



William Kettelkamp MD

December 31, 1932 - October 15, 2021

William E. Kettelkamp, of Marion, Iowa, died peacefully at home on October 15, 2021, at the age of 88. He was educated at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, and the University of Iowa College of Medicine where he earned his MD in 1957.

Born to Dr. Enoch Kettelkamp and Elsie Norden Kettelkamp in Monona, Iowa, he learned the importance of hard work, love of family, responsibility to others, and the drive to make a positive contribution. Between completing his studies at Cornell College and the University of Iowa Medical School he was selected to do research at Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island. Although very rewarding, this experience helped turn his focus to clinical medicine. Bill's career spanned 60 years. For the first part he took great pride in his Family Practice, in which he delivered over 1000 babies. It was during this time, Bill married Hope Nieminen, and six of his seven sons were born. They subsequently divorced. Early in the 1970's he completed a fellowship in Gynecology/Endocrinology at the U of I while he started the Emergency Room at St. Luke's Hospital practicing there for over 25 years. As an ER director he took care of countless patients and oversaw the development of the Area Ambulance Service and the Flight Care Program in this community and with two other ER doctors started a medical clinic at the base of the mountain in Keystone, Colorado. In 1992 he married Joan Upah and a seventh son was born. Bill cherished Joan and his seven sons and made a profound impact on each one. Time spent with family was a great joy to him.

When he retired from ER medicine in 1997, he spent 20 years consulting for Aegon as a part time medical director. Throughout his entire productive career in this community, he fought for the patient. In addition, he was highly respected by his peers for his medical skill and was chosen by them as a leader in many capacities. He was an exceedingly, warm, gentle, and caring doctor always thinking of the patient first. Bill worked hard to keep the cost of medicine affordable when he practiced and worried until the end that everyone should have health care within their reach.

Bill had a great sensitivity; he was interested in social justice and early on supported local

doctors of color in their fight for racial equality in this area. He travelled with one peer to Detroit, Michigan, to meet Julian Bond and establish solidarity with the civil rights movement. But Bill's conscientious desire to help others was with him each day. He never turned down someone who asked for help. He was also an artist. He painted many pastorals, genre and still life images. Some, shown at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, some in local collections, and he loved reading and writing poetry.

Bill is survived by his beloved wife Joan Kettelkamp; cherished sons William (Beth), Robert (Cindy), Peter (Linda), Dr. James (Shellie), Dr. Donald (Dr. Danielle), Dr. Richard (Nikki), and Joseph Kettelkamp; brother Dr. Donald Kettelkamp; 18 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. We his family know he had a deep religious faith. He always believed that God would take care of us.

First Presbyterian Church Cedar Rapids will conduct the funeral on Friday, November 19, 2021, at 11:00 a.m. If you have a story to share, visit murdochfuneralhome.com. In lieu of flowers, please consider a gift to the Community Health Free Clinic of Cedar Rapids or First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Rapids.

Photo by Kerry Helvey

Events

NOV	Funeral Service	11:00AM
19	<hr/>	
	First Presbyterian Church	
	310 5th Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, US, 52403	

Comments



“ Dr. Kettelkamp figures in some of my first and best memories of my journey to be a physician. The summer after my freshman year of medical school he agreed to allow me to shadow the three physicians in St. Luke's ER, a privilege that was both a wonderful learning experience and the beginning of some lifelong friendships with those docs and the staff in the ER. He was a great mentor to me, and became a great friend.

He often asked after my Aunt Jane, with whom he had attended Cornell College (my alma mater as well). And we also talked about my sister's open heart surgery, which occurred at a time when the procedure was infrequent and carried a 50% mortality. It was always a pleasure to see him as a student and then as a practicing family physician in CR, where he always treated me as an equal colleague. I was also impressed with his artistic skill, displayed at some of the doctors' events. He was truly a wonderful doctor, man, and friend.

Though our retirements meant we didn't see much of each other these last few years, I will always remember him fondly and miss the opportunity to run into him.

My condolences on your great loss.

Wendy Buresh, MD

Wendy Buresh, MD - December 01, 2021 at 01:52 PM



“ I was one of many nurses that worked in the ER with Dr Kettelkamp. Every one of the staff nurses, fellow physicians, and ancillary staff had the utmost respect for him. Kettels was always kind to the less fortunate, patient with parents and families no matter the situation, and in control of any situation.

He excelled in so many aspects of his life--from the tennis courts and ski slopes, to the world of art and antiques. He had many acquaintances and former patients that still recognized and spoke with him even in the last few weeks of his life--witnessed this myself. He never met a stranger, or at least, would make them feel like they were not a stranger to him. He was a great listener to all who wanted to talk with him.

