

2009 Dr. Daniel Cheney

Dr. Daniel Cheney graduated in 1955 from Elida High School as class valedictorian. He was active in sports and extra-curricular activities and a member of the Ethan Allen Honor Society. Active in the Boy Scouts he attained the Eagle Scout rank as well as the God and Country Award. Dr. Cheney received his undergraduate training and the Doctor of Dentistry degree from The Ohio State University in 1961. At OSU, he was a 3-year letterman in lacrosse, was senior co-captain and an All-American. The recipient entered the Army, interned at Madigan General Hospital and then served 3 years in a field hospital in Northern Italy. Cheney then began his surgery residency at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Georgetown University.

In 1966, Dr. Cheney felt compelled to interrupt his surgical training and deployed to Vietnam. There he joined the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, the "Screaming Eagles", an elite unit with a proud history. He first served as the Brigade Dental Surgeon for a unit of 6,000 to 8,000 men. After six months he was promoted to Major and later assumed command of the medical clearing company, something unique as he, at that time, was the only dentist to command a medical company during the war. He was also one of the few dental officers to qualify as a paratrooper. Dr. Cheney's awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Combat Medical Badge, the Bronze Star, the Air Medal and The Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters. He has numerous unit citations including the Presidential Unit Citation, the Meritorious Unit Citation and the Valorous Unit Citation. He is also a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff School.

In 1967, Cheney resumed his oral surgery residency completing training at Fitzsimon Army Hospital in Denver. He then returned to Madigan Hospital as Chief of the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Service.

It was as a young Army officer during the Vietnam War that Dr. Cheney first experienced the satisfaction of participating in outreach programs. The spirit of volunteerism was alive and well. His medical clearing company supported a leper colony in the area of the Central Highlands with supplies and treatment; and his dental unit provided care to the indigenous Montagnard people of the region. From that time on, Dr. Cheney involved himself in service to others. He became a leading member of teams that visited Mam Indians in remote areas of Guatemala to meet urgent medical and oral surgery needs. Performing work among the Mams was difficult as the villages were often situated in hazardous nooks in the mountains requiring teams to move portable equipment up and down steep narrow trails. Potable water and electricity were often not available and facilities were usually dusty, cramped and poorly lit. Dr. Cheney has severe crippling ankylosing spondylitis and has many joint replacements, which made his contribution to this effort even more amazing. Dr. Cheney and his team

continued this work, making 9 trips in an 11-year period.

In 1972, our recipient resigned his regular Army Commission and moved to Bellingham, Washington, to begin private practice. He maintained a full office, clinic and hospital practice and served as a Clinical Professor at the University Of Washington School Of Dentistry. He remained in the Army Reserve and was later promoted to the grade of Colonel.

Dr. Cheney served two terms as president of the Whatcom Family YMCA and chaired the long range planning that played a key role in raising \$2.0 million in a capital development program. A 28-year member of the Rotary Club of Bellingham, Dr. Cheney has served as their president and was the recipient of their Annual Community Service Award in 1993 and the Paul Harris Fellowship in 1992.

Our recipient served the Whatcom County Chapter American Red Cross for many years on the Board of Directors and as Chapter Chairman. Other civic organizations include the United Way of Whatcom County Board of Directors, the Bellingham Festival of Music Board of Directors, and Mt. Baker Theatre Board of Directors. The State Dental Association named him Washington State Citizen of the Year in 1997. He received the Annual Community Service Award of Interfaith coalition (Ecumenical, Inter-denominational) in 1992; and the Michael K. Mischaikow Rotary International Service Award in 2002-2003.

Dr. Cheney is a fellow of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, Western Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, the American College of Dentists and the Academy of Dentistry International. He is a past president of the Mt. Baker District Dental Society.

Dr. Cheney resides in Bellingham with his wife Joyce. His daughter, Amy is attending Medical School at the University of Washington. His son Chris resides in Oregon.