



Richard "Dick" Traeger

August 27, 1932 - November 19, 2014

TRAEGER, RICHARD "DICK"

Richard "Dick" Traeger, age 82, a friendly, kind, and gentle soul, passed away on Wednesday, November 19, 2014, leaving a better world behind through his contributions. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Laura Beth. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Carol "Sonny" Traeger of Albuquerque; four children, Ric Traeger and wife, Judy of Albuquerque, Marc Traeger and wife, Laura of Pinetop, AZ, Scott Traeger and fiancée, Nancy Lobner of Las Vegas, NV, and Kim Nutter and husband, Mark of Austin, TX; ten grandchildren, Ryan, Kristin, Meiling, Jeremiah, Luke, Adela, George, Olivia, Sophie and Ethan; and cousin Pam Hilty. Dick was the true love of Sonny, as she was the true love of Dick. Dick was born August 27, 1932, in Madison, WI to Edgar and Hildegarde Traeger. His youth was spent in Milwaukee, where he achieved the Eagle Scout award and enjoyed adventures while camping, ice skating, and doing other outdoor activities. At the University of Wisconsin, he attained a B.S. in Chemical Engineering. He married Carol "Sonny" Sonnenburg in 1954, moved to Ohio, and worked at Goodrich Corporation while he obtained a master's degree at Case Western Reserve University. A resident of Albuquerque since 1959, Dick was a popular lecturer at the University of New Mexico, where he received several fellowship and grant awards from the National Science Foundation. In 1963, he was the recipient of the first doctor of science (Ph.D.) degree ever awarded by the UNM

Chemical Engineering Department. Dick was employed at Sandia National Laboratory from 1963 to 1999. There he worked in the materials research group, hybrid electronics technology and energy divisions. Early research included coal liquefaction and oil shale retorting. He became the first manager of the Geo Energy Technology Department, where he investigated geothermal energy resources and related geosciences. Dick served on President Carter's Energy Committee. He enjoyed doing on-the-scene research at both the Kilauea and Mt. St. Helen's volcanoes. The last several years of his career with Sandia were in government relations, serving as a liaison to Congress, for which his work was recognized by Senators Bingaman and Domenici for contributing directly to national policy-making and national security arenas. He served on the Board of Directors of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and on the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology at NMSU and NMT. Dick's devotion to his family and children was evidenced by his complete support of their interests, serving as Boy Scout Troop leader, Little League baseball coach, supporting all school activities, their love of the arts, music, and other interests too many to list. He is most respected and remembered by them as a mentor and leader. He enjoyed hiking, tennis and handball, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and competed in several Mt. Taylor Quadrathlons. Dick spent his later years volunteering with the Albuquerque Open Space Division and serving as a docent at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science. He was an active member of St. Luke Lutheran Church. A service will be held on Saturday, November 29, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Luke Lutheran Church, 9100 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Luke Lutheran Church or the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, 1801 Mountain Rd. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104.

Previous Events

Service

NOV **29**. 1:00 PM (MT)

St. Luke Lutheran Church
9100 Menaul Blvd. NE
Albuquerque, NM

Tribute Wall

GS

“ Dick, Harry and I, went to grade school together. We played ping pong, horse shoes, and went exploring along the river and through the woods. Later, through all kinds of weather, the three of us hiked to Rufus King High School every day. It was at King where Dick met Sonny, who he eventually married. After high school, we each went our separate ways, although I thought of Dick often through the years. I remember so many things about him, from his his gentle nature to his sense of humor. His parents always treated me with great kindness, and for that I will always be grateful. I managed to stay in touch with them for many, many years. I am only sorry that I did not get to see Dick one last time. Glenn Schaeffer

Glenn Schaeffer - January 15, 2015 at 11:37 AM

SW

“ Dick and I shared many experiences through the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, but there is one for which I will be eternally grateful. It was in Boston at a meeting in the late 90s and I had an accident while out for a morning run that landed me in the hospital. Dick was asked by the AIChE executive director, Dick Emmert, to check up on me. Dick did so much more! He spent the entire day with me as I moved from room to room, test to test, until my release much later in the day. His kindness and thoughtfulness will always be my lasting memory. With deepest sympathy to Sonny and family from Claire and I,

Steve Weiner

Steven C. Weiner - December 19, 2014 at 11:12 AM

BE

“ Dick, Carol and I were in the "gang" (Dick's term) of 43 that ventured to Europe in June and July of 2000 to see the Passion Play in Oberammergau. Returning home, Dick typed up a 34 - page summary of our trip, complete with photos. I read it this evening, reliving that time through his sparkling eyes. What a gift!... My condolences to all of you.

