But Polk makes no apologies. Surgery “is a serious, big deal and you need to take that seriously,” he said. “Striving to be the best you can be sometimes means telling people, ‘I think that’s stupid.’”

Collins, 68, held himself to those same high standards as he has helped build a nationally renowned surgery department.

He has written or co-written hundreds of papers and journal articles, dozens of textbook chapters and numerous books, and served as editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Surgery for 18 years.

He pioneered the practice of giving antibiotics within an hour of surgery to stave off infection, which has become commonplace.

And Mcmasters said residents who have risen to Polk’s challenge earn his loyalty, and return it. “Most people are pathologically loyal to Dr. Polk. He stands by his people 100 percent. . . . He’s made my career. While he was firm and strict as a teacher, he also has a very benevolent and loving side.”

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But Polk was mindful of tailoring questions to a resident’s understanding, Mitchell said, and would be hardest on senior residents. Also, many doctors-in-training saw something beneath the harshness—intelligence, skill, compassion even though he had never seen such a fracture.

“He fried him,” Mitchell said of Polk’s response. “He said, ‘Don’t undertake something you’ve never done without backup.’”

“No question about it,” Mitchell said. “He made all of us better doctors because he made us think about what we’re doing.”

FAMILY—AND—HORSES

Nurturing residents and building a department required long hours.

“He was busy and gone a lot,” said his daughter, Susan Polk, 47-year-old second wife, said she understood the long hours and is a workaholic herself. She said Polk would call at their East End home from doctors around the country asking for professional and personal advice—and sees this as a compliment, evidence of the relationships he has built over the years.

Some of Polk’s rare hours outside of work have been focused on his love of horses. He and Richardson together are owner-breeders whose horses have included Mrs. Revere, a four-time stakes winner at Churchill Downs in the mid-1980s for which a stakes race is named.

Richardson sees things in common between surgery and the horse business, such as the reminders, every time a horse gets hurt, of the fragility of life and success. Polk sees common points, too, but noted: “A good horse is better than a good resident. You love them, and they try hard to be the best they can be.”

Polk claims to have mellowed over the years, and links it to his divorce, his remarriage, and the death of Mrs. Revere, whose memory still chokes him up.

He said he also gained new perspective through four major operations, including one for prostate cancer. And he has had to adjust to changing times in medicine; he has been sued for medical malpractice, usually in an administrative capacity, and has had to work within new national rules limiting residents’ working hours to 80 a week.

But current trainees and friends haven’t noticed a mellowing. Cornelia Poston, a third-year medical student, said Polk is diligent for rounds by writing questions on note cards, studying the night before and carrying a book called “Pocket Surgery” inside her white coat.

“You strive for perfection, and he demands that,” said Dr. Bryce Schuster, chief administrative resident. “At times it could be intimidating. But fear is a great motivator.”

Mitchell agreed. “The residents still get sweaty palms,” he said, “but they still stand and deliver and give a straight answer to a straight question.”

To celebrate Polk’s career, colleagues, residents and others have launched a $5 million campaign to rename the department in his honor and secure an endowment for clinical education and research activities.

But his true legacy, colleagues say, may be best symbolized by a picture of a tree in his office, with names of the surgeons he has trained near the many branches.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:59 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 79. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to award a Congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–1124. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Closure of pollock in statistical area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska” received on February 28, 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1125. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Regulation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (Including 3 Regulations):” (CGD05–05–008), (COTP Western Alaska 05–002), (COTP Western Alaska 05–061) ([RIN1625–AA00) received on February 28, 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1126. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Regulation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (Including 3 Regulations):” (CGD05–05–008), (COTP Western Alaska 05–002), (COTP Western Alaska 05–061) ([RIN1625–AA00) received on February 28, 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

March 1, 2005

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HATCH:
S. 476. A bill to authorize the Boy Scouts of America to exchange lands in the State of Utah acquired under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself and Mr. INOUYE):
S. 477. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to include Indian tribes among the entities consulted with respect to activities carried out by the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY:
S. 478. A bill to designate the annex to the E. Barrett Prettyman Federal Building and United States Courthouse located at 333 Constitution Avenue Northwest in the District of Columbia as the “William B. Bryant Annex; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. CANTWELL:
S. 479. A bill to amend title 4 of the United States Code to prohibit a State from imposing a discriminatory tax on income earned within such State by nonresidents of such State; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mr. WARNER):
S. 480. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the...