



# Dr. Kenneth Lee Walgren

February 28, 1930 - April 29, 2016

Kenneth “Doc” Walgren was born on February 28th, 1930 in Belvidere, IL, to Dr. Roy and Stella Walgren and grew up in Pearl City, IL, a tiny town with a population of 450 and a single stoplight. His father practiced medicine in their home and made frequent house calls for his patients. Ken was the second of four sons born to his parents but became the eldest child upon the death of his older brother, Robert, from a ruptured appendix at the age of 6.

Ken was a very active and talented athlete. He loved basketball and baseball and was named to the all-state basketball team as a high school senior, graduating in 1948. He also became an Eagle Scout, an accomplishment that he spoke about frequently, and lived by many of the Boy Scout principles on a daily basis. Following graduation, Ken was drafted to the Chicago White Cubs baseball team, but his father was not in favor of that idea, so Ken changed courses and was accepted to Beloit College in Wisconsin where he studied chemistry.

Ken was raised during the Great Depression and during this time, his mother’s sister Lillian, her husband and their children, came to live with the Walgren family in Pearl City. In turn, when Ken’s mother, Stella, passed away from what was likely hemolytic anemia when he was 14, he spent a great deal of time with Lillian and her family in Lincoln, Nebraska. The values of being financially conservative and family-focused remained with him throughout his life and he was sure to raise his family in the same way. He was proud of his Scandinavian heritage and carried this with him throughout his life.

After receiving his degree from Beloit in 1952, the Korean War was upon the United States and rather than being drafted, Ken enlisted in the Navy and graduated from one of the first naval Officers’ Candidate Schools. Over the following 3.5 years, he was an officer on the USS Cotton destroyer and traveled twice the world. He loved his time with the Navy, being surrounded by water, and enjoyed sharing his many experiences from his service.

After Ken was discharged, he returned to college and enrolled in the biochemistry program at the University of Wisconsin where he received his Masters’ Degree in 1957, and planned on continuing on to get his Ph.D.; however, his advising professor became ill, and even though he was adamant that he was not going to become a doctor, Ken visited the University of Chicago, met with the medical school admissions team, was accepted and enrolled. He received his M.D. in 1961.

During his 2nd year of medical school, Ken met his future wife Kay Snyder and they were married in 1960 in the University of Chicago University Chapel during his senior year. Upon graduation, Ken and Kay moved to Iowa City, Iowa, where he was first an intern and then an Internal Medicine Resident at the University of Iowa Medical School between 1961-1964. Upon finishing his residency, he remained on the faculty at the University of Iowa Medical

School in Internal Medicine for an additional six years. During this time, Ken was named the “Teacher of the Year” by the medical students, an honor he was proud of.

In 1970, he was recruited to become the Director of Internal Medicine at St. Paul Hospital in Dallas, Texas. By that time, he and his wife had 3 young children and moved into a home in Richardson, Texas where Kay still lives today, 45 years later. After six years, Ken left his administrative position and created his own internal medicine practice and remained on staff at St. Paul Hospital. In 2004, Ken suffered a massive heart attack and then two strokes as he underwent bypass surgery. Severely disabled from the strokes, Ken spent the following three months in the hospital before being released. The loving nuns of St. Paul visited and prayed daily, for his continued healing and with loving care from his family, doctors, nurses, caregivers and friends, he lived on for over 12 years.

Ken was a person with many interests and talents. He loved to read, particularly about the history of the Civil War and anything about Texas, New Mexico, the Southwest and World War II. During his hospital stay, he and other doctors at St. Paul started a book club that continued and grew over the course of his illness. In addition, Ken was an outdoor enthusiast who loved to sail, hunt, fish and hike in the mountains surrounding his beloved Camp Davis in Rociada, New Mexico. He was sure to impart his passion for the wilderness on his children, Judy, Beth and Mark who in turn handed the passion for the outdoors to his grandchildren. He was passionate about fine art and music and loved learning about any and all kinds of businesses. He was supremely devoted to his family, his patients and his friends.

Ken set a good example of how to make the world a better place. He was loved by many and will truly be missed. The consummate physician and gentleman, Ken was loved by his patients and those who knew him. He is survived by his wife, Kay, his children Judy, Beth and Mark, his daughter-in-law Carolyn Ann Walgren and his grandchildren, Sophie, Ellen, Madeleine, Laura and Theo. With special gratitude we thank Hazel Marshall, the Manchester Place and Hospice.

En lieu of flowers, please donate to one of the three following organizations:

THE BRIDGE Homeless Recovery Center: online at <http://bridgenorthtexas.org/give/> or by mail to The Bridge, P.O. Box 710100, Dallas Texas 75371-0100 in Memory of Kenneth L. Walgren, MD.

WEEKEND FOOD Ministry of First United Methodist Church of Grapevine: online at [http://www.firstmethodistgrapevine.org/Content.aspx?site\\_id=10664&content\\_id=254828](http://www.firstmethodistgrapevine.org/Content.aspx?site_id=10664&content_id=254828); or by mail to 422 Church Street, Grapevine, TX 76051.

St. Andrew United Methodist Church: online at <https://secure.accessacs.com/access/oglogin.aspx?sn=94300> (benevolence fund) 5801 W. Plano Pkwy, Plano, Texas 75093

A Celebration of Life will be held on Tuesday, May 3rd, 2016 at St Andrew United Methodist Church, Plano TX at 2:00 PM. Reception at the church following the ceremony.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted into Restland Funeral Home and Memorial Park, 13005 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75243.