



## Dr. Keith Dawson

September 6, 1926 - May 5, 2020

Dawson, Dr. Keith,

Keith passed into the loving arms of his Savior Jesus Christ on Tuesday afternoon May 5th. He resided at Brightondale Assisted Living in New Brighton, Minnesota. He had been living there since January 1, 2019. The facility had been on “lockdown” mode since March 10 because of Covid-19, and family members were strongly discouraged from visiting loved ones. When Keith’s fast decline from pneumonia became apparent, his wife, Donna, was able to enter to be by his side until he died.

Keith (Wayne) Dawson was born near Sumner, Iowa on September 6, 1926. He spent much of his young life in small towns in northwest Iowa before moving with his parents to the Twin Cities. Keith began high school at Edison High in northeast Minneapolis. After his family moved to the Anoka area, Keith graduated from Anoka High in 1944. After graduation Keith at age 17 joined the Navy and was sent to Gustavus Adolphus College to study engineering and pre-flight training. He completed his flight training in Corpus Christi, Texas. WW2 ended before Keith was called into battle, but Keith was proud of his piloting skills, and before leaving the service of the University of Minnesota, he gave his family members a thrill by taking them for a ride.

During his time as an undergraduate, Keith worked at Montgomery Ward unloading box cars (Keith was never afraid of hard work). He befriended a co-worker who has been an Army flier in WW2. Keith ribbed him good-naturedly about how army flyers were trained to navigate by following train tracks while navy fliers learned how to navigate by the stars. The work buddy was Deke Slayton who later became one of the “Right Stuff” astronauts. After earning his BA in English at the University of Minnesota, he subsequently taught English at Sioux Valley and Clarkston, MN and Decorah, Iowa. He also served as athletic coach at these schools and as principal at Sioux Valley. He held special memories from each school, but Sioux Valley ranked the highest because of the lifelong friendships established there. He also ended up being a caregiver for life for one of his students who became disabled during the Korean War.

Keith served as a counselor at Robbinsdale High School from 1955-1958. During that time period he received a Specialist Degree in Education Curriculum (1955). In 1958 he earned

a MA in Educational Psychology. Both of these degrees were from the University of Minnesota.

Keith's next career move was to St. Louis Park Schools where he remained until his retirement in 1985. He began as a counselor there, but then succeeded Dr. Roland Larson as Director of Pupil Personnel Services. In this capacity he was to have direct supervision over counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses in the St. Louis Park School System. This was expanded later to Special Education Services as well. Keith was a Licensed Consulting Psychologist, and a patient listener when identifying problems encountered.

Keith took a sabbatical from St. Louis Park Schools to work on his doctorate at the University of Wyoming at Laramie. He received his Doctor of Philosophy Degree August 20, 1968.

Keith was always a kind, personable man with a good sense of humor, and he was grateful for the exceptional colleagues he was privileged to work beside during his career! Keith built his own vacation home at Lake Washburn near Outing, Minnesota. He did most of the work on weekends or vacations. In the years that followed, the cabin became a gathering place for family. He especially liked to see his grandchildren come to stay a week when they were old enough to fly alone. He was always delighted when any family from the west coast came to visit. The cabin was the place Keith's mother liked to spend her summer when she visited from Renton, Washington. Lots of boating, swimming, and fishing took place there. Keith also used the cabin as a base for deer hunting.

He enjoyed all his hunting and fishing expeditions wherever they might lead him. His buddies were great sportsmen, and Keith looked forward to his times with them. Going elk hunting with his brother Dick provided a wonderful time together for the brothers (however they did not get an elk). Canada was one place where he learned how to best filet northern pike. Goose hunting in Canada was always fun too.

After Keith's beloved wife Donna of 38+ years retired, he started them off to years of adventure. For 18 years they wintered near Brownsville, Texas. Keith acquired a stray dog the second year there. Perdida became Keith's constant companion. During the winter Texan years Keith volunteered at the Audubon Wild Life Sanctuary, and mentored students at Porter High School. Of course, he did a lot of fishing there too. Many friends came to visit which was a delight. Keith always had fun showing them around. A number of excursions were made into the interior of Mexico by bus which provided wonderful learning experiences about the rich but troubling history of Mexico. Keith could speak some Spanish and that helped.

Keith was an avid reader and always looked for ways to expand his knowledge. Perhaps that is why international travel as well as national on the road excursions became a part of our lives. Albums of places traveled around the world line the bookshelves. They looked to make each learning experience an adventure to be treasured.

Keith was a devoted husband, a brilliant, kind, loving, and compassionate man. He cared deeply about the well-being of his family, many of whom live on the west coast.

Keith is survived by his wife, Donna of 38+years; his children, Thomas Charles, Mary Claire, Charles Harwood; seven grandchildren; nine nephews, three nieces; wonderful in-laws, and their progeny; and a host of long-time friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Madge Rosemond Dawson and Lyle Earl Dawson; sisters, Virginia Ireland (Robert), Catherine (Donald), Lois (Ron); brother, Richard; nephew, Cory Nelson; step-son, Gerrell Graham McBrian.

A celebration of Life will take place at GracePoint Church in New Brighton, Minnesota when circumstances allow us to gather freely. Perhaps early October 2020.

Any correspondence regarding Dr. Keith Dawson should be sent to the Fridley address.

[www.Washburn-McReavy.com](http://www.Washburn-McReavy.com)

Hillside Chapel 612-781-1999

# Comments

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“ Sincerest sympathies to Tom, Mary, Charlie & their families from the surviving members of the Hoffman Family. We have rich & happy memories of the Dawson family summers at Washburn Lake, near Outing. Cherish your memories; hold them close but share them with us all.

**Kurt Hoffman III** - May 31 at 09:25 AM



“ Thank you

**Charles Dawson** - July 01 at 08:57 PM



“ Mary Claire Dawson Kalamafoni: I remember when your dad worked for SLP Schools and we visited him in his office there. Many, many condolences on his passing. If you are in the Twin Cities please give me a call—(952) 545-3795. Would love to see you. Marcy Jones Wiltbank Reiter

**Marcelyn Reiter** - May 10 at 05:27 PM



“ I'll get this to MC. Thanks.

**Charles Dawson** - July 01 at 08:58 PM