

The Life and Times
of
DR. NEAL KIRKPATRICK

July 5, 1919 — February 12, 2017



Reflections by his son
Dr. Richard Kirkpatrick

WISCONSIN ROOTS

After being born in Richland Center (SW Wisconsin) and growing up in Baraboo (central Wisconsin), Dr. Neal and his 4 brothers all graduated from the University of Wisconsin (known around here as "the other UW"). Their boyhood home at 116 South Randall, was just a few blocks from UW's 80,000 seat Camp Randall Stadium. This large 5 bedroom home was a key source of money for the family; generally 2 or 3 bedrooms were rented out to college students. Bob, Neal, Vernon, Don, and Wendell became lifelong Badger fans.

At UW, Dr. Neal first majored in music, then decided that music was a better hobby than career, so he switched to biology. He was first chair flute in the UW Concert Band.



After graduating from UW, he entered the UW Medical School, from which he graduated in 1944.



At the Methodist Wesley Activities Center Dr. Neal met Ethel Carola Hull, who was secretary of the Panhellenic Council and active in musical productions. They married in 1945. She faithfully assisted him with his many activities and provided the traditional nurture, homework aid, encouragement and transportation for the 4 kids.



After working in Richland Center with his cousin Dick Edwards, who had inspired him to become a physician, Dr. Neal and Ethel moved to Rochester, MN, where he was admitted to the Surgery Residency Program. There was just one problem - his hands were too big. So, he transferred to Internal Medicine. In 1947 he published the first ever journal article on NPH insulin (still in use today), and also completed his Master's Degree from the University of Minnesota, with thesis on Aortic Aneurysms. In 1948 he was named a Senior Resident Associate (junior faculty) in Cardiology. He sang in the Mayo Men's Chorus.

THE JOURNEY TO LONGVIEW AND CREATION OF THE KIRKPATRICK CLINIC

In 1949 Dr. Neal, Ethel and sons Richard and John (both born in Rochester) moved to Lincoln NB, where he joined The Pervis Clinic. Unhappy with the roles assigned by Dr. Pervis, he answered a call from his Mayo Surgery friend, Dr. Fred Parke, and moved the family to Longview. Their office was in the top floor of the historic General Mortgage Building.

Daughters Carol and Jane were born in Longview.

Three years later, Dr. Neal was inducted into the US Air Force and, after training in Alabama, was sent (with the family) to be Chief of Medicine at the 5005th USAF Hospital at Elmendorff AFB, near Anchorage. In 1955, after a stressful relationship between the efficiency-minded captain and the bureaucratic colonel, Dr. Neal was suddenly afflicted by acute Rheumatoid Arthritis, including the gnarly hands typical of the disease. He was given a medical discharge, and returned to Longview, where the Clinic had been run by Dr. Wendell, his youngest brother, who finished his residency at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore just in time to step in when Dr. Neal joined the Air Force. Between 1953 and 1955, Wendell acquired the practices of several elderly doctors who were retiring or relocating, so when Neal returned, there was plenty of work for the two young, energetic doctors.

In 1857 architect Bob Newhall, Wendell and Neal created a unique circular clinic design, purchased land on the Civic Center, and moved their clinic. This set up featured "one-stop shopping" that included lab, xray, ECG, and minor surgery. They practiced in this clinic until their retirements in 1997 (WCK) and 2007 (NRK).



FAMILY LIFE



During the 1950s, Dr. Neal took his family on summer excursions to Wisconsin, generally riding the Empire Builder or the Great Northern Railway trains to Portage (a 2 day ride) where Uncle Bob would pick them up and transport them to 116 S. Randall in Madison. Riding the train provided a basic understanding of the size of our country but also taught the kids how to enjoy 48 hours of confinement with neither radio nor television for entertainment. In Madison, they enjoyed card games, fishing Lake Mendota with Grandpa Bruce, running around Vilas Park and Zoo, and playing mini-golf with Uncles Bob, Don, and Vernon and their families. Unfortunately, these trips never included Dr. Wendell and Mickey and their 5 children. Because keeping the Clinic open was crucial, the two families had to come to Madison separately.

