

## SOCIETY NEWS

### OBITUARY

*Seeing that death, a necessary end,  
Will come when it will come*

*William Shakespeare : Julius Caesar*

#### **Professor Wolfgang Draf, M.D.      November 29, 1940 – October 24, 2011**

On Monday, October 24 2011, Professor Wolfgang Draf passed away, finally losing his long fight against cancer, just a month before his 71st birthday.

Born on November 29, 1940 in Bonn, Germany, he studied Medicine and in 1971, received his degree as Specialist in Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, Head and Neck Surgery. In 1975 he became Professor and Deputy Head of the Mainz University ORL-H&NS Department and in 1979 he was appointed Director of the Department of ORL-H&N and Plastic Facial Surgery at Fulda, Germany, which was to become his home base until his retirement in 2005. Even following his retirement, Wolfgang continued to be very active as a surgeon at the Hannover International Neuroscience Institute as well as continuing as a teacher and much sought after lecturer at countless conferences, workshops and courses worldwide.

Though best known for his microscope-based approaches to the sinuses and skull base, Professor Draf was a true “all-rounder”, equally active and talented in otology and head and neck surgery. His interest in the nose and sinuses started early in his career. He was actually one of the first to publish on endoscopy of the maxillary sinus as early as 1975. His endonasal techniques to drain the frontal sinuses have become a mainstay of our surgical armamentarium over the last 20 years, and will be passed on to the next generation as the Draf I – III “drill-out” procedures.

His achievements were not limited to surgery though this is not the place to list his numerous publications, skull base “firsts”, invited lectures and honorary degrees. He will be remembered as an icon during his own lifetime; an icon however, who would always be ready to listen to others, discuss and advise, not being reluctant to change his opinion, when other ideas appeared more plausible. His critique was always an open one, never on a personal level. We are indebted to him for his fairness and encouragement that he extended to so many of the rhinologic community.

It is with sadness and deep regret that we mourn the loss of a pioneer in our speciality, a great teacher, a tireless supporter of young clinicians and scientists, an exceptional personality with a great sense of humour – and above all, a very close and dear friend.

*Heinz Stammberger*  
Graz, November 2011

