



Dr. Peter Beardslee App M.D.

July 8, 1939 - May 27, 2019

Commander Peter Beardslee App, MD

Born July 8, 1939

Died May 27, 2019

Dr. Peter App, passed away on May 27, 2019, Memorial Day, at the age of 79 after a life of service to his family, his country, his patients, his parish, the Grand Rapids community and to God.

Dr. Peter App was born in New York, New York to a family dedicated to the practice of law. Dr. App, son of John Weber App and Lucille O'Connor, was the eldest of three children. The first thirteen years of Dr. App's life was spent between New York City and his father's hometown of Cleveland in upstate New York. At the age of thirteen, his father moved the family back to his hometown of Cleveland New York to be a president of a bank. His father met an untimely death two days before Dr. App's sixteenth birthday. His mother moved the family to Pittsburgh, PA in 1955. In 1957, Dr. App started college at Georgetown University in Washington DC, with the intention to study law.

While at Georgetown, he joined the ROTC and participated in crew. During his third year at Georgetown, Dr App was a victim of a car accident that changed the trajectory of his life. He told himself that if he survived, he would become a physician. He promised God that he would serve people no matter who they are or how much they could pay until he was no longer physically or mentally able. Due to the car accident, he graduated a year later than expected with his brother Jonathan App in 1962.

Dr. App went on to medical school at Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, PA. During his third year of medical school, he did an away rotation at Mayo Clinic. There he met his wife, Margo Maryland, (for whom shared the same birthday July 8) and married in 1965. Dr. App graduated in June of 1966. He and Margo moved to Grand Rapids Michigan to start his internal medicine internship July of 1966.

In 1967, during the Vietnam War, Dr. App was called to duty by the Navy. He was first stationed in Glenview, Illinois where he was a Medical Receiving Officer in charge of 20 corpsmen. Two or three times a week they would receive over a hundred wounded, often still in their fatigues from battle. His job was to check the wounded and triage the most serious casualties to decide which ones need to go to the hospital first in the ambulances.

Often, they worked 24 to 48 hours straight until all the men had been transported. Dr. App was then transferred to Keflavik, Iceland where he served as a General Medical Officer and director of the Internal Medicine Clinic. There were 8000 American military and civilians on base which meant the clinic was incredibly busy. As the hospital was only staffed by himself, a pediatrician, a surgeon and an obstetrician, he was often called to assist in surgery or cesarean sections. He was released from active duty in June 1970. However, he continued work one weekend a month in reserve duty until 1996, whereby he was discharged with distinction as a Commander. When President Gerald R. Ford was being transferred to be interred at his Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids, Dr. App, in his naval uniform, stood in the cold with hundreds of military officers to pay his respects in January 2007.

Given his experience in working with the naval families, rather than Internal Medicine, Dr. App decided to become a Family Practitioner upon his return to Grand Rapids. Before he started his solo practice, he served as the first medical director of St. Mary's Hospital Emergency Department. Dr. App developed a very large solo practice that expanded to a large group practice while at the same time would have "side jobs" as he called them. These side jobs included being a coroner, an officer in the Kent County Medical Society, Michigan State Medical Society, and Michigan Association of Family Medicine; doing sports physicals for several Catholic schools, starting the student medical center at Aquinas and their part-time physician, the Medical Director of River Valley Recovery Center and being the ring side doctor at Golden Glove boxing matches.

It was as if Dr. App was driven to help and care for as many people as he possibly could. He was so busy the day his wife Margo was to be discharged home with their newborn baby, that she got tired of waiting and brought herself and the newborn home in a cab. He delivered four babies in nineteen hours that day. When Dr. App would be complimented about being a physician, he would say "That is what I do but it not who I am". But for anyone who knew him, being a physician is exactly who he was.

Ever the teacher, he loved to teach medical students and residents. Ever the learner and student himself, he was a voracious reader to continue to learn the latest developments in medicine so as to be able to take the very best care of his patients. Dr. App took care of thousands of families and delivered 4000 babies before retiring in 2014 after forty-eight years of practice.

He loved to share jokes with his patients, you could tell what clinic room he was in by the laughter of his patients. He would tell the same joke hundreds of times until he became captivated by a new one. He loved to share stories of places he had been and events in his family. He always wanted to know when good things happened to his patients and friends. He loved to create rhyming nicknames for people, even if it didn't quite rhyme. He loved to dance. When he was an officer, Dr. App would take his wife Margo, when pregnant, to the officer's club for what he deemed "exercise". He loved the sounds of

Motown and the Rat Pack.

Dr. and Margo had six children, fulfilling his prediction on their first date that they would have at least six kids. In addition, Dr. and Margo welcomed many children and adolescents to stay and live in their home while in school in Grand Rapids. He considered all friends family. He and Margo were known to invite new families in town to their home to share Thanksgiving dinner. They loved to entertain and share their home. As he always said "We are making great memories".

Dr. App was a devout Catholic. As a parishioner of St. Alphonsus, he loved to be a lector at mass. He joined the Knights of Columbus and was a Fourth Degree Knight.

The last few years of his life he was lovingly cared for in the home of his son and daughter-in-law, Drs. Michael and Colleen App. During his last few weeks, Dr. App was surrounded with love from his children, grandchildren and friends. The faithful servant, the veteran, the physician, the teacher, our father, passed peacefully to his Lord on Memorial Day, May 27.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Jonathan App. He is survived by his wife of 53 years Margo; his sister Gretchen Akers (Dr. Richard), his children: Dr. Megan (Richard), Dr. Michael (Dr. Colleen), Richard (Monica), Robert, Mary (Keegan), Susan (Dr. Ben), thirteen grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial mass will be held at St. Alphonsus on June 14th, Friday at 1 pm. The address of the church is 224 Carrier St. NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505. A lunch reception will be held in the Parish Center immediately following.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the St. Alphonsus Parish Pantry at the Parish Center – 228 Carrier St. NE, 616-913-4404.

Comments



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Dr. Peter Beardslee App M.D..



June 02 at 07:21 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Peter Beardslee App M.D..



May 31 at 01:56 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Peter Beardslee App M.D..



May 29 at 06:29 PM



“ Dear App Family,
It is a gift to know and cherish your family. Dr. Peter's care, concern, and kindness will not be forgotten in relation to our family. He is like a "tree planted near running water yielding good fruit" and blessings. Anchors away dear friend! Chuck and Mary Zarzecki

charles edwin zarzecki - May 29 at 12:22 PM



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Dear App Family,

We feel so very blessed to have known your amazing husband, father, physician, patriot and Catholic Christian. His promise he made after his accident in his youth, by the grace of God, was indeed kept to the fullest. Rest easy now "good and faithful servant," a special place of joy and peace await you. We keep you in our hearts and prayers and believe that, even now Dr. App is already busy with the Lord's work from a heavenly place. May Our Lord give you comfort and peace! Sincerely, Barb & Vic Ceru



Barbara A Ceru - May 28 at 08:01 PM