

## MURRAY WHITFIELD COULTER

### Obituary

Dr. Murray Whitfield Coulter, recently of Katy Texas, passed away on July 4, 2025 in Houston, Texas of complications from kidney and heart disease, having humbly led an accomplished life, seeking little recognition for his leadership and extensive contributions.

Murray was born on May 2, 1932 in El Dorado, Arkansas to Mr. Edward Herbert and Mrs. Estella (Prothro) Coulter. He then grew up in Little Rock, spending much cherished summers working and playing with his older brother George on their grandparents' nearby farm near Ferndale on the Little Maumelle River. After graduation from Little Rock High School (renamed Central High School), he went on to earn his AA from the University of Arkansas, Little Rock (then Little Rock Junior College), BS from Emory University, MS from the University of Arizona, and ultimately, his PhD in Biochemistry and Microbiology from UCLA.

Murray Coulter first met Ingrid Glaesser when he was her lab instructor at the University of Arizona. Good fortune introduced them again a few years later at the wedding of one of his cousins to her best friend. After that, Murray and Ingrid never parted until his passing, as he said Ingrid was the best thing that ever happened to him. They married in 1959 and began building their family as he also continued to pursue his career and personal interests.

After serving as a research fellow at the University of Arizona, an assistant professor at California State University Northridge, and a research scientist working under Nobel prize laureate Willard Libby at UCLA, Dr. Coulter went on to a long tenured position on the faculty of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, ultimately serving as interim Chair and Professor Emeritus of the Department of Biological Sciences. During those productive years, Dr. Coulter also consulted for American Aviation in Burbank, California, and for the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization in New Delhi, India. He was named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a member of the American Society Plant Physiologists, the Indian Society of Plant Physiologists, and the Genetics Society of America.

Throughout his life, Dr. Coulter enjoyed being active. A high school wrestler and swimmer, he also played French horn in the band and orchestra, and was first chair in the all-state band. Despite a near-fatal head injury suffered as college football player, he went on to be a coach and member UALR swim team, an Arkansas state record holder in swimming, and later, a state-ranked tennis player in Texas. Even after outlasting his knees, shoulders and a hip, he regularly played pickleball and practiced Tai Chi into his '90s.

An Eagle Scout, Dr. Coulter was deeply committed to volunteering in his community. He served for more than three decades as an election judge in Lubbock, and at various times served as President of the Texas Tech faculty senate, President of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Lubbock, State Vice President of the Texas Association of College Teachers, and still found time to volunteer and be involved as an AAU swimming official, and with his sons' sports and Scouting activities.

Dr. Coulter was especially dedicated to volunteering in support of the growth of the sport of tennis. He served as President of the South Plains Tennis Foundation, President of the United States Tennis Association-Texas Section (1997-1999), and member of the USTA Executive Committee. A long-time member of the USTA-Texas Management Committee, and Lifetime Board member, he resigned shortly after his 93rd birthday. Recognized for many of his contributions in tennis, he was a recipient of the USTA Texas Section's W.T. Caswell Service award and was twice a recipient of the South Plains Tennis Association's Houston Boyd award.

Dr. Coulter is survived by his wife of 65 years, Ingrid Coulter, his sons Keith (Lee Ann) of Houston, Kenneth of Manhattan Beach, CA, grandchildren Suzanne Anderson (Scott), Brennan Coulter (Julia Bates), Katherine Coulter, Margaret Coulter, and Cameron Coulter, and many cherished extended family members.

Dr. Coulter is preceded in death by his parents, his half-brother Edward Jr., his half-sister Katherine Stanick, and his brother George.

Dr. Coulter's life can be honored with memorial contributions to the USTA-Texas Tennis Foundation.