



James Huskins

November 1, 1915 - August 24, 2004

James D. Huskins, 88, longtime physician in Siloam Springs, died Tuesday, August 24, at his home in Siloam Springs. Born November 1, 1915, in Muskogee, Oklahoma, he was the son of John E. Huskins and Lena Mae Schnitzer Huskins. He began his medical career at Eastern Oklahoma Junior College in Wilburton, Oklahoma, and continued at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma. He attended medical school at the University of Oklahoma Medical School in Oklahoma City and graduated in 1938. He served his internship at the University of Wisconsin and returned to Oklahoma City where he served a one-year general surgery residency at Mercy Hospital. Following the residency, he came to Siloam Springs the last day of 1939 in search of a location for his medical practice. He was interested in finding a community that had a university, a hospital, and nearby water. He stayed at the Crown Hotel and recalled that, "There was no one on the street except the street cleaner and his donkey cart. He was sweeping the street with a broom." He decided that this must be a "nice clean town." He set up his first practice with Dr. G. A. Hughes over Chandler Drug Store located at University Street and Mt. Olive. He made house calls from Stilwell, Oklahoma, to Southwest City, Missouri; 30% of obstetric deliveries were still being done in the home at that time. Three years into his practice he was called to serve his country and joined the U. S. Army on November 5, 1940, in Ft. Benning, Georgia, for one-year duty. Several visits to Birmingham, Alabama, renewing acquaintance with a pretty little nurse from medical school culminated when he came through

and picked her up to go to Siloam Springs to get married. On July 6, 1941, Pastor Jim Upton united them in marriage at the First United Methodist Church. They returned to Ft. Benning and learned late in 1941 that his tour of duty had been extended to the European Theater. A frontline physician, he served as a battalion surgeon with the 41st Infantry Medical Detachment of the 2nd Armored Division in World War II from November 1940 to January 1946. He participated in his first action at Sicily, action in Africa, and then at Normandy on Day Three. Following the Battle of the Bulge he was stationed at the 124th General Hospital in England as a ward surgeon doing reconstructive surgery until the end of the European theater. He served under General Patton and remembered him as "dynamic in public; much more human in private." He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the American Defense Ribbon, the EAME Theater Ribbon with five Bronze Battle Stars and one Arrowhead, and the Combat Medical Badge. He was authorized to wear six overseas bars. He began his career a first lieutenant and became a major in the medical corps. He served in Berlin until September 1945 even though his release had been requested by the mayor of Siloam Springs. Following his discharge in 1946, he returned to Siloam Springs and opened his practice over the Spot Theatre. In 1956 he, along with Dr. Cal Dean Gunter and Dr. Billy J. Puckett, built the Medical Center on Maxwell Street. He began practicing in the hospital located on the third floor of the Fire Station and participated in the building of Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital. The Medical Center that he founded is now the Community Physicians Group, a multi-specialty primary care clinic in two states with six different clinics served by 16 physicians. He retired from the practice of medicine in 1995 following a career of more than 50 years. In 2000 he was the first recipient of the James D. Huskins Award, established by Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital Foundation, to honor outstanding service in the healthcare field. Dr. George Benjamin states: "He built the medical community from the ground up. He built it on the bedrocks of service and excellence. These are the qualities that the medical community tries to revere to this day

as we revere Dr. Jim Huskins and his legacy." Dr. Huskins had been active in numerous civic organizations and activities. He was a member of the Siloam Springs Rotary Club and a recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow Award; the Siloam Springs Chamber of Commerce and honored as the Pioneer Citizen of the Year in 1990; and a member of Key Lodge #7 F.&A.M. where he had been honored as a 50 year member. An active member of the First United Methodist Church , he had served the local church in many areas including membership on the Administrative Board and the Board of Trustees and teaching Sunday School. He also served on the General Committee for Race and Religion for eight years, held state offices, and attended conferences as a delegate. He served on the Board of Trustees at John Brown University for 24 years and has been a Trustee Emeriti for 19 years. He was preceded in death by his first wife Frances. Survivors include his wife Patricia Ann Huskins; two sons, James C. Huskins of Siloam Springs, Arkansas; and Dr. John A. Huskins and wife Beth of Rogers, Arkansas; two daughters, Mary Ann Guinn and her husband Gary of Siloam Springs; Lynne Whitehead and her husband Steve of Pittsburg, Texas; one stepdaughter, Sandy Shrum and her husband Dale of Springfield, Oregon; one stepson, Doug Phillips of Siloam Springs; 7 grandsons and 5 granddaughters. Memorial services for Dr. Huskins will be Saturday, August 28, at 2:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church with Dr. David Bush officiating. In lieu of flowers memorial gifts may be made to First United Methodist Church, Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital, or your favorite charity. Arrangements are under the direction of Wasson Funeral Home, Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

Tribute Wall



“ *James Huskins*

September 19, 2012 at 12:05 PM