



Keith Parrott

April 11, 1946 - February 12, 2012

Keith A. Parrott, Emeritus Professor, Oregon State University College of Pharmacy, died Feb. 12, 2012, at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center in Corvallis. He was 65.

The second child of Grace and Elmer Parrott, Keith was born in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, where he attended elementary and high school. Following graduation, he enrolled at Pacific Lutheran University, where he and Wanda met as freshmen; they married three years later.

Keith studied engineering at Pacific Lutheran, but soon discovered that engineering was not for him and transferred to Idaho State University, where he entered the College of Pharmacy and graduated with honors in 1970. Months before Keith was to graduate, the first lottery drawings for armed service in Vietnam were held, and when his birthdate was selected 14th for the draft, Keith began the process of finding a service in which to enlist. He applied for and was accepted as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Public Health Service, where he served as a pharmacist.

Keith was first stationed at the Brighton Women's and Children's Hospital in Boston, where he received additional training at the National Institutes of Health, the University of Kentucky, and Massachusetts General Hospital before completing a hospital residency. From there, he and Wanda moved to Keams Canyon, Ariz., where Keith had been assigned to the Indian Public Health Hospital. There, he was deputy chief of the pharmacy department in the Indian Health Service Hospital.

When his tour of duty ended, they moved to Lexington, Ky., where Keith had been accepted into the pharmacy residency program (newly established by Paul Parker) at the University of Kentucky, where he attended graduate school on the GI Bill and graduated with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 1976.

While Keith and Wanda were in Kentucky, their first two children were born: Jeffrey in 1974, and Shannon in 1976. The family moved to Oregon in 1976, and Kimberly was born two years later.

Keith joined the OSU College of Pharmacy faculty (then the School of Pharmacy) in 1976, and spent his professional career there until health issues forced his early retirement in 2004. At the time he retired, Keith was assistant dean for Student Affairs.

Colleagues and students remember him as a patient, kind and thoughtful man who was a strong advocate for both his students and the pharmacy profession. He especially enjoyed working with students, and was always delighted when they visited, or when he saw them working at various pharmacies throughout the country.

Despite declining health and early retirement due to his spinocerebellar ataxia, Keith never considered himself disabled. He joined Fitness over 50, where he worked out three times a week; he liked the exercise, and enjoyed visiting with other members, but especially loved working with his wonderful trainers.

Keith was indomitable. He continued to travel, socialized with his many friends, and planted and worked in his yard. In 2010, several of his friends designed and built a raised gardening bed which allowed him to tend a garden as well.

But most of all, he loved to fly fish. Freezing temperatures or pouring rain — it didn't matter; he was oblivious to the weather. A retirement gift from his colleagues of a fishing trip to California delighted him, as did the trip he and Wanda took to Alaska, where they fished opening day on the Kenai River. Whether on the waters of Roaring Springs, the many lakes in Central Oregon, the Deschutes, the McKenzie or Fall River, where friends tied him and his

wheelchair to a tree so he could fish from the steep bank — he was always happiest when he had a fly rod in hand.

Keith and Wanda celebrated their 44th anniversary last year. They traveled extensively in the United States and Europe, learned to ballroom dance, canoed, camped, fished, spent time at Sunriver, and enjoyed their life together, especially loving to spend time with their family and many friends. Keith is survived by his wife and their three children. He loved talking about his children and their spouses, and their many accomplishments. His children, a great source of pride and joy in his life, are Jeffrey Parrott of Copenhagen, Denmark, and his wife, Klara Hobza, of Berlin, Germany; Shannon Parrott of Honolulu, Hawaii; and Kim Parrott Rivera and her husband, Hector, of Miami, Fla.

Keith was able to attend Kim and Hector's wedding in Miami just a month before he died. He joyfully celebrated with friends and family and, despite being in a wheelchair, "danced" with everyone around him, a beaming father of the bride.

Keith is also survived by a sister, Karen Soderling (Tom); brothers-in-law Rick Otta (Anne) and Eldon Otta (Debbi); sister-in-law Peggy Phelps (Larry); as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Keith was a kind and loving man who lived his life to the fullest despite his declining health and the limitations it imposed. He is greatly mourned by all those left behind.

Keith's family hopes the tissue donations made following his death will help increase the knowledge of spinocerebellar ataxia, the rare and debilitating disorder that Keith dealt with courageously and without complaint from the time he was diagnosed in his early 40s until his death. Those who wish to make a donation for ataxia research in Keith's memory can send their donations directed to Albany Research Institute, Inc., 113 Holland Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12208.

Some may wish to make donations in memory of Keith to Grace Center for Adult Day Services in Corvallis, where Keith was one of the original board

members and served as a board member for 23 years.
A celebration of Keith's life will be held at a later date.