

## **Dr. William Coy – 1922-2010**

ROTONDA — When it came to building a community consensus — even about the most controversial of issues — Bill Coy left his mark in Rotonda, Englewood and the surrounding area.

Coy, 88, died Thursday of pneumonia, resulting from complications of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. His wife of 40 years, Barbara, said up until the last few years Coy never was sick and remained active. Memorial services will be announced at a future date.

Community and consensus building were central to his belief that “the real voices of the people” should be heard by county commissioners and other officials.

A short list of his involvement included regularly attending Charlotte County Commission meetings; serving on county advisory boards — the Board of Zoning Appeals, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Charlotte Assembly and the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee; and serving as a founding member of regional associations, such as the Lemon Bay League. He also had been a long-standing leader in the Rotonda West Association and the Charlotte County Civic Association, an umbrella group of 28 homeowner organizations.

He also served on the Englewood Community Hospital board and the Englewood Interagency Council, a bicounty board focused on health and human services issues.

In 2009, Coy told the Sun, “You can influence the direction the counties and region are going if you get enough of the right people to talk about the issues and solutions.”

Community statesman

Englewood Community Hospital CEO Mary Conroy described Coy as providing “servant leadership” to the hospital and community at large.

“He tended to the community like it was his family,” Conroy said, recalling that Coy introduced her to people throughout Englewood when she first arrived two years ago. “Bill’s passion for this community was unequalled, will be unequalled. He was a knowledgeable, kind and caring elder statesman in this area.”

Whether he was serving on the Charlotte County School Board or as a Charlotte County commissioner, Mac Horton said Coy was someone he often called upon for advice.

“He was faithful to his calling right to the end,” Horton said.

Long before he sought an elected seat, Charlotte County Commissioner Dick Loftus and Coy served on several advisory boards, met at various civic meetings and sat in the audience through many a commission meeting together.

“He was an outstanding man, an honorable man with impeccable integrity,” Loftus said. “He was positive all the time and dedicated to the community.”

When he died Thursday, his wife Barbara said she immediately thought of a fitting epitaph: “The meeting is adjourned.”

#### Yankee transplant

The Coys started visiting Rotonda in the 1970s. The couple bought their Rotonda West home in 1985, and moved permanently to the area in 1990. Like many Rotonda West residents, his love of golf first attracted Coy to the area. Although he played four or five times a week and in tournaments, it wasn't enough. While he was involved in his local Rotary Club chapter in Vermont, his civic activism grew after the couple moved to Rotonda West.

Born and raised in Boston, Coy built a successful dental practice, first in Massachusetts from 1951 to 1970, then a teaching practice in Vermont from 1970 to 1990. Among his professional accomplishments, Coy taught prosthetic dentistry as a clinical professor at Harvard and Tufts universities.

His only child, June, from a prior marriage, was born in 1947, but died in her late 20s. He credited his wife Barbara with helping him overcome his grief.

Coy encouraged Barbara's artistic pursuits, including building the mats and frames for her paintings. She said he was more than a husband — he was her life partner, a soul mate.

Besides Barbara, Coy is survived by his sister, Janice Donovan of Boulder, Colo.; his sister-in-law Marilyn Paul of Henniker, N.H.; and several nephews and nieces.