



Douglas Alan Hedlund

December 20, 1935 - November 27, 2022

In the comfort of family, Dr. Douglas A. Hedlund passed away at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Minneapolis on November 27, 2022. We are overwhelmingly grateful for his love, wisdom and service. "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

Dr. Hedlund was born in 1935 to parents Olga (Cleveland) and Albert Hedlund, along with his younger brother Don. He described his growing years as being surrounded by aunts and uncles and spending good times at the farm with cousins who famously taught him how to share a can of peaches. Douglas graduated from Fargo Central High School, Carthage College and the University of Michigan Medical School. He completed an internship in internal medicine at the US Naval Hospital in Oakland, CA. During the Vietnam War he was stationed as a US Navy doctor on the USS Ajax in Sasebo, Nagasaki. Upon his return, he pursued a psychiatry residency at Sheppard Pratt Hospital in Baltimore. Decades later, the American Psychiatric Association recognized him for 53 years of practice dedicated to caring for patients with anxiety and depression.

Douglas met the love of his life, Gwendolyn Rick, at Carthage College where he wooed her from the recording studio by dedicating his quartet's album to her. It wasn't until they met again after his years in the Navy and relocation to MN that she finally said "yes." They married in 1968, moved to Baltimore, and

started a family; Keith arrived in 1970 and Shawna in 1972. Douglas and Gwen recently celebrated 54 years of marriage and nearly as many love poems.

Dr. Hedlund's work was driven by curiosity and empathy. He provided care at Hastings State Hospital and the Hamm Clinic, was the Director of the Outpatient Clinic at Sheppard Pratt, and was instrumental in developing the Behavioral Medicine Clinic at Abbott Northwestern. Dr. Hedlund also supervised students from Johns Hopkins and the University of Minnesota. He eventually opened a private practice with colleagues he deeply admired and considered close friends. Late in his career, he found new rewards providing care at Lutheran Social Services. Dr. Hedlund loved his work. Even once living in memory care, he was offered a notebook and a desk to provide "therapy" for anyone willing to tell him their story.

Near retirement, Dr. Hedlund took just as passionately to a new talent - grandparenting. He pushed strollers, pulled wagons, hosted sleepovers, and fervently studied "how to raise optimists." He taught his grandchildren to talk about their feelings, blow dry their hair, listen to their hearts (with a stethoscope) and play golf in the living room. He wrote services and baptized each of them.

Doug campaigned for open and affirming churches, mental health parity and more mental health beds for children. He read voraciously and studied history, wrote polemics and taught himself to play piano in his 70s. He was quick to apologize, slow to judge, and witty when needed. He loved hats, galoshes and sandals with socks. He thought the perfect golf swing was meditative.

In the company of children, laughing with Gwen, in the woods or garden, and surprisingly, with Alzheimer's, Doug's lighter side appeared. He was most relaxed at YMCA Family Camp Du Nord, and on 5:00 am paddles with Keith

and Shawna to Lake Hegman. Over the years, he introduced Keith to JD Salinger, John Steinbeck, Alfred Hitchcock, and the art of waxing skis. He wrote Shawna letters at important moments in women's history. He taught them the value of self-acceptance, the power of a well-written sentence, and the limits of human comprehension in a complex world.

Dr. Hedlund recounted that the most common phobia he saw was "the fear of time passing." When asked how he treated this, he explained, "the only way to slow down time is to notice more details every day," and he did. He moved turtles stuck in roads, searched endlessly for the perfect pair of socks, and never missed an opportunity to say "you're important to me." Douglas promised not to be "tranquil" as he grew old, writing, "have happy days. Live each one as a gift and a choice."

We deeply appreciate his care team at the Minnesota Veterans Home, who were warm, loving and dedicated to the very end.

Please join us at his service on January 9 at Normandale Lutheran Church in Edina: 10 AM memory gathering, 11 AM service, 12 PM luncheon.

Douglas is preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Don Hedlund. We celebrate his life with spouse Gwen and children Keith and Shawna Hedlund, son-in-law Jason, grandkids Tennyson, Wilder and Wesley (Stinson), sister-in-law Shirley Hedlund, brother-in-law Gary (Gale) Rick, and nieces and nephews Mike Grace, Dusty (Cheryl) Hedlund, Jodie (Eli) Harvala, Jennie (Tom) Voss, Marsanne Rick, Jeff (Rocky) Rick, Randy (Lynn Taylor) Rick, Bradley Rick, and many cousins he loved.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 9. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Normandale Lutheran Church
6100 Normandale Road
Edina, MN 55436

Memorial Service

JAN 9. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Normandale Lutheran Church
6100 Normandale Road
Edina, MN 55436

Tribute Wall

KH

“ *I was a patient of Dr. Hedlund. He was a great doctor and we would chat. He told me about his time in Japan. Both of us loved music. He told me that the Japanese really understand western music.*

Katherine Ann Helfter - April 12, 2025 at 08:08 PM