

Eulogy for George Goodheart **By Carroll Velie**

I always knew my Dad was special - handsome, for sure, with his shiny black hair, clear blue eyes, and perpetual tan - I wanted him to run for President. I didn't even realize that he was short until I started dating taller boys in high school. Back then he seemed sophisticated, wearing long camel hair coats striding down the streets with his hands behind his back whistling "I'll Take Manhattan." He read *The New Yorker*, smoked a pipe, and was drinking green tea long before anyone was ordering chai lattes.

Growing up Goodheart was pure "Ozzie and Harriet" - or better yet "Father Knows Best." Mark, my sister Beth (Betsy, Liz, Udge) and I were Dad's little holistic experiment: no shots, pop, or white sugar, only whole wheat flour; if it didn't come from the ground or spoil we didn't eat it. At the dinner table we talked about the evils of flouride, the power of the AMA, and Barry Goldwater. He wore his tie to the table, which shouldn't surprise any of you, and during Sunday dinners he always referred to his father as "sir." His life was full with long hours at the office, tennis, and walks with Walt Schmitt, but we could always count on him to show up at our plays, meets, and matches even if it was just for the tail end.

As the oldest, I got to work in his office downtown during the summer and developed a very different appreciation for my Dad as a doctor and healer. I would see people in enormous pain come into the waiting room (and that was the appropriate word) and leave standing upright and smiling. He instinctively knew how to market his practice, "give the patients a choice of two times, don't let them know that the whole day is available." People paid in cash (\$6 or \$8), he developed his own X-rays, and often kept specimens in the refrigerator at home. My mother and grandmother washed the cotton gowns every night and pressed them in a mangle sending them back daily in a brown paper bag. In the office Dad was the maestro with his white coat, warmly greeting patients like old friends, professional and always a gentleman as he moved patients from room to room.

One of the great benefits of those summers was going to lunch with my Dad, being exposed to his downtown world. The waitresses knew him by name at all the restaurants from the Statler and Stouffers to Greektown, in smoky dives and swanky chophouses he moved comfortably with a smile and a healthy tip at the ready. As the oldest, I was the recipient of the George Goodheart homestyle brand of wisdom: "treat people the way you want to be treated," "love everyone even if you don't like everyone," "you get what you give," "if you expect the best it will happen," "find your passion and money will follow," "worry about only what you can control," and the overarching premise that conventional wisdom was to be questioned.

The teacher we knew as kids became evident to the rest of the world with the introduction of AK. He was never happier than when demonstrating ("Resist") his latest epiphany or discovery. Layering story after story, his lectures were more than medical innovation, they were grounded in the same truisms that we'd heard at the dinner table or at lunch or, famously, in the family bathroom.

As we grew older relationships changed but the lessons remained the same. I remember long letters in Dad's distinctive handwriting composed on airline stationery as he spread the word on AK, and I remember ski trips with Beth, disguised as the "Dirty Dozen's" meetings in Gaylord. I remember the chivalrous tennis match between my injured husband-to-be and my likewise injured father. I remember Dad's proud face when he announced Wally would be going to Chiropractic College. And I remember the long months leading to the death of our beautiful Kitty. Our family was changing and expanding. Mark met Mary, Beth went to college, and father began talking about a lovely young woman in his office. Before we knew it his smile had returned and JoAnn became his bride. It was no longer "Father Knows Best," but that same unconditional love remained, the circle was just getting bigger. George and JoAnn traveled the world, widening their AK family. I saw my father become a father figure to many of you, which eased the pain when he lost his own son, Mark.

The George Goodheart that we shared was a man of honor and integrity. He was loyal and if he liked something - say - Blue Mt. Coffee, zucchini, Da Eduardo's veal chops, Standard Process, blue blazers with khaki pants, corvettes, tennis, shrimp cocktail, fanciful arrangements of melon balls, kiwis, bacon, anything WWII, John Metras, or anything coming out from JoAnn's kitchen - you knew he really liked it. He never gossiped, rarely raised his voice, or used profanity. He was a spiritual man and wasn't prone to smallness. He was curious and knew something about most everything. He loved his work and his family. Even in ill health he would brighten when JoAnn entered the room and he never let an opportunity go by to tell the world what she meant to him. He delighted in delighting others - from apricots to miniature motorcycles, to the perfect birthday cards. He reveled in the successes of his grandsons, he reveled in the successes of us all. He gave us confidence to challenge the standard and the accepted, he gave us the courage to see a world of possibilities.

"Va de Bon coeur" ... so go with good heart father, husband, grandfather, doctor, teacher, friend. It was a life well lived and model to those who follow.