

Dr. Larry R. Camp, Col., U.S. Army (Ret.)

1952-2015

Dr. Larry Roger Camp passed away peacefully at his Pensacola, Florida home on May 9, 2015 with his loving wife of 42 years, Diane Freeman Camp, at his side. He enjoyed spending the last few weeks of his life with family and friends, including his two daughters, Lindsey Camp Edelmann of Boynton Beach, Florida and Casey Camp Mettler of Seattle, Washington, and their spouses, Clifford Edelmann and Larsen Mettler; his brother, Ken Camp of Birmingham, Alabama; and his best friend for over 30 years, Dr. Robert Toney of Madison, Alabama.

Dr. Camp, a retired U.S. Army Colonel, was born in Birmingham, Alabama on January 5, 1952. He attended the University of Alabama-Birmingham for both his undergraduate and D.M.D. degrees. Upon his graduation from dental school, he joined the United States Army. He attended the AMEDD Officer Basic Course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas in 1977 and then deployed to Landstuhl, Germany. After serving in Landstuhl, Dr. Camp was an early selectee to dental residency and obtained his certification in Comprehensive Dentistry at Fort Hood, Texas in 1982. Later, Dr. Camp would be awarded the "A" Proficiency Designator in Comprehensive Dentistry by the Surgeon General, the highest designation available. Dr. Camp's military service included a number of dental command positions, including at Fort Drum, New York and Fort McClellan, Alabama. As a commander, he consistently achieved the highest dental readiness rates for military personnel, whom he loved and served. Dr. Camp's military career also included serving as Chief of Dental Services in Palmerola, Honduras; Professional Development Officer for the Dental Corps at PERSCOM; Executive Fellow to the Office of the Surgeon General and later with FORSCOM in Fort McPherson, Georgia; and Program Director for the Comprehensive Dentistry Residency at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Dr. Camp's military awards include the Legion of Merit (2 awards), Meritorious Service Medal (3 awards), and the Army Commendation Medal.

While serving in the Army, Dr. Camp started a long running career. After competing in his first 10k (6.2 miles) race in Texas in 1982, he was dared by a colleague to run the associated marathon (26.2 miles) the next day. He successfully completed that marathon in just over three hours (while acknowledging that "the wheels came off after the 16th mile"). He ran four more marathons over the course of the next four and a half months and qualified for the prestigious Boston Marathon during this time. Dr. Camp ran his first Boston Marathon in April 1983 and completed it with a time of 2 hours, 43 minutes. In total, he qualified and ran in the Boston Marathon six times. He also served on the All-Army Marathon Team in which he represented the U.S. Army in the Marathon of the Americas in Panama. Dr. Camp was the first American finisher in the Berlin Marathon in 1983, running the marathon in 2 hours and 37 minutes, his personal best time for a marathon. Dr. Camp also served as the team captain for various military running teams and led the Military District of Washington's Army team to win the first two Commander Cups in the Army 10-Miler.

Dr. Camp's career of service did not end with his military retirement in 2003. He served as a dentist for various low income dental clinics, worked as a dentist in several Alabama prisons, and most recently worked as a dentist at the VA in Pensacola, Florida. To the extent Dr. Camp had a "hobby", it was treating patients and mentoring others - something he continued to do in the final week of his life.

Dr. Camp is preceded in death by his father, William Alton Camp, and his mother, Anna Laura Camp, both of Birmingham, Alabama. He is survived by his wife, Diane, whom he met while working at Baptist Medical Center in Birmingham, Alabama, as a blood collector while working his way through his college in January 1972; his daughter Lindsey, a complex business litigation attorney with the law firm of Greenberg Traurig with whom Dr. Camp worked closely with on several pro bono matters involving patient rights; his daughter, Casey, a nurse who Dr. Camp had the honor of pinning her Airborne wings on during her time as an ROTC cadet at Syracuse University; his son-in-laws, Cliff and Larsen; his older brother, Ken, a retired fire fighter; his two grandchildren, Amelia Camp Edelmann and Samuel Ross Edelmann; and Ray and Parrish Knorr, whom Dr. Camp considered to be family.

Visitation will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Harper-Morris Memorial Chapel on Monday, May 11, 2015. The Funeral Service will be held at Harper-Morris Memorial Chapel at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2015. A Military Service at Barrancas National Cemetery will follow at 12:30 p.m. Active and honorary pallbearers will include: Ken Camp, Dr. Robert Toney, James Heinold, Dr. Andrew Himm, Ron Green, Richard Darden, Dr. Kristen Ann Wisniakowski, Dr. Kevin McGlynn, Dr. Ed Neiberlien, and Dr. Camp's three brother-in-laws, Bruce Freeman, Jeff Freeman, and Kelly Freeman, who served as the ring-bearer (throwing the ring pillow several times, as expected for a four year old) at Larry and Diane's 1972 wedding.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the ASPCA, the Southern Poverty Law Center, or hospice.

The family would like to give their special thanks to the entire staff of Sacred Heart Hospital, especially Dr. Elenor Tring who provided more love, support, and compassion than we could ever expect and for whom we are profoundly grateful; Dr. Fred Mettler, who provided us with an exceptional amount of information and materials relating to the treatment of thyroid cancer as well as support during our most difficult hours; Dr. Robert Toney, for his unwavering love and friendship; Dera Freeman and the rest of our family for sharing the tears for Dr. Camp that he refused to shed for himself; the staffs of the V.A. Dental Clinic in Pensacola and Biloxi, and the countless friends who refused to give up on Dr. Camp and who will ensure that his legend and his spirit of service will continue.