

WHO WAS RICHARD (DICK) PRIEM?

Summary: Dick Priem was incredibly **gifted** with intelligence and talents, but so **humble** he'd prefer to **serve** others than bask in the pride of his accomplishments. He was very **devoted** to family and the church. He died completely content with his life, **thankful** for his many blessings, and still thinking of others before himself.

Born 1/25/28, raised in Mayville, Wisconsin (pop. 2,000), very similar to Mayberry of the Andy Griffith Show

Earned a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from University of Wisconsin-Madison

5 Years service with the US Air Force Reserves (1952-57).

Met Kathleen Berger at work at NASA and married in 1956 (nearly 58 years of marriage). Father of 5 children (Rich, Terese, David, Betsy and Jeff), four engineers and one with business career.

A 30-year career with NASA Lewis Research center as a rocket scientist, a worldwide expert in the field of rocket propulsion, powering Apollo and other manned space flights.

A second career as Director of Research for American Gas Association, and a third career as independent consultant for combustion technology. And on the side, just for fun, invented and patented a washing machine that employs jet propulsion principles!

Loved nature: hunting, fishing, canoeing and whitewater kayaking, hiking the mountains with his family, and at home, relaxing on the patio watching wildlife in the woods out back.

A man of few words, who only believed in talking if he had something meaningful to say. His final advice to his family: "be good". But in his final days, rallied himself for an extensive goodbye, personally addressing each member of his family.

A consummate do it yourselfer, who shared his skills with many – never hired a contractor because he could install or fix ANYTHING; remodeling or building decks or additions on each of his 5 kids' homes, even replacing his own roof after retirement. Made multiple kayaks for each member of the family, paddles, wetsuits, etc. Also helped many fellow kayakers build their own boats. Also a

skilled carpenter (taught by his father), made his own cabinetry, and gifts of rocking horses, incredible jungle gyms and decks, etc.

A devoted family man, home every night right after work, always working on projects for the family & home, taking wife & kids on many of his major business trips. Hauling all the family and gear to kayaking rivers most summer weekends. Patiently driving the family station wagon all over the country and to Mexico and Canada on 4-week summer camping vacations each year.

He taught many people by example: respectful of everyone, committed to duties and responsibilities, always giving 100%. He was a gracious mentor to those interested in learning from him.

Generous with his time and talents, always serving others (colleagues, neighbors, friends, church, community), always serving, rarely complaining, never expecting/wanting to be served.

Humble – never talked about himself. The family learned many significant things about him from others' testimonials, such as his retirement party, 50th wedding anniversary cards/letters, etc. Never used his PhD title or talked about his many awards and accomplishments, except he did like the photos showing off his best fish catches, and telling the story of catching Walter the Walleye. Our family ate a lot of fresh fish!

Consistently maintained long-term (lifetime) friendships, with colleagues, church friends, bridge club and committee members, fishing and paddling buddies). International colleagues visiting NASA were always invited to the Priem "B&B". He and Kathleen welcomed every guest as if family, making sure they were as comfortable as if they were at home. He was grill master at countless family graduation or wedding celebrations.

As he saw his death approaching, his top priority was to maintain his life at home with Kathleen, and to make his passing as easy as possible for his family. Even to his last words, he only spoke to reassure family that we need not worry over him, that he's grateful for the good life he's been blessed with and is content and ready to be received into the Lord's kingdom.