



Railsplitter Obituary



Dr. Ronald John Darling, Sr.

18 December 1935 — 26 June 2020

“Dr. Ron” Darling passed away peacefully in his sleep on Friday, June 26, 2020, in Tampa, Florida.

Dr. Ron was born on December 18, 1935, in Milwaukee, the eldest child of Dr. Sylvester John Darling and Helen Louise Barnes. While growing up in Fox Point, Dr. Ron attended Fox Point Elementary School and high school at Milwaukee Country Day School. Story has it that he became involved in his high school newspaper so that he could spend all day outside of school drumming up advertisements!

Summers were spent on the water, one of his favorite places to be. Sailing his lightning, Pequod, driving his grandpa’s boat, Victory, and eventually racing on his friend Pete’s boat, Escapade, winning the Mackinac Race in 1967. Over the years, he was captain of two Pequods, the Rascal, Anni B, Yitai, and the Pollo del Mar. And, he was the source of entertainment at all family parties – he was a master at



Railsplitter Obituary

playing the Martin Tiple and always had a new board game to share (Risk was known to have brought out the fiercely competitive side of all family members)!

Dr. Ron graduated from Brown University in 1958 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and in 1962, he obtained his Doctor of Medicine at Marquette University School of Medicine. Dr. Ron also served in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1963 through 1971 with the 452nd General Hospital and Division Surgeon for the 84th Division.

Dr. Ron did his residency in otolaryngology with the Wood Veterans Administration Center and with the Marquette University School of Medicine Affiliated Hospitals and then practiced full time with the Veterans Administration and held the position of Instructor of Surgery at the Marquette University School of Medicine.

In the fall of 1966, Jane Richmond, a new nurse at the Veterans Administration Hospital, caught Dr. Ron's eye. He asked if she would go on a date with him if he picked her up in a boat. She agreed, wondering how he would pull that off. He picked her up in his Amphicar, and they drove to the lakefront and right into Lake Michigan. As they say, "The rest is history!"

Dr. Ron opened his ENT practice at Moreland Ear Nose and Throat Group in Waukesha in October 1968, and proposed to Jane on the same day. They were married on May 10, 1969, and celebrated 51 years of marriage this year. Dr. Ron, his brother, Bill, and good friend, Tom Belson, practiced together at Moreland Ear Nose and Throat Group until Dr. Ron suffered a stroke in 2012. From 2012 forward, Dr. Ron was lovingly and tirelessly cared for by his wife, Jane. They have shared a lifetime of tears, joy, and laughter over the years!

Dr. Ron was a loving husband, devoted father to three children, and a brilliant physician. He was a man who believed his purpose was to make people's lives better, and he found profound joy in that. His patients loved him because he treated them with kindness and respect, and he made everyone happy with his ridiculously bad jokes ("Did you ever hear about the three Wells? Well, well, well...") and silly limericks (Who could forget the story of the Piddling Pup?!?) – all of which made you laugh, but made him laugh the hardest!



Railsplitter Obituary

Dr. Ron was patient, accepting, and kind. He had a predisposition towards happiness and had a passion for good food, travel, and life! Dr. Ron was a source of wisdom and encouragement. He instilled in his family an attitude of understanding and a desire to be the best they could be. He was always willing to shoulder others' suffering and ever-ready to celebrate the best in everyone's lives. Dr. Ron will be forever remembered by family and friends as one of the nicest human beings ever known. He was truly one of a kind – a class act!

Dr. Ron is survived by his wife, Jane; by his children Ron (Erin), Andrea (Javier), and Fritz (Hannah), by his grandchildren Owen and Addy Darling, Arianna, Bella, and Giovanna Cortes, and Cailan and Isla Darling; and, by his brother, Robert Darling. He was preceded in death by his parents, Sylvester and Helen Darling; his siblings, Suzanne MacClurg, William Darling, and Cheri Read; and by his grandson, Oliver Darling.

Because of coronavirus restrictions, a celebration of Dr. Ron's life will be held in Milwaukee at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial gifts to support the Department of Otolaryngology be made in his name at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Attn: Office of Development, 8701 Watertown Plank Road, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0509 or online at www.mcw.edu/giving (please indicate Department of Otolaryngology in the comment section).

(Freeman — July 3, 2020)