

Ellsworth “Kent” Rogers

December 12, 1929 - November 22, 2016

(From Grocefuneralhome.com)

Kent Rogers, B.S., D.D.S., age 86 of Asheville, N.C., passed away physically on November 22, 2016.

He was born and raised in Hinton, West Virginia, a railroad town on The New River, the river that flows north. Kent is the son of Ellsworth Kent Rogers JR. ("Toots") and Vera Margaret O'Connor Rogers; both parents are deceased. A younger brother, retired LTC Jack L. Rogers is also deceased, as well as numerous aunts, uncles.

During the high school years in Hinton, Kent enjoyed competitive sports; and, his senior year was appointed captain of the football, basketball, and baseball teams. Declining a professional baseball contract with the St. Louis Cardinals' organization, he worked out with the New York "Yankees" at Hertford, N.C. in the spring of 1947. Kent entered Wake Forest College on a baseball scholarship in the fall of 1947, at Wake Forest, N.C., where he played four years of varsity baseball and finished 2nd in the 1949 College World Series.

In 1951 Wake Forest College was chosen to represent the United States of America in baseball competition in the First Pan-American Olympic Games held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Kent played center-field/3rd base, hitting .304 and fielding without an error. The United States baseball team finished 2nd with a silver medal.

Following graduation from Wake Forest College with a B.S. in General Science (Pre-med), he migrated into Nova Scotia, Canada to play baseball in the Halifax and District League. Ultimately, four summers were played at the position of 2nd base for the Stellarton Albions. The Albions won the league championship play-offs in 1951-52-53.

Making the decision to pursue higher education in the summer of 1951, Kent entered Marshall College at the end of the baseball season to work toward a master's degree in Biological Sciences. Following acceptance at Northwestern

University School of Dentistry in Chicago, Illinois, Kent initiated his dental education in the fall of 1952.

Following graduation from Northwestern University Dental School in June 1956, Kent entered the United States Air Force. After serving his country four years, a position as a staff dentist with the V.A. Hospital in Oteen, N.C. was accepted. Kent worked as a staff dentist from November 1960-1962. In January 1962, a private practice of dentistry was opened in East Asheville. Following forty-four years of a general practice of dental science, Kent retired in 2006, after the sale of his practice to Dr. Doug Phillips.

Following Kent's eleven years in competitive sports, he was honored to be included into several sports Hall of Fames; including the Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame in 1980. Without God's gift of athletic ability, becoming a dentist to serve people would never had been possible for a poor boy from the hills of West Virginia. Kent enjoyed a wonderful romance with dentistry and was privileged to serve many wonderful clients during his fifty years "down in the mouth".

Kent is survived by his wife, Gail F. Rogers; sister, Mary Lu Crawford; five children with Shirley Mellotte Bumgarner, Cheryl R. Pope and husband David, Donna R. Cavanaugh and husband Bill, Steven K. Rogers and wife Darnell, David W. Rogers and friend Paul Baker, "Patty" R. Richardson and husband John; seven grandchildren, Samuel, Roxanne, and Isabel Pope, Brianna C. Jones and husband Brandon, Kara Cavanaugh, and Joseph and Anna Richardson; and a great-grandson "Baby Jones" on the way. Kent is also survived by his wife's three children, Pat Howard and wife Barbara, Wendell Howard and wife Amy, Kelly H. Beasley and husband Keith; her grandchildren, Josh Howard and wife Jess, Jacob Howard, Taylor Howard and wife Leah, Keri H. Piller and husband Keenan, Kadee and Maggie Beasley, Caroline and Scott Bailey, and Kirsten Price; and her great-grandchildren, Hudson and Sutton Howard, Hawkins Howard, and Layla Price.

The family will receive friends from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 29, 2016, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, with funeral services beginning at 12:30 p.m. Graveside services will follow at 2:00 p.m. at the Western Carolina State Veteran's Cemetery in Black Mountain.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to: E.K. Rogers and Family Athletic Scholarship for Christian Athletes, Wake Forest University, c/o Deacon Club, 499 Deacon Blvd., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27105.