

## **Obituary-Leonard E. Gibbs**

Leonard E. “Len” Gibbs, 64, of Eau Claire, Professor Emeritus of Social Work, at the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire, died on Friday, June 13, 2008, after a courageous three-year battle with metastatic prostate cancer. Len, a nationally recognized expert in the field of evidence-based practice, was a Professor of Social Work at UW-Eau Claire from 1977 to 2005, and at the University of Wisconsin Madison from 1976-77. He received Bachelor of Science, MSSW and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. Len received the Excellence in Scholarship Award from UW-Eau Claire in 1992. He served for four years in the United States Air Force between 1968 and 1972, first at Wilford Hall Hospital in San Antonio, Texas and then as head of mental health services at Lajes Air Force Base on Terceira in the Portuguese Azores.

Active with the Eau Claire Squadron of the Wisconsin Civil Air Patrol from 1990 to 2008, Len served as a Mission Pilot and as Safety Officer. He was also active with Troop 88 of the Chippewa Valley Council of Boy Scouts during the past decade. Len remained athletic throughout his life and completed 27 American Birkebeiner Cross Country Ski Races.

Over the course of his career, Len published three books and numerous journal articles describing ways to integrate scientific reasoning into how helping professionals can make better life-affecting judgments and decisions. After his diagnosis with metastatic prostate cancer, Len spoke widely, both nationally and internationally, about how members of the helping professions can apply principles of evidence-based practice to more effectively serve their clients. He collaborated with his wife, Betsy, and with Dr. Eamon Armstrong, a physician, to create the following website for those individuals who want to apply evidence-based practice to assist their helping professionals to use the best available evidence regarding their own diagnosis and treatment: <http://www.uwec.edu/lgibbs/index.htm>. Len also collaborated with the Knowledge and Encounter Research Group at the Mayo Clinic this spring to develop a proposal titled, “Prostate Choice: Patient risk and participation in decision-making in prostate cancer diagnosis” which is designed to help men, working as partners with their physicians, to make more informed decisions about prostate screening, diagnosis and treatment.

Born in Wilmington, North Carolina on September 3, 1943, Len was the son of Albert and Odelia (Paulson) Gibbs. Len married Mary E. “Betsy” McDougall on July 9, 1988, in St. Paul, MN.

Len is survived by his wife, Betsy; two sons, Martin (Dori) Gibbs of Rochester, MN and Jeff Gibbs of Eau Claire; his grandson, Aidan Thomas Gibbs of Rochester, MN; two sisters, Tanasi Baldet of Boca Raton, FL, and Sheri Gibbs of Sturgeon Bay, WI; uncle, Harry Boehler of Brookfield, WI; father-in-law and mother-in-law, James and Yvonne McDougall of Minnetonka, MN; brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 21, 2008, at Christ Church Cathedral, Eau Claire with The Very Rev'd Robert L. Rademaker officiating. Burial with military honors will be at Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis. Visitation will be

from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday at Christ Church Cathedral, 510 S. Farwell St. with a time of sharing and reflection at 6:30 p.m. Lenmark Gomsrud Linn Funeral & Cremation Services is serving his family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Scientific Reasoning Scholarship fund to be given to the Methods of Social Work Research student or students who score highest in overall points in the class. These contributions can be sent to Scientific Reasoning Fund, Account #397 that is kept by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Foundation, Schofield Hall, Room 214, P.O. Box 4004, University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004. Donations can also be made to the CaringBridge Website at [www.caringbridge.org](http://www.caringbridge.org) or by mail to CaringBridge, 1995 Rahn Cliff Court, Suite 200 Eagan, MN 55122, and the Chippewa Valley Council of Boy Scouts, 710 S. Hastings Way, Eau Claire, WI 54701.