Dr. Walter Jay Eldredge

October 9, 1937 ~ July 27, 2013

Dr. Walter Jay Eldredge passed away on July 27, 2013 surrounded by his loved ones. Dr. Eldredge, better known to his family and friends as "Jay" was born on October 9, 1937 in Salt Lake City, Utah; his beloved parents were Walter Joshua and Marjorie Ormsby Hyde Eldredge. He spent his entire youth in Salt Lake City nurturing his mind and spirituality. He appreciated and loved his family and also his ancestry. The Eldredge family was one of the first families to establish Cape Cod in Ma in the early 1600's and a library there still bears the family name. He also descends from early Mormon pioneers who entered the Salt Lake Valley to settle in 1847.

As a young boy, Jay loved spending summertime at his Grandpa and Nana Hyde's gentleman's farm in Farmington, Utah where he and his family, aunts, uncles and cousins would enjoy fried chicken and donuts around the campfire. Jay learned to be a hard worker from his father who often worked on home remodeling projects: Jay would say that his mother would be afraid to leave the house because of what she would find when she got home! His mother appreciated fine art and Jay was instilled with the same love. He learned to play the piano at an early age and also loved to paint. Siblings would say Jay was the "king of the siblings," making each of them pawns in his garage play productions or pioneer parades.

Jay graduated from East High school and served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After returning from his mission to Germany, he studied pre-med at the University of Utah, and was a brother of the Beta House. He received his medical degree from George Washington University in Washington D.C. and completed his residency at the Medical College of Virginia.

Dr. Eldredge chose to become a cardiologist, specializing in pediatric congenital heart disease. He was offered a position with Deborah Heart and Lung Hospital in Browns Mills, NJ. The hospital was known as one of the top research hospitals, and still is considered a leading charitable hospital. Jay held many positions during his 38 years of continuous service with Deborah Hospital. His first love was pediatrics and later he became responsible for the adult congenital heart disease program. He was well-known as a leader in the field using CT imaging as a way of diagnosing heart conditions. Jay authored articles and books and was a highly sought after speaker for medical conferences on the subject. One of the most memorable highlights of his practice came when he traveled with several of his colleagues to Poland after the Solidarity Movement to help children with congenital heart disease. That charitable humanitarian effort, "Children of the World" was a great success. Pope John Paul II invited Dr. Eldredge and his colleagues for a private audience and papal blessing at the Vatican for their outstanding humanitarian efforts. Their efforts were also highlighted on NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw.

After honorably serving his fellowmen his entire adult life, he retired and lived at Harbour Cove South in Somers Point, NJ, "his small oasis of tranquility." He loved the Jersey shore, sharing it with his family and friends. Jay

enjoyed sunset cruises, crabbing, and the bay views from his deck while completing the New York Times crossword puzzle. In addition, he was an avid reader, mostly novels. He was also a long time resident of Medford, NJ, where he played an active role in youth programs. He volunteered his medical services as a team physician for many of the local sports programs, and invited the Boy Scouts to enjoy his backyard pool. He also hosted wonderful dinner parties where the guests all gathered around his piano and had sing-a-longs well into the evening.

Jay will be laid to rest in the family plot in Salt Lake City near his beloved parents. A memorial service will be held at the Deborah Heart and Lung Center Auditorium in New Jersey, date to be determined.

Jay had a saying, "Carpe Diem," and yes he did! He will be loved and missed by all. Jay is survived by his life partner, Bouke "Bob" Sjored Ecoma Verstege and his wonderful four siblings. He has three caring and supportive sisters and their husbands, Heidi and William Vriens, Sharon and Randy Harmsen, Rosemary and David Olsen, all from Salt Lake City, and his brother Brent and wife Cynthia of Sandy, Utah. Jay is also survived by cousins and numerous nieces, nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Deborah Heart and Lung Foundation in Browns Mills, NJ or to the Alzheimer's Association.