Barbara Edwards Exley - December 12, 2014 at 09:52 PM

CT

“ Dick hired me into Sandia 37 years ago, and I worked for with him for many years. He was great about giving me the flexibility and freedom to define my work and career directions. We could tell from the eulogies at his service that he was as special a father and husband as he was a boss. I could hear Dick's voice through the words of his kids at the service. Your family has our sympathy for your loss.

Craig and Katherine Tyner

Craig Tyner - December 12, 2014 at 10:40 AM

PP

“ I was at the service for Dick and was touched by love that was shown by his children in their sharing of memories of him. Unfortunately, I had another event after the service and found myself at the end of the receiving line preventing me from meeting the family and paying my regards to Carol. While I had not known Dick for very many years, I thought he was one of the nicest men I have met. He had such a sweet smile. I missed him after he went to assisted living. Carol is such a faithful member of our congregation and I am so sorry for the familys loss. Please accept my condolences.



Phyllis Peterson - December 03, 2014 at 01:21 PM

DM

“ I'm sorry I was not able to attend Dick's funeral. Your obituary was perfect and captured the essence of Dick's being and his contributions to his family, friends, Sandia, and the nation. I valued working with him at Sandia, and I know he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

With sympathy,
Dennis Miyoshi

Dennis Miyoshi - November 30, 2014 at 11:31 AM

GM

“ Paul and I will always remember Dick for his kind, level headed, and practical approach to life and dry sense of humor. We were on several mountain biking trips with him on the White Rim Trail in Canyonlands National Park in the 1990s. My favorite memory of Dick on those trips, (where we were camping and packing in and out all our food/trash), was he ate every meal of the day from the same beat-up old tin camp mug! He knew how to pack light! Rest in Peace Dick, and know that you made a mark on many lives.

All our sympathy to Ric and the rest of the family.
Gail and Paul Murray, La Cienega, NM



Gail Murray - November 27, 2014 at 08:54 PM

MM

“ To the Traeger family,

My deep condolences on your loss. Dick was a valuable and loyal member of the Chemical Engineering Academy at New Mexico State University. He always had valuable insights on how we could improve the program. He, more than once, reminded me (as a young department head) that I should "stop and smell the flowers."

Martha Mitchell

*Associate Dean, College of Engineering
(former department head, Chemical Engineering)
New Mexico State University*

Martha Mitchell - November 25, 2014 at 11:29 AM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Richard "Dick" Traeger.



November 23, 2014 at 06:23 PM

JA

“ we will miss Dick so very much at the NM museum of Natural History and Science. His expertise and knowledge will be missed. Our sincere sympathies to his family.

Jayne Aubele, Geologist and Educator, NMMNHS

Jayne Aubele - November 22, 2014 at 05:06 PM

MM

“ *My sympathy. Cross county skiing with Dick was very special. He was always very considerate of others.*

Marcella Madsen

marcella madsen - November 22, 2014 at 02:00 PM

JW

“ *Just a moment to express my condolences to the Traeger family, Mrs. Traeger, Rick, Mark, Scott and Kim(Kimmy). Many fond memories of Dick Traeger. Though I had not seen him in many years I always remembered him as an extremely fun dad to be around. While Scott and I were young, elementary school through high school, my brother Dennis and I spent many years close to the Traegers. Mr. Traeger was always great fun to be around and always welcomed us in and around his home and family. He took us on camping trips and coached Scott and myself in little league. Thank you for that Dick. Today I celebrate your life and the memories. Jim Wing*



Jim Wing - November 22, 2014 at 12:20 PM

MT

I love the photo, Jim! Thank you for sharing it! Marc

Marc Traeger - December 31, 2014 at 09:25 PM

LS

“ *On behalf of the French Family of Companies, we express our deepest condolences.*

Luke Rogers and Wyoming Staff - November 21, 2014 at 12:44 PM