



Rev. Shepard Crim

October 7, 1927 - July 14, 2012

he Rev. B. Shepard Crim of Corvallis died of a hemorrhagic stroke on Saturday, July 14, at Corvallis Manor Rehabilitation Center. He was 84. He was born Oct. 7, 1927, in Detroit, Mich., to William Doolittle Crim and Margaret Miller Crim. Shep attended the local schools from kindergarten through his senior year. In high school he participated in football, hockey and track. His senior year, Shep had the highest vault in the state in the pole vault, but instead of going to the state track meet in the spring of 1945, he enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard.

After the war, Shep enrolled at Michigan State University, but stayed for only one semester since, in the postwar surge, his dorm room was a cot in the middle of the gymnasium, along with scores of other veterans. In January 1947, Shep entered the School of Agriculture at Montana State University in Bozeman. There Shep met a pretty coed named JoAnn Peck, and they were married Aug. 26, 1950.

After he graduated with a degree in agriculture, Shep and JoAnn moved to Billings, Mont., where Shep went to work as a salesman for Ford Tractors, covering all of Montana and northern Wyoming.

With few radio stations in that sparsely populated part of the country, Shep had lots of time to think about values in his life. One night in a motel in Miles City, Mont., he picked up the Gideon Bible and began to read.

He remembered a Greyhound bus trip he had taken in November 1947 from Arizona to Michigan. He was awakened at 2 a.m. somewhere in New Mexico

by the thought of becoming a priest. He put that thought out of his mind and went back to sleep.

While traveling for the next couple of years, Shep got in the habit of visiting Episcopal priests and discussing the meaning of the Bible and other theological questions. In September 1955, he enrolled in seminary at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, and moved with his wife and young son to Oakland, Calif. After seminary, Shep decided his calling was in serving rural communities.

He was ordained a priest, moved to Sheridan, Mont., and began serving churches in the area. Always a strong supporter of the armed forces, Shep applied to become a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. In 1961, he was sent to Officer Candidate School in Providence, R.I.; soon the family was moved to Millington, Tenn., and Shep became a chaplain at the naval air station there. A year later, the Navy moved the family to Long Island, N.Y., where Shep was assigned to sea duty out of the Brooklyn Naval Yard. It was during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the ship he was on evacuated many of the family members who were stationed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Shep loved the life at sea, but his knee, which had been operated on in Tennessee, did not. The knee never healed properly, and Shep was given a medical discharge in 1963. The next rural church Shep decided to make their home was in Houghton Lake, Mich. In January 1966, the family moved to Parkesburg, Pa., and a year later moved a few miles down the road to Coatesville.

Civil rights were a major issue of the day and Shep, besides his duties at the Episcopal Church, was appointed the head of a city commission responsible for getting the black and white communities to break down barriers and work together more efficiently. He was proud of the results achieved in bringing the races closer together, especially the integration of the all-white church in Coatesville with an all-black African Episcopal congregation.

By the fall of 1970, the Crims headed west again, to Burns. The Presbyterian church in Burns had no pastor at the time, and in an ecumenical move, Shep

served both the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches in Burns, as well as Episcopal congregations in Lakeview and Summer Lake. In January 1976, the family was on the move again, as the Crims headed to Tulare, Calif.

A year later, Shep decided to move to Phoenix, Ariz., to study to be a hospital chaplain. He soon realized work in a hospital involved lots of paperwork and busywork, and pastoral work was what he enjoyed the most. In January 1978, Shep took three small churches in Louisiana, in Lecompte, Cheneyville (a church that still had bullet marks from the Civil War), and Bunkie.

After four years in Cajun country, it was off to Santa Maria, Calif. Two years later, in 1984, Shep and JoAnn, now empty-nesters, moved to Wamego, Kan. When Shep discovered that the Bishop of Kansas was responsible for the Episcopal Church in Guam and they were looking for a priest, he applied for and got the job. In 1987, Shep and JoAnn were off to Guam for three years in a Pacific paradise.

Thoughts of retirement were being mentioned by 1990 when a house with some acreage was purchased in Philomath. In order to maximize retirement benefits, Shep decided to work three more years, so moved to Independence, Kan. He kept the house in Philomath, and moved back in 1993.

A lifelong gardener, Shep planted a garden whenever and wherever he could. After several years of huge gardens, in 2004 he decided to downsize, and made his final move to Corvallis. He continued having a small garden, and began teaching master gardener classes. Shep enjoyed playing card games, especially with his children and grandchildren. His favorite games were pinochle, cribbage and the family favorite, "Oh, Hell!"

Shep enjoyed sports of all kinds, and was especially fond of following Beaver football. He also particularly enjoyed traveling, especially by train. At one point, Shep and JoAnn took a six-month trip around the country, pulling their travel trailer and visiting the many friends they had made over the years at all the places they had lived.

An active member of Rotary, Shep was always willing and eager to volunteer

for the sake of the community where he resided. He loved to talk to anyone and everyone, and would strike up a conversation with somebody everywhere he went.

Shep is survived by his wife of 61 years, JoAnn; Elwood II, the family dog; and four children, Shep and Sherry (Potter) Crim of Boise, Idaho, David and Claudia (Crim) Raleigh of Corvallis, Andy Crim and Beth Steven of Newhall, Calif., and Lonnie and Betsy (Crim) Jones of Eugene; and eight grandchildren, Dusty, Brandon, Zac, and Tyson Crim, Seth, Bobby and Nathan Raleigh, and Kaylei Jones.

Shep is survived by three siblings, William Doolittle Crim Jr. of Saline, Mich., John Winthrop Crim of Augusta, Ga., and Margaret "Peggy" Barry of Rindge, N.H.

A visitation is set for 4 to 6 p.m. Monday, Aug. 6, at McHenry Funeral Home in Corvallis. A funeral service will take place at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 7, at the Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, 333 N.W. 35th St. in Corvallis. After a short luncheon at the church after the service, interment with military honors will follow at Mount Union Cemetery in Philomath.

In honor of Shep's favorite color, the family is asking people to wear red to the service.

The family requests any gift be made in the form of a donation to the Samaritan Village Transportation Fund for a New Bus, 285 N.W. 35th St., Corvallis, OR 97330. Shep was the chaplain at Samaritan Village for many years.

As Henry Clay said, "Of all the properties which belong to honorable men, not one is so highly prized as that of character." Anyone who knew Shep knows he was definitely a character!