



Douglas K. Lilly

June 16, 1929 - June 24, 2018

Douglas K. Lilly died on June 24, 2018 in his home in Amherst, Nebraska after a long illness. Doug was born in San Francisco, CA on June 16, 1929. He grew up in San Carlos and attended Stanford University, majoring in Physics. He served in the Navy during the Korean War on a minesweeper. Though he did not greatly enjoy his period of service, referring to it as the coldest time in his life, he appreciated the opportunity to travel to interesting places. In 1953, Doug entered a graduate program in Meteorology at Florida State University, where he met his wife, Judith Ann Schuh, to whom he would be married for over 63 years. As a research scientist, Doug focused on stratocumulus clouds; he performed fundamental research in the fields of meteorology and geophysical fluid dynamics, significantly enhancing our understanding of the mechanisms and processes within large scale weather patterns that led to our current ability to forecast storms. He worked to develop simulation and modeling of atmospheric convection for the United States Weather Bureau in Washington D.C as a Senior Research Scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in Boulder, CO, and finally as a Professor at the School of Meteorology where he held several Directorships and mentored numerous graduate students. In 1993 he received the prestigious Symons Gold Medal from the Royal Meteorological Society and on 1999 was elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors that can be accorded to a scientist. In 2002, he retired from the

University and he and Judy moved to Nebraska to be closer to family. Although Doug had always been fascinated by weather, he had many other interests as well. During his time at Stanford, he was on the rowing crew, and throughout his life was an avid skier and energetic hiker. At 6'4" in height, he left most of his family struggling to catch up, then took them on "short cuts" down the mountain that didn't always quite work out but instilled a spirit of "finding your own path." He also loved gardening, birdwatching, and construction and built two of the family's homes. Although suffering from short term memory loss in his later years, he retained his quick wit and sense of humor. Most of all, he never let the bastards get him down!

He is survived by his wife (Judy), a sister and brother in California (Margaret Poole and Andrew Lilly) three children, Kathryn Dunbar (Lafayette, CO), Donald Lilly (Longmont, CO), and Carol Lilly (Amherst, NE), and multiple grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He will be greatly missed. The family would also like to express their gratitude to the caregivers who made Doug's life so much richer during the last years and months of his life: Nancy Smolik, Brandon and Don Ulrich, Iris Shields, Juli Klingelhofer, Tiphany Puga and Jessica Blair.

Memorials are suggested to the family to be designated later.

Tribute Wall



“ *Douglas K. Lilly*

January 29, 2023 at 11:14 AM



“ *Andrew L. purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Douglas K. Lilly.*



Andrew L. - July 03, 2018 at 02:26 AM



“ *Limin Zhao and Cheng-Zhi Zou purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Douglas K. Lilly.*



Limin Zhao and Cheng-Zhi Zou - July 01, 2018 at 09:36 PM

“ When I first told friends from the University of Michigan that I was going to interview at the School of Meteorology at the University of Oklahoma, I was told over and over how cool it would be to be a part of the same department as the amazing Doug Lilly. After all of their descriptions of the work that Doug had done, I was more than a little nervous when I had to go talk with this obviously brilliant man during my interview process. When I walked into his CIMMS office, there was Doug with his shoes off and feet up on his desk. He very quickly made me feel completely comfortable and I was sorry when our time was up.

Doug and Judy were one of the few faculty who bucked the norm and chose to live on acreage in east Norman (definitely considered “the wrong side of the tracks” when I moved to Norman in the early 1990s). My husband and I followed their lead and never regretted it for a moment. Once when Doug and Judy were at our house for an official function, all Doug wanted to talk about was the fact that he had seen a painted bunting (a very colorful bird) in our backyard. He’d been looking for one for a long time, but had never seen one at his house. Now whenever I see a painted bunting I can’t help but think of Doug, and how absolutely delighted this great man was at seeing a small bird.

Over the years, most of our conversations were centered around pets, gardening, and nature in general. There were plenty of brilliant people with whom he could discuss his research, but apparently not so many who wanted to know about the flora and fauna of east Norman. Doug helped me understand that it was OK to have an interest in life outside of the university.

I missed Doug a lot when he retired and moved – but my memories of him and the life lessons I learned from him will always be with me. My deepest condolences to Judy and the rest of Doug’s family.





Susan Postawko - June 29, 2018 at 06:05 PM

YL

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Yu-Chieng Liou - June 27, 2018 at 08:17 PM

YL

“ My deepest condolence to Dr. Lilly's family. I am always very grateful to Dr. Lilly's guidance and great help when I was his Ph.D. student at OU.

Yu-Chieng Liou - June 27, 2018 at 08:04 PM

JS

“ Jenny Sun purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Douglas K. Lilly.



Jenny Sun - June 27, 2018 at 06:41 PM

Profile icon

“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Douglas K. Lilly.



June 27, 2018 at 05:33 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Douglas K. Lilly.* ”



June 27, 2018 at 04:20 PM

KA

“ Dear Judy, Kathy, Donald and Carol and all the Lilly family,

All the wonderful things that Dr. Lilly taught us will be with us all of our lives.

From Kathy:

Two of my fondest memories of Dr. Lilly are the following: 1) when we would often wander into my office and I would be ready for a tough scientific question, and he would tell me all about the wild birds and the beautiful blueheron that flew over the lake by his home that particular morning instead; and 2) the time I had just had a breakthrough in my research and I showed him the graph (with all the proper axis and contour labels!), and he said nothing, but smiled from ear to ear and patted me on the back.

From Jerry:

I remember Dr. Lilly's love of animals and all nature. He loved the sound of the pelicans as they flapped their wings as they flew over toward the Lake at dusk. He respected the Oklahoma Black Oak when they "fought back" when he tried to trim them. I also recall the time when Kathy and I were leaving the building to go storm chasing and without thinking he said, "wait, I'll go along" and he did. His musings and observations of the clouds and storms that day were a rare treat and glimpse of his way of thinking.

The example of his life will continue to teach us.

Please know you are all in our thoughts.

Sincerely,

Kathy Kanak & Jerry Straka



Katharine - June 27, 2018 at 03:47 PM

JK

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Joe Klemp - June 27, 2018 at 03:26 PM

JK

“ *1 file added to the album Tribute Wall*



Joe Klemp - June 27, 2018 at 03:21 PM