

J. Schainbaum, researcher

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Julius Schainbaum, 81, of Warminster, a pharmaceutical researcher for Smith Kline & French (now GlaxoSmithKline) who had such compassion for living creatures that he had difficulty killing horseshoe crabs for lab experiments, died Friday at Abington Memorial Hospital of complications of pneumonia.

Mr. Schainbaum developed a patent for medical equipment to improve detection of abnormalities in the size and shape of human cells, most notably for sickle-cell anemia (U.S. Patent 3753109, issued 1973). For more than 28 years, he designed systems and programs for new pharmaceuticals at Smith Kline.

"Even though he did most of his work behind a microscope and knew the purpose was to help people, my father felt bad that horseshoe crabs had to die for research," said his son, Joshua. "The crabs look much like hubcaps to me."



Mr. Schainbaum's compassion did not end when he retired in 1980.

He cared for his wife of 42 years, Sandra Ware Schainbaum, after she became ill with cancer in 1997. She died in 2001.

"He did not talk about his private life, but I discovered he worked for Meals on Wheels and read to several sick friends for years after they had been abandoned by everyone else," his son said. "The most emotional exchange we had was when he gave me a light pat on the arm recently when he was sick. He was a gentle person."

Born in the Bronx in 1927 to Russian immigrants, Mr. Schainbaum skipped a couple of grades, graduated from high school and joined the Army in 1944 when he was 17.

"He was a Jew and wanted to serve his country during World War II," his son said. He was a communications specialist stationed in Adak, Alaska, until being discharged in 1947. Mr. Schainbaum used the GI Bill to earn a bachelor's in engineering from City University of New York and did post-graduate work in biology at the University of Illinois, Cornell University and Dartmouth University.

In addition to his son, Mr. Schainbaum is survived by a daughter, Chavi Singer, and 10 grandchildren. A graveside service was held Monday in Mercy of Truth Cemetery in Pottstown.