The people of Cedar Rapids are lucky that he decided to practice medicine here--I'm sure he has saved countless lives in this community.

Teresa Williams - November 18, 2021 at 11:08 PM



“ When I first came to Cedar Rapids in 1977, I heard of the prowess of "Kettles" on the tennis court. I was invited to a breakfast group and doubles action, which endured until it was only breakfast and memories shared. This endured until the Derecho, when a few of us had, according to Bill, "High Tea" which lasted until the end. I'll always be fond of our shared opinions and of solving the world's problems.

Kevin Nebergall - November 18, 2021 at 10:03 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of William Kettelkamp MD.



November 18, 2021 at 07:36 PM



“ Uncle Bill, like all of the Kettelkamp family, was an impressive figure. Doctor, farmer, equestrian, wrestler, and father to 7 boys, who grew up to be 7 impressive men. (Makes me tired just thinking about it.) In her later years, my mother Mary would sometimes forget herself and call me Bill, mistaking me for her brother. That always made me smile, because if you're going to be mistaken for someone else, it should be someone you admire. We will mourn Uncle Bill's passing, but we will always celebrate his life and legacy.

With love,

Tom & Janet

Tom Shepherd - November 18, 2021 at 10:39 AM



“ Dr. Kettlekamp was not only an excellent physician, loving and caring his leadership was evident in crisis ER patients, state-wide EMS planning, developing an area wide ambulance service. Respected by colleagues, nurses, hospital administrators, and all who knew him. His memories are with the beautiful portrait of Bruce more he gave me. Your excellence in practice was instrumental in my development as a ER nurse. The angels greeted a super human being. Myrt Bowers

Myrt Bowers - November 15, 2021 at 02:59 PM



“ Dr. Kettelkamp delivered my son and was our family Dr. until he left private practice. He was a gentle man and our children loved him. One night at 2 in the morning my 2 year old was suffering from a severe ear ache, he begged me to "please take me to see Dr. Kettlekamp", he thought he walked on water. He was a trusted blessing to us all. My condolences to his family for a huge loss but thank you for sharing him. Joye Winey

Joye Winey - November 15, 2021 at 10:33 AM



“ Starting back in 1978, I started helping Bill's patients in St. Luke's ER. Not only did we care for the Orthopaedic problems but often discussed the general State of Affairs of health care and life in general. We played tennis together and everyone knows how competitive and athletic he was. Later I would speak to him at art and antique shows. A Renaissance Man. It was a gift to be a small part of his life. Fred J. Pilcher MD

Fred J Pilcher - November 14, 2021 at 11:33 AM



“ My heartfelt sympathies go out to Dr. Kettelkamp's family. I think that Bill fundamentally changed the course of my life. He is the guy that got me in to medical school through his advice and advocacy. I was lucky enough to reconnect with him many years later and he has been a constant role model and inspiration. He also continued to be both a coach and a cheerleader every chance that he got. I am where I am today because of Dr. Kettelkamp, and I am very grateful to have known him and to have been able to learn from him. I can only imagine the impact that he has had on countless others in the community. It is a legacy that very few people could ever aspire to.

Chris Buresh - November 12, 2021 at 03:22 AM



“ From Bill's Aegon/Transamerica friends purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of William Kettelkamp MD.



From Bill's Aegon/Transamerica friends - November 11, 2021 at 11:07 AM



“ My late wife worked with Bill for many years at St. Luke's hospital. She often said what a wonderful person he was to work with. I also had some business dealings with Bill and found him to be an overall great guy. He will definitely be missed.
Glen Hankemeier

Gken Hankemeier - November 08, 2021 at 09:56 AM



“ The Kay Hill family extends our deep sympathy to Joan and the whole Kettelkamp family in the death of our dear friend, Dr. Bill. Kay and Bill were the best of buddies for over 56 years. Bill was with us in Iowa City, flew to MD Anderson in Houston with us, and made many visits during Kay's last weeks. We were grateful to have him speak a few words at Kay's funeral. He was a great comfort to all of us with his kind and and gentle ways. He will always have a special place in our hearts.

Shirley Hill, Kim and Marc Frette, Kelly and Kent Allison, and Kris and Cathy Hill.

Shirley Hill - October 30, 2021 at 02:13 PM



“ Cindy and Robert,
So sorry to hear of your loss.
Thoughts and prayers are with you all.
Connie moore

Connie moore - October 28, 2021 at 01:45 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of William Kettelkamp MD.



October 27, 2021 at 10:01 AM



“ Ed and I were so shocked when we saw the passing of Bill. We were just visiting with Richard regarding his father.

