

Dr. John McCollister

1935 - 2019



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ABOUT

[Bethune-Cookman University](#)

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John McCollister Obituary

Dr. John McCollister
December 19, 2019

Dr. John McCollister, a resident of Las Vegas, died on December 19, 2019, following almost eight and a half decades of living life with gusto. Born in 1935 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he became a life-long fan of baseball and the Pittsburgh Pirates. In fact, he attended a try-out camp with hopes of making the team as a pitcher but was eventually cut, in his words, "because of a few bad breaks and an amazing lack of talent." He earned his BA in history from Capital University and his M. Div. at Trinity Lutheran Seminary. He then pastored Lutheran congregations in Freeland and Lansing, Michigan. He completed his studies for a Ph.D. in communications from Michigan State University.

He was married for nearly 50 years to his college sweetheart, Beverly, who passed away from cancer in 2010. Together, they built a wonderful life together with many adventures. Resulting from this union are three children, Beth (Steve) Armogida, Amy (Bryan) McDaniel, Mike (Debbie) McCollister, and three grandchildren, Olivia (Brent) Picard, Audra Irvine and Canon McDaniel. Later, he married his best friend, Sarah Katherine, who became and remained the love and inspiration of his life. As a private pilot he enjoyed taking cross-country trips in his single-engine plane. Dr. McCollister received several honors in his life. In 1982 he was invited to deliver the official Lincoln Day Address in Washington, D.C. On several occasions he was asked to sing the national anthem prior to Major League Baseball games in Detroit and Minneapolis. His prayer - "A Baseball Invocation" - was placed on display in Baseball's Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York. Three interests later consumed his attention: the law, teaching and writing. In 1974 he was appointed as an arbitrator for the federal government and the State of Florida during which time he conducted more than 700 hearings. His teaching assignments included professorships at Olivet College, Bethune-Cookman College and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Dr. McCollister earned a national reputation through his writing of books and articles. For several years he was a regular contributor to The Saturday Evening Post plus a variety of regional magazines and newspapers. His 25 published books included The Baseball Book of Why, The Bucs! The Story of the Pittsburgh Pirates, The Tigers and Their Dens, The Christian Book of Why, Writing for Dollars, and God and the Oval Office. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be sent to the Pittsburgh Pirates Alumni Association or to the church of choice.

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