THE TENNIS COURT, THE TENNIS PLAYER and COMMON SENSE TENNIS

A favorite family story concerns the building of a tennis court in the back yard at 2227 Cascade Way. After polling his wife and 4 children (all of whom voted for a swim pool), Dr. Neal announced soberly, "Well the vote is in, it's 6 to 5 for a tennis court." It was a wise move, as the lighted court was used by thousands of people over 60 years for church youth group functions, tennis matches, high school tennis practices, private lessons, touch football, hockey, soccer, volleyball, lighting off fireworks, YMCA basketball team practices, and Midnight Basketball on Fridays and Saturdays. At a LCC Hall of Fame Banquet years ago, current Colorado Rockies MLB manager Buddy Black publically thanked Neal and Ethel for allowing him and his buddies Kelly Smith and Kirc Roland, to play basketball till 2AM on Friday and Saturday nights, a safe alternative to drinking parties

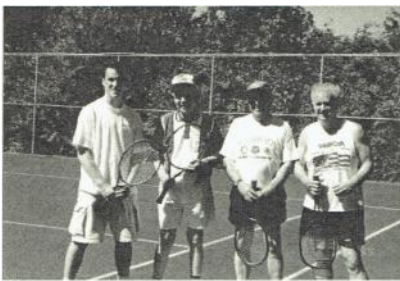
For Neal, tennis was a game of tactics; he was neither a power player nor a scrambler. "Keep getting it back, especially to the opponent's backhand side, and eventually he/she will make a mistake." "Better to hit it in

than to hit it **hard.**" "Get every first serve in; a serve into the net or outside the lines, is a fault, even if it has great spin and travels 100 miles per hour. " If they like it hard and low, hit it high and slow."

Sons Rich and John did well as under-aged, under-sized (and also under-skilled) high school doubles players with a strategy of lob it back, lob it back, lob it back, smash it at the net. They played in amateur tennis tournaments at UW in college and medical school and at Mayo Clinic. After John grew to 6'4, the defensive strategy was no longer necessary. Jane played high school tennis and college basketball, and was a high school basketball and tennis coach in Seattle. As an eventual consequence of Dad's tennis court decision in 1958, John's entire family are top level tennis players; daughter Julie became a college all American at Scripps. Son Brad, who played on the Pomona College team, has a flourishing Seattle after-school tennis business, teaching the game to hundreds of young students after school. John and his wife Cori are executive directors of the American Medical Tennis Association and play in international tournaments for medical couples.

Dad never took a tennis lesson; Longview had neither a pro nor an indoor court until around 1980. He didn't think lessons were necessary for his level of participation. Besides, his common sense approach often defeated more talented and athletic opponents.

Although he was a friendly opponent, Dr. Neal enjoyed winning. Take a look at this photo of him and his partner Andrew Benton after they conquered son Rich and Seattle Times columnist Don Duncan to win The Greater Seabeck Open Doubles Tournament.



OTHER SPORTS

Dad always had a soft spot for the Chicago Cubs MLB team, probably because of their constant underdog role, and the fact that he did his internship at Evanston Hospital and Wesley Hospital, both in north-end Chicago. With pride, he wore his Cubs jacket when he threw out the first pitch at the newly lit Western Youth Baseball Fields, in Longview in 2003.

Dad enjoyed playing city and church league basketball and shooting baskets with kids and grandkids on the tennis court. His 2 handed set shot was deadly from the baseline, and he shot free throws underhanded. He enjoyed playing hoops, and one noteworthy experience was getting a significant facial laceration going after a loose ball at age 84. He declined aid and kept playing. He very much enjoyed the games played by his Longview grandchildren and grandnephews.

As for football, he was a late convert. Though Sunday afternoons were often spent playing touch football down at Mark Morris, Dr. Neal had doubts about tackle football—figuring that Rich and John would surely get injured, and hence vetoing their typical aspirations to play for the school team—but ultimately enjoying watching grandsons Jim, Ron and Scotty and great grandchildren Hayden and Riley play. The closest Neal came to playing tackle football, was dressing up in professional sized shoulder pads and football helmet, and darting between tables in the Seabeck Dining Hall while the crowd sang Mr. Touchdown USA.

The Kirkpatricks' professional football passion was the Green Bay Packers in the 50s and 60s when everybody else in Longview rooted for the Rams or 49ers. Even at age 97, Neal loved to wear his true leather Green Bay jacket and one of his 4 ornate Packer caps—especially to church on game days. He backed the Packers even when they played his grandchildren's favorite Seahawks and Vikings.



MEDICAL EDUCATOR, INNOVATOR, AND LIFE-LONG LEARNER

Dr. Neal loved teaching medicine, and concurrently recruiting help-and scientifically-minded young people into careers as Doctors, Nurses, Therapists and technicians.

