

Dr. Robert Stripling, Jr.

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Dr. Robert Stripling, Jr.'s 70 years on this Earth came to a peaceful close on Oct. 28, 2010 at Covenant Hospital in Lubbock.

Robert was born on May 19, 1940 in Big Spring, Texas, to Robert and Jean Stripling. He grew up in Big Spring and graduated from high school in 1958. He completed his undergraduate studies at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, later graduating from Kansas Medical School in Lawrence, Kan., on June 18, 1966. Two weeks after graduating med school, he married Karen Klinger in Ashland, Kan. In 1972, after finishing residency, he moved his family to Lubbock, where he began his practice. He and Karen enjoyed raising their two children, traveling and being active participants in the community. Sadly, Karen developed a disease that would prematurely claim her life and end their happy marriage of 38 years.

Robert followed in the footsteps of his parents and dedicated his life to serving others. He was a lifelong member of the First United Methodist Church; he served in the U.S. Army; volunteered for the United Way; served on the board of the LSO; was affiliated with countless other organizations; and was a devout supporter of the arts and continuing education.

In 1998, Robert met the love of his life, Melissa Rodriguez. She put a sparkle back in his eye and renewed his youth. They were married on March 5, 2006 in Lubbock. He now had two "bonus children" and a wife to dance with and support him in life. The two were happily married and virtually inseparable until the day of his death.

Robert was a greatly admired pediatrician who loved life. He enjoyed spending time with his family and entertaining guests. His hobbies included dancing, playing the piano, traveling, music and going on walks. He felt very lucky to be able to help so many people through his work. Every patient was special to him. Three generations of West Texans received treatment from him. Many families who could not afford treatment were served without charge, including the cost of medicine where needed. He thought he had the best staff in the world and appreciated all of his colleagues. He loved both his family and community and served both unconditionally and wholeheartedly.

He is survived by his wife, Melissa; his children, son, Dr. Stephen Stripling and his wife Tiffany; grandson, Harris; daughter, Stacy Cohen; and "bonus children," Joe Ryan and Christian T.H. Logou. Robert adored both his wives and all of his children and desired the best for them.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, Oct. 31, 2010 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Resthaven Funeral Home. Graveside services will be held on Monday, Nov. 1, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. at Resthaven Memorial Park with a memorial service to follow at First United Methodist Church at 1 p.m.

Those interested in supporting Dr. Stripling's love and passion for young musicians should send donations to any of the following organizations: the Lubbock Youth Symphony Orchestra c/o the Lubbock Symphony Orchestra, the Stripling Vocal Award c/o the TTU School of Music, the Texas Tech String Project c/o the TTU School of Music, the South Plains Suzuki Foundation or the West Texas Children's Chorus. Condolences may be offered at www.resthavenfuneralhome.com.