I worked for Bill for a couple of years when he had his office on first avenue. He was a very caring person and his patients were always "first". We have since visited over the years watching each other grow older.

Ed remembers when he was wrestling at Cornell. He also remembers when they went pheasant hunting together. Such great memories.

May his memory always be eternal.

Ed and Carol (Lenz)Abodeely

Ed & Carol (Lenz)Abodeely - October 21, 2021 at 02:21 PM



“ Everyone whose lives were touched by Bill Kettlekamp have suffered a great loss! His boundless patience and love were demonstrated to my wife Kathy who assisted the Doctor in the delivery of babies at Mercy Hospital and to me who exhibited his incredible talent as an Artist at the Marion Heritage Center.

Jay Kacena - October 21, 2021 at 02:07 PM



“ Bill was an intern during my senior year of training at St. Lukes. Following graduation he asked me to work for him. We worked together for five years. In later years he would introduce me as "my first nurse". He delivered both of my sons and the eldest is named after Bill.

He has remained a dear friend over these many years and I will miss him.

My deepest sympathy to his family.

Shirley Miller

Shirley Miller - October 19, 2021 at 02:31 PM



“ Dr. Kettlekamp was my father's, Dr. Julius Pietrzak, best friend. They would be seen together for years all over the place, Vail, Aspen, CR, tucson, ... having a beer, skiing, and laughing. It was an enduring friendship of wonderful memories and family support. I will miss Bill tremendously. He was an incredible doctor and man.

eva marquart - October 19, 2021 at 01:35 PM



“ DR. Kettlekamp was my family doctor when i grew up, i loved him then and i loved him today, he was great, one time my grandma was in the hospital, she had the same name as my mother she was 92 and my mom was around 65, he went to see her and came out bewildered, said that she sure aged since that last time he saw her, then he saw my mom and realized his mistake it was so funny we all were laughing, He had such a great patient relationship with all that he took care of, he will be hard to match that is for sure.

LaRae Wenzel and family

larae wenzel - October 19, 2021 at 11:00 AM



“ Dear Kettelkamp family: I look at the Gazette obituaries weekly, and today, when I saw Bill's name, I froze and was gripped by a deep sadness and grief I've only had a handful of times. I never knew him outside of work at St Lukes, and yet he had to be in the top 2 or 3 most influential people in my career and life. He had a smile and warmth and kindness that could tear down strongholds and melt ice. I learned so much by his example. Ironically, lately it's crossed my mind that I should go tell him but I never did.. so I will share it here. His legacy in medical education and patient care is enormous, and like ripples in a pond, ongoing. I'm sure many feel as I do. Rest in peace my friend. Bob Roof

Bob Roof - October 16, 2021 at 07:34 PM



“ I worked many years with Dr Kettelkamp in the Ed he was a friend, good educator and a very sincere and caring person he also was very good artist he will be greatly missed thoughts and prayers to the family during this difficult time

Pat Martin - October 23, 2021 at 09:45 AM



“ So sorry to hear this. I lived with the Kettelkamp family while I did my student teaching in 1971. What a wonderful family. Later I would see Bill at the tennis club or at Hy-Vee Drugstore. We always had a nice chat. I will cherish my memories of a great guy.

Marge Porter Helsell - November 06, 2021 at 10:09 PM



“ My family got to know Dr. Kettelkamp back in the 1960s as we had a cabin in McGregor across the lane from he and his father. A few years ago I was temping at Aegon and saw his name on his desk, not far from me and had an opportunity to get reacquainted. We shared memories of McGregor and had lunch there at times. Also I live close by and would stop at times to say hello when he would be outside working. So sorry for your loss and we all will miss him.

Daniel L. McWhinney - November 11, 2021 at 04:39 PM



“ Was so very sorry to read of Dr. Bill Kettelkamp's passing. I was a patient of his many years ago. He delivered a couple of our kids. I always credited him with teaching me his wonderful caring bedside manner; he was always interested in his patients and listened to them. My career was better because of his influence. The world is a lesser place without his being a part of it. Blessings to the family and all who grieve for him.

Jan Monk

Jan Monk - November 14, 2021 at 02:56 PM



“ I knew Dr. Kettelkamp from St. Luke's and visited with him just recently at a restaurant and he was his usual gracious friendly self. My fond memory of him was as a judge for decorated Christmas trees at the annual St. Luke's fund raiser. I assisted him around a number of decorated trees and he struggled to select a winner because of course that meant there was a loser too. Very sensitive. Sincere Sympathy Patricia Gonder

Pat Gonder - November 15, 2021 at 10:06 AM