

A Patient at Shriners Since 1945, Bob Phillips Is Yet Our Ambassador

Bob Phillips was born in Warsaw, IN, with two broken femurs, a fractured left humerus and numerous rib bones. Doctors diagnosed his condition as Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI)--brittle bone disease. During his first two years of life, he was examined by several doctors at hospitals throughout Indiana. His family was told that their son's mobility would be restricted to a wheelchair. But, with the help of Mizpah Noble Henry Curdes, Phillips was admitted to SHC - Chicago in 1945, at the age of two-and-a-half (photo, right).



Over the next 13 years, Dr. Harold A. Sofield, Chicago Shriners Hospital Chief Surgeon, performed 10 major rodding operations on Phillips. This operation, known as the "shish-ka-bob" technique, was developed by Dr. Sofield. For each operation Bob was required to be hospitalized three to four weeks, and had outpatient clinic visits twice a year. The result was complete mobility!



At our Chicago hospital, he continued his elementary education at the hospital classroom and participated in our Boy Scout program, earning the rank of Eagle Scout. A multi-talented young man, he played his saxophone during the 1955 Chicago Imperial Session hospital visitation. Introduced to Dr. Edward Millar, who assisted in caring for him, the two men maintained their friendship over the years (photo, left). Bob says "With the assistance of Shriners, I always had a team of qualified doctors interested in helping me overcome this condition."

A Mason-Medinah Shriner since the 1960s, Brother Bob was employed as the Director of Temple Accounting at Shriners International, Tampa, FL, on April 16, 1987. Currently he is a 53-year Mason and 48-year Shriner.

Bob retired from Shriners International October 1, 2009, and he and Lady Linda moved to Delray Beach, FL to be near sons, Matt and Marc. His employment not only included accounting duties, but also allowed him to be a patient ambassador at 22 Imperial Sessions, as well as a banquet speaker at 16 Shrine High School All-Stars football games. Brother Bob maintains his connection with Shriners.

Today Bob keeps active as an associate member of Amara Shriners, Palm Beach Garden, FL, as secretary of the Boca Raton Shrine Club, and as consultant with US temples seeking accounting and tax return reporting advice.

We were pleased to welcome Brother Bob to the Annual Sofield Day here at SHC - Chicago on November 11, where he was a featured guest, speaking on "There is life after the shish-ka-bob procedure."



Our resident OI specialist, Dr. Peter Smith, reports, "Bob began our lecture day in honor of Dr. Sofield by reminiscing about his relationship with that great man. Both patient and doctor were equally delighted with the results of the newly-invented rodding surgery and set about together popularizing it through articles and seminars. Starting when Bob was a precocious child, he continues that spirit today and our audience enjoyed his stories of being cared for by Dr. Sofield. His explanation of the history of OI care included a display of his personal collection of removed rods." As a patient and an ambassador, Bob Phillips brings great honor to SHC – Chicago, and we are so very proud of him and his accomplishments!