He inspired (or wore down) The Sisters to finance the first Coronary Care Unit in western Washington, and then, to purchase and install heart monitors for every bed on the 7th floor cardiology unit at St. John's. Not even Mayo Clinic outfitted those rooms in this fashion. Many lives were saved because the monitors detected life-threatening arrhythmias before symptoms began, or immediately upon cardiac arrest, so that staff could initiate CPR and

defibrillation before fatal brain damage occurred.

Many of today's senior RNs recount fond memories of his informal answering of questions and formal lectures on current medical topics, particularly Heart Disease. He taught scores of nurses to read ECGs, believing that THEY, rather than doctors, were always close by when a patient experienced chest pain or other signs of arrhythmia or heart attack.

On the public health scene, he funded speakers for the Annual Heart Foundation dinner, bringing in national experts like cardiologist Howard Burchill and heart surgeon Albert Starr. They spoke to hundreds of locals who then participated in door-to-door fund drives... proceeds for new equipment at St. John's.

He also argued successfully to achieve smoke-free status for first St John's doctors' lounge, and then the entire hospital. Thousands of patients quit smoking at his behest.

One of his major passions was Lowering Cholesterol. He was an early proponent of low-fat diets and championed egg beaters, margarine instead of butter, and after coming home from a cardiology meeting, "BLUE MILK" (i.e. skim milk). He and Wendell developed a diet that eerily reminds one of today's DASH and other diets: Lean Meats, Fruits and Vegetables, Skim Milk, Sherbet or ice milk, and avoidance of heavy sugar and starch intake.

He was involved in creation of the revolutionary Starr-Edwards heart valves in the early 1960s. He was Margaret Edwards' cardiologist in Longview, while her husband, a Weyerhaeuser engineer, worked with Albert Starr to design an artificial heart valve that would save her life and many thousands of other's.

Dr. Neal also believed that all health care workers should know about the latest developments in Medicine. To accomplish that end, he read over 60 different medical journals every month, selecting 20-30 articles per week, which he summarized into short paragraphs for his newsletter, ***The Second Opinion***. He paid for printing and paper, and distributed these to every medical office, nursing home nurses-desk, and hospital ward, for 30 years. Many years later, the famous New England Journal of Medicine created a for-profit version of this concept, entitled JOURNAL WATCH. Today there are at least a dozen organizations that put out weekly or

daily summaries of the latest in medical news. Dr. Neal was always willing to share opinions on medical topics with the Longview Daily News.

Dr. Neal was also known to family members for his habit of systematically defacing text books so they had no resale value: he underlined and wrote in the margins of every page. Second wife Carolyn Feasey, whom he married in 2001 after Ethel's death, noted that once on a cruise he read and outlined a 1500 page textbook in a week.



Around 1975, the American Medical Association created "The Physicians' Recognition Award" (PRA)." The notion was, if you put in a documented 100 hours of medical study or attendance at lectures, the AMA would send you a certificate (suitable for framing and displaying in your office), which you could then use to satisfy medical license renewals. Dr. Neal accumulated nearly 40 of them.

Imitating the Mayo Brothers, he enjoyed going to conferences around the world, learning of new developments before they were published, and bringing the information back to St. John's....where he would "encourage" the Sisters to purchase the product or implement the system. These concepts helped make Mayo Clinic into the leading health care institution in the world, and helped St.

Johns become the premier hospital in our region.

Dr. Neal also enjoyed writing theses and qualifying for membership in professional societies. He amassed more credentials than most Medical School Professors. (BS, MD, MS, FACP, FACC, FACCP, FACA, FICA, FIAPS) He also attended a couple medical conventions each year, generally taking the family along. They would play by the pool until scientific sessions were done, then join with Dr. Neal in seeing in the sights.

Dr. Neal served the Medical Staff of St Johns as Chief of Medicine, President of the Medical Staff, and Director of Medical Education. As DME, he created "The Noon Roundtables," in which mostly out-of-town experts would share lunch with medical and nursing staff, and discuss new developments. Over 30 years, 1560 were held. (Of course, true to his practical nature, Dr. Neal lobbied the State Medical Board to certify that these sessions qualified for licensure requirements and the AMA PRA.)

