



Richard Lynn Gardner

August 18, 1934 - November 9, 2020

Colonel Richard Lynn Gardner, MD went to be with his Heavenly Father on Monday, November 9, 2020.

Richard was born in Monterey Park, CA on Aug. 18, 1934. When he was a young boy, he moved with his family to rural Colorado, where he and his older brother Bill were responsible for herding the family sheep. After a few years, the family moved back to California and settled in Pasadena, where Richard lived through high school. From early on he developed a strong work ethic. After the ranch in Colorado, he began working at Ralphs grocery in California from the age of about 10 or 11.

During his high school years, Richard played clarinet in school and community bands and marched in the Pasadena Rose parade several times. He fondly remembered ending the parade at the football game and sitting in the band members' reserved seats on the 50-yard line.

He met his future wife Carol Martin at Westmont College where they both sang in the college choir. It was during a Westmont Choir tour that they both traveled to Bellingham and stayed at the Firs Conference Center. That experience would prove to be influential later in life.

The couple were married in 1958 and moved to Houston, TX where Richard

attended Baylor Medical School. At Baylor, he caught the attention of pioneering heart surgeon Dr. Michael DeBakey. As a medical student, Richard assisted DeBakey in surgery and had a part time job working in DeBakey's clinic.

After medical school Richard began active duty in the US Army. Over the next several years, he was stationed at Army bases near Tacoma, WA, San Antonio, TX, Washington, D.C., Frankfurt, Germany, and Monterey, CA, and his growing family moved with him to each of these locations. One notable episode in his army career was seeing former first lady Mamie Eisenhower as a patient and giving her a tour of the hospital in Germany that had been part of her husband's command after World War II.

After leaving active military duty, Richard and his family moved to Bellingham, WA. Richard enjoyed telling the story of how God called him to Bellingham: while on an exploratory trip, he stayed at the Firs Conference Center, and one evening walked down to the shore of Lake Whatcom. There he saw what he described as the most beautiful sunset he'd ever seen in his life and felt an overwhelming sense that this is where God wanted him and his family to be. Their eventual home on Lake Whatcom is only a stone's throw from the location where he saw that first Bellingham sunset on the lake.

Upon settling in Bellingham, Richard opened a private practice as a dermatologist, and he was active in that role until he was in his 70s. He and Carol were members of Geneva Community Church (later Northlake Community Church). He served several terms on the board of elders and also as missions committee chairman. In addition, they served on the Firs Council together. When Carol died in 2010, she and Richard had been married for 52 years.

In 2011, Richard married Margaret Toews. During their nearly nine years of

marriage the couple split their time between Bellingham and Langley, B. C., and Richard enjoyed getting to know a new set of friends and family in British Columbia.

Those who knew Richard remember him as a man who loved the Lord and who was always generous. He supported numerous missionaries and Christian organizations over the years and was faithful to pray for them as well.

He is survived by wife, Margaret, sons David and wife Cheryl, Jonathan (Fr. Martin), Steven and wife Chantel, and grandchildren Carol, Katherine, Annelise, Sarah, Max, and Colt.

Grandad Richard will also be missed by Margaret's Canadian family: Dave & Wenda, Waldon & Erin, Jeff & Natalia and grandchildren Alisha, Ethan, Jenaya, Riley and Mikayla.

Memorial gifts may be made to The Firs or to Missions at Northlake Church in Bellingham.

Tribute Wall

JH

“ *My condolences Margaret. Just having heard of Richard’s passing today, my heart was saddened as I fondly remember our regular catch ups on Sunday mornings. May you find comfort and strength in these challenging covid days to journey through the grief and adaptations that you will encounter. May Christ’s resurrection reality give you firm hope in the strength you need for the present but also for the tomorrows.*

Jim Heuving - November 28, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JK

“ *Dear Margaret Heartfelt condolences in the loss of your husband. We hope that even in this time, you feel the love and support of your Pacific Church family.
Sincerely, Joanne and John Koning*

John and Joanne Koning - November 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM