



Kenneth Johnson

March 15, 1938 - January 6, 2020

Ken Johnson – Husband, Father, Dentist, Mentor, Teacher, Author, Inventor, Philanthropist, Grandfather, Visionary, Die-hard Beaver fan, Community organizer, Woodworker, Gift Giver, Lover of Life - was born in 1938 in Harvey, Illinois and died at home this week in Corvallis, Oregon. Ken moved to Tillamook, Oregon in 1947 and graduated from Tillamook High School - home of “the Cheesemakers” - in 1956. From a young age, Ken knew he wanted to be a dentist and upon high school graduation, he attended University of Oregon to obtain his Bachelor of Science. After U of O, Ken attended Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Oregon and graduated from Dental School in 1963. Ken spent two years on Guam as a Captain in the Air Force and moved back to Corvallis in 1965 to begin his dental practice.

For over 40 years, Dr. Johnson, DMD. practiced dentistry in Corvallis. He dedicated his life to alleviating dental pain and suffering. He treated adults and children, and possessed a unique ability to connect with children both in and out of the dental chair. Many parents are forever indebted to Dr. Johnson for helping their children stop sucking their thumbs! Ken’s gentle manner, his magic, and his gift of making people smile all helped to put his patients – big and small – at ease in the dental chair, including some of the toughest Beaver athletes.

Ken provided for his community locally, and he also traveled the world to

provide volunteer dental care in many countries. His life's mission included providing care for those unable to afford care and he had a dream of creating a dental clinic in our community to serve youth across Benton County. Beginning with mobile dental vans, Ken traveled throughout the county providing free dental services. After retirement, he approached the Boys and Girls Club of Corvallis with his vision of a free dental clinic. By February of 2008, Ken, working with the close support of his wife, Dot, served the first patients in the new clinic.

Ken was a consummate teacher. He originated and advised the Pre-Dental course at Oregon State University and hundreds of practicing dentists have participated and benefited from the Pre-Dent Club. For decades, Ken provided regular mentoring and teaching at Linn Benton Community College and in OSU's pre-dental program. He had a deep desire to give back to his profession and to ensure that the next generation of dentists would also be skilled in the art of dentistry for children.

The many friends Ken made in the community and in the world experienced his gift of bringing people together. So many have been touched and inspired by his model of service. He created community; he encouraged people to work together; he invited friends to pool their resources; he reached out to other dental professionals. The OSU Men's and Women's basketball teams and coaches were all special to Ken and the basketball parties he hosted, along with the "Men's Parties," were uniquely beautiful ways that Ken brought people together with joy and laughter. Ken did magic for people all over the world - he made people smile and giggle and feel cared for. He mentored us all and invited us to meet him in his generosity of spirit. Ken left this world a better place.

Ken's family includes his loving wife Dot Johnson, his children Jillean Johnson

and Michael Johnson and his wife, Paige, and his step-children Rob Dye, Tom Dye, Jason Brown and Shannon Brown. He has 10 grandchildren and one adorable great grandson. We all miss him terribly.

There will be a memorial service celebrating his life on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 6 p.m. at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center on the Oregon State University campus at 725 SW 26th Street, Corvallis, OR 97331.

In lieu of flowers, we invite you to donate to the Boys and Girls Club of Corvallis at 1112 NW Circle Blvd, Corvallis, OR 97330 and/or Lumina Hospice and Palliative Care at 720 SW 4th Street, Corvallis, OR 97333.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 14. 6:00 PM (PT)

CH2M HILL Alumni Center
725 SW 26th St.
Corvallis, OR 97331

Tribute Wall

VW

“ I would like to send my condolences to the family and close friends of Ken. I met Ken in early 2000 when he participated on a Faith In Practice Village Medical/Dental Team to one of the villages in Guatemala. Performing dentistry under less than optimal circumstances on patients who are terrified and in pain from tooth decay and gum disease is a daunting task. Ken carried it off with questionable professional skill, extreme kindness and a gentle touch. Magic tricks and playful antics endeared him to the Guatemalans and to his team. He was truly gifted in many ways. I'm only sorry that I did not get to spend more time with him during the years he volunteered with the organization.

Vera Wiatt - January 11, 2020 at 12:53 PM

KK

“ My parents (Janet and Paul Komar) and I (Kristin Komar) really liked Dr. Johnson when he was our dentist years ago. We loved to watch the trains at his office. We enjoyed seeing him at the opening of the new part of the Boys and Girls Club that is named for him. He also did dentistry for poor people in other countries. Our condolences to his family and close friends.

Kristin Komar - January 09, 2020 at 06:35 PM

WR

“ I first met Ken Johnson when he came on a Faith In Practice medical team to Guatemala, some time in the early 2000's. He asked me whether I wanted to assist him. I did. I passed out, but I saw how much he cared for the people he was treating. As a result of that experience I became his patient. I have had terrible experiences with dentists. Ken helped me get over those experiences. While in Guatemala, during lunch breaks he would perform magic for all the patients and their families waiting to see doctors and the dentist. Without needing to speak Spanish, he shared his skills as a magician and made people laugh and ooh. He was truly a gentle soul. I will miss him and his impish smile.

Wendy Robinson

Wendy Robinson - January 09, 2020 at 06:28 PM

GK

“ What can my family say Kimberley and have the highest respect for this fine man. He had a special kind caring manner with people. He was a gentleman and one we all looked up to. His generosity and way in helping others will be remembered.

Our sincere condolences to his immediate family and those who were close to him.

Dr. J. is one that we All will remember.

Thank you my friend, Love the Fuszek / Rockwood Family 🌈



Gary and Kimberley - January 09, 2020 at 05:29 PM