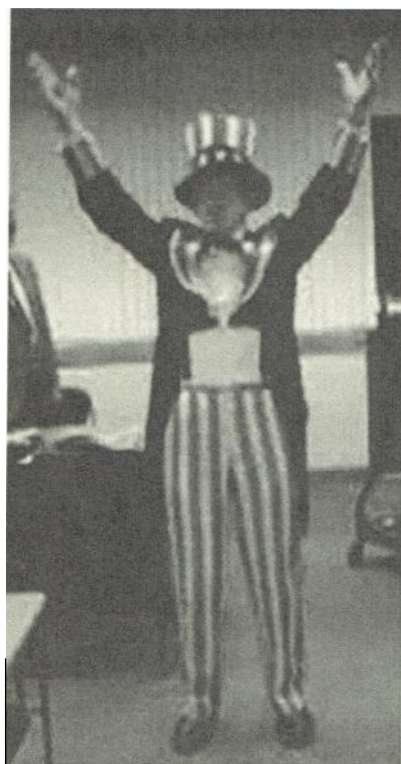
THE HAM AND MUSICAL PRODUCTIVITY

Neal was, at heart, a Showman. This attribute may have been spawned in Baraboo, where the Ringling Brothers circus spent winters. The thousands of circus workers were all entertainers and showmen, after all. The 5 Kirkpatrick boys delivered newspapers and worked many odd-jobs for the Ringlings and other performers, and attended events at the (then new, now historic) Ringling Theater.

In Madison, he led the Radio Hall Firemen, a band of 20 players (5 Kirkpatricks) that performed a live radio show on Saturday mornings, and rode around in an old fire truck, dressed as firemen. In the "souvenir postcard" that station WHA ("The oldest Station in the Nation") sent out to 8000 listeners who phoned in, Neal is conducting the group using an axe instead of a baton. Neal was first chair flute in the UW band.



While in the Air Force, he was named conductor of the Anchorage Symphony and Chorus.



On several occasions Dr. Neal could be seen dressed as Uncle Sam, in red/white striped slacks, bright blue sport jacket and white shirt and tie. The two most memorable events at which Uncle Sam "worked the crowd into a frenzy" were a SWW Symphony concert at the Columbia Theatre, and a Massed Pianos festival at the Monticello Gym, in which he led 20 pianists performing The Stars and Stripes Forever.

'Whip up the crowd' was also his mantra at annual last-week-in-July SEABECK FAMILY CAMP, where he led after-meal singing. Mr. Touchdown, the MTA, Mrs. O'Leary (Fire! Fire! Fire!), New Ashmolian, and an interesting Russ Rhodes version of simultaneous college songs BOW DOWN TO WASHINGTON and the WSU FIGHT SONG that fought each other until finally ending on the same note.

Another Seabeck highlight was the annual performance of The Kirkpatrick Family Bottle Band: 2 fifes, jugs, and bottles BCD, EF, GA. Generally all parts were doubled or tripled, depending on who was available to play tunes arranged by Adam P. Lesinski. Dr. Neal got the idea from the Longview Kiwanis

Amateur Show in 1957, when the combined choir, band and orchestra students from R.A. Long HS performed a massive bottle band concert.



Dad also was Drum Major for the Seabeck Children's Parade, generally marching ahead of 30 or 40 little kids, while a pep band of campers played The Mickey Mouse Club March over and over and over.

Dr. Neal believed strongly that successful musical performance depended more on practice than innate talent. He also believed in teaching The Work Ethic. The kids got no allowance, but instead had the opportunity to do manual things like wash the car or mow the lawn for a dime, or shine shoes for a nickel. The bonanza payoff, however, was music practice. The deal was this: Practice for 8 hours for a week and you got a quarter; fall short of 8 and you were fined 50 cents. Many weekend afternoons were spent "catching up" in order to get the quarter and prevent the 50 cent loss. The by product was accumulating enough ability and muscle memory, to be able to continue playing long after leaving high school.

Dr. Neal's love of music was passed (Nature? Nurture?) on to his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, especially daughter, Carol, who has been a church organist/pianist, accompanist and piano teacher for over 40 years. Additionally, grandson Dave has composed and recorded 5 CDs of Christian rock songs. The complete roster (9 too young to start) includes:

Clarinet, oboe and flute: 1 each

Sax and French Horn: 2 each

Trombone, guitar and bass guitar: 3 each

Trumpet and piano: 17 each

Baritone and Drums: 6 each

Grand Total 62. This number will grow as great grandchildren from Carol's and Jane's grandchildren become old enough to play.



In 1952, Dr. Neal got an ambitious idea: put together a choir and orchestra, to perform *Handel's MESSIAH* at Christmas time. Response from choir and instrumentalists was so positive, and audiences so responsive, that two performances (Saturday 8pm and Sunday 4pm) were provided. Because of his background in band and orchestral music, he understood the thought processes of busy high-caliber musicians. Therefore the orchestra generally had only one rehearsal, and it was structured so that those with roles in only a few of the 15 pieces, could rehearse their portions and then go home. Generally the production included 85 singers and 35 instrumentalists.

