

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS RICHARD J. THURRELL

Richard J. Thurrell, MD, distinguished professor emeritus in the Department of Psychiatry, died on March 24, 2012. He was 83.

He was born in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin on February 25, 1929, to teachers Edith Bergstrom and George Thurrell. Through his father, he was brought into the Unitarian Universalist faith, which remained a source of spiritual inspiration and humanist engagement throughout Richard's life.

His father's Yankee family hailed from Stockbridge and North Adams, Massachusetts, with roots in Nova Scotia. His mother was the child of Swedish immigrants. His Bergstrom cousins were always very important to him, especially after his father's death when he was 12. He and his brother Roger lived with them as siblings. His family spent many summers with the Bergstroms, Olsons, and Keithleys on Lake Enterprise in Langlade County, Wisconsin. Dick enjoyed the nature and serenity of the North Woods throughout his life.

In high school, Dick was swim team captain and state champion, physics club member, and sportswriter for the *Washington Scroll*. His future spouse, Mary Demeter, was his editor. He graduated in 1947 from Washington High School in Milwaukee.

Richard attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and later, UW-Madison. He worked briefly at the Wiltwyck School for Boys in Esopus, New York. He served in the U.S. Public Health Service (1955-58) and did his medical residencies and USPHS duty all over the United States including Hawaii, New York, Texas, California and Kentucky. On his return to Madison, he was happily reacquainted with Mary, and they were married on November 22, 1958.

Dick returned to Madison and in time, became full professor in the UW Medical School. He served patients there and at Mendota State Hospital, the Veterans Administration Hospital, the Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the School for the Deaf, and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections.

During his career as a psychiatrist, he was involved in the treatment of the mentally ill and incarcerated. As a Wisconsin Psychiatric Association delegate, he was active in various offices and committees of both the WPA and the American Psychiatric Association for 54 years; he was honored as a distinguished life member in 2003. Dick enjoyed traveling as an American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology examiner and attended various APA, WPA, and residency directors meetings. Richard deeply appreciated his time as head of the UW Psychiatric Department residency program both as a teacher and colleague; he had great respect for his many students and professional partners.

Dick liked to spend his free time with his three daughters, Mali, Lisa and Ede. He was an avid reader, tree planter and gardener, and artist/painter. He collected dumb jokes, cartoons, humorous writing and especially terrible greeting cards.

Later in his life, Dick won many national awards for the publication he edited, *The Wisconsin Psychiatrist*. Many remember his reviews of classic movies. From his psychiatry department days until recently, he continued to exercise at the UW Cardiac Rehab Center. Early in his retirement, he extended his many years at the VA hospital by counseling a group of WWII veterans. Richard remained a supporter of many charitable, artistic, and liberal causes. He enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren Zoe, Sofi and Max LaLonde, and gently ribbing his sons-in-law John LaLonde and Robert Cleary.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
Ned H. Kalin