



# In Memoriam

**CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL PALMER**

**1946 - 2024**



<https://www.citizen.co.za/benoni-city-times/news-headlines/local-news/2024/05/10/benoni-vet-dr-chris-palmer-dies/>

Chris was born in Krugersdorp in 1946. In 1963, his family relocated to Benoni and in that year he matriculated at the age of 16 from St Stithian's College in Johannesburg. He started his studies at Pretoria University and then moved to Onderstepoort for his BVSc, qualifying as a veterinarian in 1970.

Chris worked for the Johannesburg Municipality for a year, when he married Margaret Harris and moved to Eikenhof. In January 1972, he opened his own veterinary practice in Vryheid with his wife as his assistant. Two daughters, Sheri-Ann and Mandy Jane and twin sons, Rupert and Gaston were born. Chris bought a plot and built a large animal hospital, as most of his work came from dairy and beef farmers in the surrounding area, and he later opened a branch practice in Dundee.

They moved back to the plot in Benoni in late 1975, taking their imported Pintzgauer stud cattle with them. Chris built offices and a laboratory in 1987 and started his own veterinary pharmaceutical consultancy, Palmvet, and also took on a position with Bayer on their research farm in Kyalami. Chris enjoyed the research and development of new veterinary remedies, and his job put him in touch with many top farmers in South Africa, as well as allowing him, and occasionally his family, several trips to deliver papers and keep in touch with developments on the African continent.

Hoechst Pharmaceuticals contracted Chris to conduct trials, register new veterinary remedies and train their representatives. He was sent to Europe and the USA. After a further six years in the veterinary pharmaceutical industry, Chris opened a veterinary research and registration consultancy, taking on projects from international pharmaceutical companies. As computerisation was developing, he started another enterprise which dealt with hardware and software and specialised in farming software with training. Later, he opened a pharmacy for vet remedies, which involved taking on two pharmacists.

Sadly, Dr Palmer suffered brain damage following a vehicle accident in 1991 and 2004, the family was attacked in their Fairleads home, where their assailants beat Chris over the head with an iron bar. Disabled, he 'retired' and joined Headway, an organisation for brain-injured persons in Johannesburg, and became a founding member of the Benoni 'Brainstorm' group. Brainstorm offered occupational therapy in the form of games, exercises, discussions, occasional outings and visiting speakers and therapists. These sessions become a lifeline for head injury victims, many of whom show amazing progress. He contributed to their newsletters and was encouraged to continue reading, gardening and woodwork. During his lifetime, Chris had many interests – caving, yachting, golf, squash, ice hockey, speed skating, photography, journalism, vintage cars, as well as his cattle and tunnel farming, producing first cucumbers and then Ogen melons for the London market.

Chris Palmer died on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 after a long battle with cancer. He will be sadly missed by his family in Benoni and abroad, by the members of Brainstormers and the Bredell Catholic community, as well as his veterinary colleagues.

*Sources:*

*Benoni City Times, Austin Markus and Margaret Palmer.*

**We honour and remember the contributions made by our colleagues who recently passed away.**

**SAVA Members:**

**Dr Fritz Zollner: 21/09/1949 – 13/05/2024**

**We honour his contribution to our profession and society in general and pray that his family and loved ones will find the strength to carry them through these times of bereavement.**