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Dr James D. Koonce (Col/Ret US Army)

of Little Rock, AR

1944 - 2015

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DR JAMES D KOONCE (COL/RET US ARMY), passed away in Little Rock, Ark. on March 12, 2015. Born on March 7, 1944 in Harlingen, Texas, his parents were Maurine and J.D. Koonce. In 1967, he received his undergraduate degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, then went on to earn his dental degree from Baylor University School of Dentistry; a Masters of Science degree from Baylor University College of Dentistry Graduated School; and a degree in Pediatrics from Baylor University in Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Koonce was commissioned Captain, U.S.Army, in 1975, and served as a clinician at Fort Sill, Okla.; a clinician at Fort Richardson, Alaska; director of pediatric residence at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Fort Meade, Md.; Chief of Graduate Dental Education in Washington, D.C.; and chief of all Army Medical Department education and training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas before retiring in February, 1996. While in the U.S. Army Dental Corps, he lectured extensively around the world and published numerous scientific papers. His numerous military awards include The Legion of Merit.

Following his military career, he was named Department Chairman at the University of Louisville Health Science Center in Louisville, Ky. In 1998, he came to Little Rock to work at Arkansas Children's Hospital, becoming in 2012 the Endowed Chair in Pediatric Dentistry. He retired as Director of Pediatric Dental Services in August 2014.

Dr. Koonce is survived by his daughter, Heather Steer (Nigel), granddaughter, Mackenzie and grandson, Riley, all of Sooke, British Columbia, Canada; and by his sister, Sandra Worthington (Wilson) of Carefree, Ariz.

Burial arrangements will be announced at a later date. The family suggests that any tributes to the memory of Dr. Koonce be directed to Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock.