

David Schaffer, CHOP Ophthalmology

DECEMBER 4, 2018 | **VOL 65 ISSUE 15 ([HTTPS://ALMANAC.UPENN.EDU/VOLUME-65-NUMBER-15](https://almanac.upenn.edu/volume-65-number-15))** | **DEATHS** | **PRINT**

David B. (“Dave”) Schaffer, emeritus professor of ophthalmology at CHOP, died on November 4. He was 81.

A lifelong educator and scientist, Dr. Schaffer taught comparative anatomy during his senior year at Brown, and he then went on to graduate from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He was still in his residency in 1967 when Dr. Harold G. Scheie named him the first director of pediatric ophthalmology at CHOP, and he remained its department chair until his retirement. He spent his career practicing clinical pediatric ophthalmology, teaching, and training residents and fellows. He earned emeritus status in 1999.

Working with Dr. Scheie, he was responsible for investigating and publishing a landmark study on the relationship of maternal rubella infection and congenital cataract formation. He also published extensively on other clinical topics, including retinopathy of prematurity and ophthalmic manifestations of systemic diseases. Dr. Schaffer was a member of the executive and editorial committees of the Multicenter Trial of Cryotherapy for Retinopathy of Prematurity (CRYO-ROP) study. The committee’s research led to the reduction of blindness in premature babies by 50%. Dr. Schaffer was also a medical (as well as wildlife and nature) photographer, co-authoring textbooks that included his medical photos. Dr. Schaffer donated his remains to medical science, enabling students at University of Pennsylvania’s Perelman School of Medicine to advance their education.

After retiring, Dr. Schaffer volunteered at The Philadelphia Zoo, serving as president of its Docent Council 2014-2016. There, he met his wife, a fellow volunteer, Sandy Kuritzky. They were married in its PECO Primate Reserve in 2002.

In addition to his wife, Dr. Schaffer is survived by his brother, Lewis; and his son and daughter from his first marriage, Edward and Nicole. A Memorial Service will be held at a later date.