

Dr. Jeffrey R. Westheimer, D.V.M. 1950-2018



A great benefit of this business and hobby are the people you meet. Some of the relationships that you build will become very strong and endure the test of time. Such was my relationship with Jeff.

I was introduced to him over 20 years ago by Richard Friedberg, at the Plymouth Stamp Show, then held in Plymouth, Michigan. Jeff started as a literature buyer and gradually moved to essays and proofs, and eventually Civil War patriotics and postal history. On Saturday night, the three of us, along with Jeff's traveling buddy, Tom Nichols would have dinner together. Jeff and Tom would then come to Chicagopex, in November, and the four of us would be joined by Ray Koch for dinner on Saturday night. This tradition of the "five amigos" would last for over 15 years. Both Tom and Ray had passed by the time of our final dinner together this past November.

The devastating blow came in mid-February when I learned that Jeff had been diagnosed with late stage pancreatic cancer. On Saturday night, March 18th he passed.

Over the years, Melanie and I would travel to Manistee, Michigan each fall to spend the weekend with Jeff and his wife, Judy, at their home. There we were introduced to glass yard art, which today graces our yard as well, a great reminder of him.

Jeff graduated in 1972, earning his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Michigan State University. He married Judy later that year, and in 1974 founded his veterinary practice in Manistee, Michigan. For 46 years he cared for animals both large and small and built a practice based on giving back to the community. Day or night, no one was ever turned away. In kind payment was always acceptable. He was instrumental in building the 4-H program in his county and would not be out bid for the grand prize lamb at the county fair. Realizing several years ago, that there were pets whose owners could no longer feed, he started Hearts for Critters. This program raised money to create a pet food bank. On any given month they are able to provide 20,000 pounds of food for his "critters." Each year he would kick off the fundraising cycle by doing a polar plunge into Lake Michigan dressed in a superman costume.

Wherever we would go for dinner, everyone knew Doc Westheimer and many people would stop by our table to share stories. He was so loved and was so proud of his community. He enjoyed taking us to the four corners of Manistee county.

Jeff was a true stand up guy, just focused on making life better for those whom he touched. A man of honesty and integrity, who he loved his wife, Judy, his children, Jamie and Melinda, and his grandchildren, all a central focus of his life.

Godspeed my friend, I am honored to have known you, for you so enriched our lives.

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This endorsement is not one of those that tells you about the vast number of services and benefits offered by the largest of all national societies for stamp collectors in America. Many of you are, of course, already members—but we know that a sizable number of you may not have considered joining. I sure hope you do consider it. It's very much the key to enjoying philately to the fullest!

What I have to say about the APS is brief and concise and goes way beyond telling you what you get for the \$45 annual dues that I consider one of the key bargains in our hobby. It's simply this:

When you are a member of the American **Philatelic Society** you are part of the greatest social medium ever conceived for the philatelist. See for yourself at www.stamps.org (where you'll find a membership app) What's more, I'd be very pleased to propose you for membership, too! Just email me at jim@jameslee.com/

