

Dr. Kirk Madson Neuberger

November 21, 1937 ~ January 30, 2022

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11/21/1937-1/30/2022.

Our dad, Kirk Neuberger, lost his battle with COVID on January 30 after just two weeks. While devastated at losing our dear father so unexpectedly, we feel some peace knowing that he left this world on his own terms.

Surrounded by his 4 children, he asked for a Diet Coke and then said he should have told us more about his life! But, luckily for us, our dad freely shared stories from his youth and adulthood, and raised us with strength and a quiet confidence. On one of his last days he quoted a song lyric by Moe Bandy that gave him some peace and tranquility. “Let me watch my children grow to see what they become. Oh Lord don’t let that cold wind blow til I’m too old to die young.”

Dr. Neuberger was born in Logan, Utah on November 21, 1937 to L. Mark and Augusta Madson Neuberger. He loved spending time after school at his grandmother’s house because she did all the baking for the famous Bluebird restaurant that still stands today.

Kirk graduated from Logan High school in 1955 and was proudly involved in ROTC. He went on to graduate from Utah State University in 1959 and received his medical degree from the University of Utah in 1963. He talked often about the rigorous coursework entailed and the many late night study sessions with his classmates. He did his surgical residency at the University of Kentucky.

Dr. Neuberger married Marilyn Gregory in 1964. He was then stationed in Augsburg, Germany as a Captain with the Medical Corps of the United States Army. They enjoyed exploring Germany together in his little red sports car. Kirk was a man who took advantage of whatever time he had and made the most of it.

Kirk and Marilyn built a wonderful life which included raising four children together. And although they divorced many years later they remained friends.

Upon returning to Kentucky, Dr. Neuberger finished his internship specializing in thoracic and vascular surgery. Kirk then began the process of finding a place to start his surgical practice. He was sought after by many but eventually chose the small town of Mattoon, Illinois to begin his surgical career. He used to joke and say he drove as far as his savings would take him and ended up in central Illinois!

Mattoon is where Dr. Neuberger made his mark as a calm and fair leader and doctor. He was esteemed by the community and was the first surgeon to perform pace maker procedures in the area. He served several times as chief of surgery and chief of staff and was esteemed by his colleagues. Nurses loved him as he was an advocate for all of their expertise and value they gave to the surgical staff.

Dr. Neuberger did not believe that titles made you better than someone else. He believed that everyone should be treated with respect and kindness. This doesn't mean he didn't share his opinions, but he believed that a good healthy debate was the spice to life. When Dr. Neuberger left Mattoon to move to Utah, his former partner Dr. Zinschlag said 'Kirk will be succeeded, but he won't ever be replaced."

In 1984, Kirk moved his family to St. George, Utah. He still felt young enough to start over with a new practice there. And although it took a bit to break into this small community, it wasn't long before nurses and patients realized his strengths and that his surgical skill was something the area needed. He held many leadership positions in Utah including chief of surgery and president of staff. And was also a member of the Hospital Board of Trustees.

Dr. Neuberger's passion about medicine and saving lives was an inspiration to his son, Jeff, his nephew, Todd and two of his grandsons, Kaden and Marcus. All four of them talk about how our dad helped influence their career path in medicine.

Our Dad loved the outdoors. He taught us how to ski and most Tuesdays and Thursdays could be found at Solitude until just about 7 years ago. Zion National Park was a special place for him and he loved hiking the subway with a park ranger friend picking up garbage along the way. Tennis was a sport he liked to play and loved to watch. Grand slam finals were equivalent to super bowl Sundays in our house!

But, his real first and great love was reading. He read everything from history to politics to religion. He had at least 20 books at a time strewn all over his coffee table and couch with pages flipped down for reference. And, often when we went to visit he had copied an article for us to read. Or made sure we all had the chance to read some of his favorite books such as Michelle Obama's Becoming. He wasn't preachy with his knowledge. But you just knew that he really knew what he was talking about. Luckily many of his grandchildren carry on his love of reading.

It's difficult in a few paragraphs to truly encapsulate everything our dad stood for and all the many things he taught us. We miss him. We miss his willingness to always listen. His willingness to share his knowledge. His unconditional love. And although death is a club we will all join that doesn't make the loneliness and sorrow any easier. His favorite poem is If by Rudyard Kipling. That is how he tried to live. Thank you, dad. You're truly one of a kind.

Kirk is preceded in death by his parents, two brothers and one nephew. He is survived by his four children: Cathy (David) Giles, Amy Neuberger (fiancé Brad Summerhays), Kevin (Angie) Neuberger, Jeff (Kari) Neuberger. 15 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

A graveside service will be held on Saturday, March 19 at 2p at Larkin Sunset Gardens in Sandy, Utah. A celebration of life will follow from 4:30p to 6:30p at his residence in Sandy.

For those wanting to donate to a worthy cause in his name please make donations to DonorConnect. Dr. Neuberger was the recipient of a liver and kidney. And we are continually grateful for the sacrifice those families made so that our father had so many extra years on this earth.