students. He was such a gentle soul in such a difficult environment. He was ferociously intelligent and communicated his passion for medicine so effectively. Lots of love to all of you in this terrible time.

Tami Ritsema - January 22 at 11:10 AM

RJ

“ Ruth Ann Jones lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha



Ruth Ann Jones - January 22 at 09:55 AM

RJ

Joe and Family
Walt was the best of the best. He was such a kind and caring physician and a great friend. I enjoyed his visits to my office when we both were at UM Shore Regional Health. We had many great discussions. I wish you peace and comfort during this difficult time. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Ruth Ann Jones - January 22 at 10:00 AM

CS

“ Chayan Dey and Bryn Sakagawa purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Dr. Walter F. Atha.



Chayan Dey and Bryn Sakagawa - January 22 at 05:23 AM

MW

“ Joe and family, Walt was a wonderful human being, dear friend, caring and talented physician. I feel so fortunate to have trained along side him at the Johns Hopkins ER, to have shared his love of playing the piano, and to have met his beloved golden retrievers. Allegro Academy and GRREAT are the perfect charities to honor his memory. Wishing you peace and comfort in these difficult days.

Melissa Wu - January 21 at 07:42 PM

LB

“ LaRhonda Butler lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha



LaRhonda Butler - January 21 at 03:57 PM

LB

Dr. Atha was one of the BEST EM doctors I have ever had the chance to work with. Glad our paths crossed!!

LaRhonda Butler - January 21 at 03:57 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Walter F. Atha.



January 21 at 02:34 PM

JK

“ Joe and family- I am so sorry for your loss. Walt was one in a million. He was always there for anyone who needed him- and always with a smile. I will keep you all in my thoughts and prayers.



Jennifer Kaminskis - January 21 at 01:42 PM

DS

“ Deborah Stamper lit a candle in memory of Dr. Walter F. Atha



Deborah Stamper - January 21 at 01:22 PM

DS

“ Joe and family, We are so very sorry for the loss of Dr. Atha. He was an amazing man with a heart of gold. He was my Buddy, he was so knowledgeable and kind and I miss him already very much. May he rest in peace and I have you and the family in my thoughts and prayers ❤️

Deborah Stamper - January 21 at 01:21 PM