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In Memory of Dr. Leslie Wegener “Dub” Williams

OCTOBER 03RD 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

In Memory of Dr. Leslie Wegener “Dub” Williams

Dr. Leslie Wegener “Dub” Williams was surrounded by his loving family and fortified by his faith, left this world behind and passed on, into the next, on September 29, 2021.

He was born on August 14, 1930, at home, in Raytown, Missouri. He grew up there and in the Hickman Mills area, living across the street from the Harry S. Truman family farm for a time. He enjoyed telling stories about encountering (then Senator) Truman while Dub and his brothers were bailing hay on that land. Dub graduated from Ruskin High School in 1948, representing the Eagles on the gridiron, and serving as class president.

From there, (like his brothers) he went on to attend the University of Missouri. An animal lover from the start, in 1954, Dub earned his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the university. He was a member of Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society of Agriculture and graduated second in his class from veterinary school.

After graduation, Dub conducted chemical research as a Second Lieutenant for the U.S. Army, then worked as a U.S.D.A inspector in Kansas City, while also seeing patients from a start-up veterinary clinic at his home. In the late 1950s, he founded the Hickman Mills Animal Hospital. He soon became known as a trusted and caring veterinarian in the growing area, and simply as “Doc” at the local drugstore lunch counter. He was also an impactful leader in the community. Instrumental in the chartering of Bannister Bank — and other local real estate development — his extensive involvement included (but was certainly not limited to) serving as the president of both the Hickman Mills Chamber of

Commerce and the Democratic Forum, Inc., community liaison for the nearby Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base, and a committee chairman for Consolidated School District #1. He was also a Master Mason (and Shriner) and member of the Lions Club.

After building his successful veterinary practice, Dub earned his certification in veterinary ophthalmology at the University of Florida-Gainesville in the late 70's. He then was appointed as veterinarian for the city of Las Vegas, Nevada. There, he also practiced his specialty — providing vision care for small animals, celebrities' pets, prized horses and police dogs, and even the big cats of "Siegfried & Roy."

Dub finished his career in animal science in Dexter, Missouri, as a veterinary supervisor for the U.S.D.A. He returned to the Kansas City area in 2020 to become a resident of the Brookdale Independent Senior Living Community on 119th Street. He will be remembered there for his kindness, his genteel manners, and tremendous gratitude.

A man of great faith, Dub had been an active member of the Hickman Mills Community Christian Church, and sought out a church community wherever he was living. He enjoyed teaching Sunday school, serving as an elder, participating in prison outreach ministry, and shared the teachings of the Bible up until his very last days.

Yet, for all of his accomplishments, Dub will be remembered most as a great storyteller, an easy charmer, a ready bestower of nicknames, a generous soul, an incredibly hard worker, and a proud and loving father. And even if you had only met him once, you would also think of him as a true friend.

Dub is preceded in death by his parents, Leslie N. and Velma S. Williams; his brother, George P. (and wife Loretta) and Don E. Williams; his daughter, Valerie Simpson; and sons-in-law, Rich Reid and John Kelly. He is survived by his [partner: Bonnie Meritt; (the mother of his children: Lois Williams Swezey): children: Greg Williams (Derri O'Brien), Cheri Kelly, and Renée Hense (Jim): and son-in-law, Chuck Simpson. He will be missed greatly by his grandchildren: Kelsey, Rowan, Linden, Eleanor, Charlie and Anton, as well as his dear and devoted nieces and nephews, and other family members.

Visitation will be held from 11 a.m., with a Celebration of Life to follow at 12:30 p.m., on Monday, October 4, 2021, at First Baptist Church, 100 W. Red Bridge Road, Kansas City, Missouri.

Memorial contributions may be made to the University of Missouri School of Veterinary Medicine.

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