Dr. Neal's co-producer of these concerts was Iry Gattiker, cellist and conductor of the fledgling Southwest Washington Symphony Orchestra. He and Dr. Neal adjusted the over 2-hour long oratorio into an 80-90 minute concert through judicious cuts and omissions of some of the lesser known selections. Dad's emotional conducting created the joyous mood likely envisioned by Handel, and he always teared up while conducting the Hallelujah Chorus. To serve the musical needs of musicians who didn't attend Longview Community Church, he encouraged singers from other churches to join the concerts. As mentioned, the "easy" rehearsal schedule allowed him to recruit the top string and wind and brass players in the area. Twice he took the choir and orchestra to Portland to perform live on Channel 6.

In the early 1960s, he got another out-of-the-box idea, namely to present Patriotic Concerts. First came *The Union*, a collection of Civil War tunes and narration. Then, the next year, *The Confederacy*, a similar cantata. And finally, *Patriotic Music*, featuring the top selections from both.

Also in these years, The Temple Singers and Orchestra performed various other classical compositions, such as Dubois' *The Seven Last Words of Christ*. These were free concerts, but offerings were collected, always with proceeds to The Salvation Army and **FISH**.

Dr. Neal also persuaded 5 senior ministers that Independence Day Sunday ought to be more of a concert than a traditional church service. Once again, brass and full-stop organ accompanied the choir in *Battle Hymn*, *God Bless America*, *My Country Tis of Thee*, *America the Beautiful*, and *The National Anthem*.

Although always wearing a tuxedo for his 100 performances of *The Messiah* and 20 Patriotic and Sacred Oratorio Concerts, and 50 July 4th Sunday services, Dr. Neal always "worked the crowd," with his enthusiastic and energetic conducting.

Dr. Neal was also instrumental in bringing Service Bands to Longview; Air Force, Navy, Marine and Army bands played concerts here, with the musicians staying overnight with local families. Today, the Longview Daily News continues this tradition by hosting Service bands and ensembles for free concerts at the Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts.

PHILANTHROPY

Dr. Neal lived a relatively simple lifestyle so he was able to support many, many charities during his lifetime. His first focus was local organizations—he realized that most national charities had high administrative and advertising overhead. His second focus was international health care efforts. As an Internist and Cardiologist, he felt his abilities and skills were of little value in the Third World, where infections and injuries were the major challenges and few people survived long enough to suffer from heart attacks and strokes. Therefore he and Ethel (and later, Carolyn) contributed supplies and funds to World Neighbors, World Vision, Northwest Medical Teams and other efforts best managed by surgeons and family physicians.

DR. NEAL'S DATA

Neal was very much production-oriented. Hence, it's only fitting that this memoir list a variety of statistics:

College and Medical Degrees: 10

Physician's Recognition Awards: 37

Years practicing Medicine: 59

Years at St Johns: 55

Office visits: 398,250

Nursing home visits: 87,000

Hospital patient visits: 142,100

House calls made: 5,500

Concerts conducted: 122

Church services organized: 2,500

Anthems or choral responses conducted:
15,000

2-page *The Second Opinion* newsletters
published: 1,560

Noon Roundtables hosted: 1,560

Journal magazines read/reviewed:
21,600

Collective musical instruments played by
progeny: 62

Collective donations to local charities in 23
years since retirement: Huge!

SO IN SUMMARY. .. Dr. Neal was born in a poverty situation and, guided by education-minded parents and a strong family work ethic, became a very successful doctor and musician, even after officials at Mayo Clinic told him he could not possibly do both.

HIS LEGACY IS ONE OF HARD WORK, HIGH ENERGY, DEVOTION TO HIS PROFESSION, COMMITMENT TO TEACH OTHERS, PHILANTHROPY, DEDICATION TO THE ELDERLY AND INFIRM, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND THE PLEASURES AND INSPIRATION OF MUSICAL PERFORMANCE.

We will all miss him, but hopefully his ideals will have positively impacted the lives of his progeny, patients, colleagues, friends and compatriots.



Dr. Neal's legacy lives on through his 4 children and 14 grandchildren - all of whom have earned college degrees and have become successful doctors, scientists, educators, business executives, entrepreneurs, artists, and musicians. They continue to share his love and enthusiasm for education, music, sports, faith and hard work with his 27 great-grandchildren.

"Work is the best hobby of all."

- Dr. William Mayo