

IN MEMORIAM



M. LEE PEARCE, M.D., J.D.

December 22, 1930 - October 12, 2017

Entrepreneur and business executive, owner of hospitals and banks, philanthropist and classical music patron as well as an expert wine connoisseur, M. Lee Pearce passed away peacefully on October 12, 2017 at his home on La Gorce Island, Miami Beach, Florida.

Lee Pearce was born in Philadelphia on December 22, 1930. He received his medical degree from Hahnemann Medical College in 1955, and immediately following graduation, moved to Miami. After practicing medicine for several years, he attended and graduated from the University of Miami's School of Law.

Dr. Pearce was well-known for his financial and business acumen as well as for his diverse interests. Over the years, he built and owned hospitals and medical facilities as well as banks and real estate. He was perhaps best known for his well-publicized and successful Southeast Bank proxy battle against corporate measures designed to protect incumbent management at the expense of shareholders.

The Wall Street Journal once described Dr. Pearce as "a tough and savvy investor" and as a "reserved figure who looks as if he were born in a gray three-piece suit." That quip captured Dr. Pearce's strong adherence to tradition and to the values he learned from his father, which he described as "Pop's rules."

Dr. Pearce's directorships, trusteeships and consultancies were numerous as were his roles as president or chairman of various corporations, associations, and societies with which he was involved. A few examples are: American Hospital Management Corp., American Medical International, Inc., American Hospital of Miami, Inc., AmeriFirst Bank of Miami, General Health, LP, and North Ridge General Hospital, Inc. of Fort Lauderdale. In 1990, he became the founder and owner of Bank of North America in Fort Lauderdale.

He served as a consultant to the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research and to Mayo Clinic Ventures in Rochester, Minnesota; as a member of the Board of Fellows of the Harvard Medical School; as emeritus member of the board of trustees for the University of Miami; and as an honorary director for the Mariinsky Foundation of America and The Metropolitan Opera.

In 1984, he established The Dr. M. Lee Pearce Foundation, Inc. which has contributed to many organizations including The Metropolitan Opera, University of Miami, the Mayo Clinic, Tufts University, Colburn School, and the Mariinsky Foundation of America.

In 2007, Ft. Lauderdale's Holy Cross Hospital "announced receipt of a \$20 million charitable gift from visionary philanthropist and medical pioneer M. Lee Pearce, M.D., J.D., to assist Holy Cross in the establishment of a comprehensive off-campus ambulatory/outpatient services center close to the hospital."

Dr. Pearce also endowed a chair in Middle East Studies at the University of Miami and supported the University's School of Music with endowments for the opera, orchestra, and string programs.

He attended musical performances annually around the world including in New York, Bayreuth, Germany and Salzburg, Austria, but he particularly cherished his time traveling across Russia on the train with Maestro Valery Gergiev and his orchestra during the annual Moscow Easter Festival.

Dr. Pearce owned homes in Miami Beach, New York, and Cashiers, North Carolina, but during the past several years particularly enjoyed spending time near Caldas, the coffee-growing region of Colombia.

A celebration of life will take place at Domaine de la Paix et de l'Amour, Dr. Pearce's beloved park, with details forthcoming.