



Richard Dale Ruppert M.D.

May 1, 1931 - October 22, 2012

Richard Dale Ruppert, M.D., lived every day of his 81 years filled with enthusiasm, optimism and most of all, love. He died unexpectedly on October 22, 2012. Born in Middletown, Ohio as the sixth of ten children, Dick dearly loved his parents, Paul Edward and Sarah Elizabeth (Morgan) Ruppert. As a young boy, Dick demonstrated an early passion for politics, sports, academics (excluding Spanish) and making friends everywhere he went. He was a member of the Franklin, Ohio High School Class of 1949, for which he served as Class President. After graduating, he spent five more years in Franklin working on the Ruppert family farm, Brookhaven, where he learned the art of growing soy beans, corn and tobacco. In 1953, he initially enrolled in The Ohio State University to pursue a degree in agriculture, but soon discovered his calling to pursue a life-long career as a physician and healthcare advocate. When he graduated from OSU in 1957 with a Bachelor of Science, he then went on to become a member of the OSU College of Medicine Class of 1961. During his first year of medical school, Dick met and fell in love with his classmate and best friend, Elizabeth (Libby) Spencer Ruppert M.D. They were married in 1959, in what proved to be a storybook romance that has lasted 53 years. Together, Dick and Libby produced four strong daughters Victoria Ruppert (Scott) Ridge, Elizabeth Morgan Ruppert (David Midtvedt), Rebecca Ruppert (Ronald) McMahon and Julie Ruppert (Todd) Schulte. They are also the proud grandparents of the seven greatest grandchildren in the world: Alexandria and Caitlin Ridge, Kinkade and Chessica Ruppert-Midtvedt,

Natalie McMahon and Kyle and Lena Schulte. Sisters, Patricia Talbot, Libby Hannah Wade, and Nancy Ruppert; brothers, James Ruppert and Rupert Earl Ruppert

After completing an internal medicine internship at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois (1961-1962), Dick returned to OSU where he completed a residency in gastroenterology (1962-1965), served as Chief Resident (1964-1965), professor of gastroenterology in the Department of Medicine (1965-1974), Assistant Dean for the College of Medicine (1970-1974) and Medical Director for Patient Services (1972-1974), in addition to being selected Man of the Year (1970). He then served four years as the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs at the Ohio Board of Regents (1974-1977) until the fall of 1977 when he was chosen to become the third President of The Medical College of Ohio at Toledo. During his seventeen years of visionary leadership, the College's physical plant grew with the addition of \$150 million for the construction of a 270 bed University Hospital, Dowling Hall, the Coghlin Pavilion, the Kobacker Center, the Henry L. Morse Sports Center and an ambulatory care center formally named in 1993 by approval of the MCO Board of Trustees, the Richard D. Ruppert Health Center. In addition, during his tenure, the College added the School of Nursing, the School of Allied Health and the Graduate School. Dick also provided leadership to grow and strengthen the College's health education, research and patient-centered care programs. Throughout his time with MCO and following his retirement in 1993, Dick also devoted his leadership, talents and boundless energy to the civic arena. Among other notable achievements, he served as: trustee (1982-1993) and President (1993-1994) of the American Society of Internal Medicine; member and four year Chairman of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority Board (1989-1999); Campaign Chair for the United Way of Greater Toledo (1991-1992); trustee, Campaign Chairman and President of the Fort Meigs Historical Society (2002-present); member and President of the Ohio Historical Society Board (2001-2011); President of Toledo Rotary (2005-2006); member of the Hayes Presidential Center Board (1996-2011); President of

the Torch Club (2012); and honored member of the Foster Group. He also served as a member of the Boards of Directors for PICO Holdings, Inc. (1995-2012) and the Physicians Insurance Company of Ohio (1988-1995). While he received many professional and civic recognitions throughout his life, Dick was particularly honored to be: inducted into the Halls of Fame for Franklin High School and the Village of Ottawa Hills; selected by the American College of Physicians as an outstanding Master Fellow (2007) and; chosen as a recipient of the Jefferson Award (2009). Above all else, Dick cherished every minute with his dear Lib and family, his unlimited woodworking and home improvement projects, reading on the shores of Lake Erie, and cheering on his beloved Buckeyes. He will be forever missed. The Ruppert Family will receive friends on Friday, October 26, from 2pm until 8pm at Coyle Funeral Home, located at 1770 S. Reynolds Road, Toledo. A celebration of Dick's life will be held on Saturday, October 27, at 11am at Christ Presbyterian Church located at 4225 West Sylvania Avenue in Toledo. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to either the Richard D. Ruppert M.D. Scholarship Fund at the University of Toledo College of Medicine c/o Mr. Howard Newman, UTMC, 3000 Arlington Ave. Mail Stop 1018, Toledo OH 43614 (419) 383-6122 or the Anne Grady Prescribed Pediatric Center, 1932 Birchwood Ave. Toledo OH 43614 (419) 381-7370.

Toledo Blade Article 10/24/2012:

News article) The third president of the former Medical College of Ohio who oversaw a period of tremendous growth at the school - in bricks and mortar, programs, and reputation - Dr. Richard D. Ruppert died Monday in New Orleans. He was 81.

He had accompanied his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Ruppert, to the national conference of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He had an apparent heart

attack as he and his wife left their hotel and could not be revived, she said. He had experienced heart problems for some time, "but this was unexpected," his wife said.

Dr. Ruppert retired in 1993 after 16 years as MCO president. He was on the board of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority board from 1989-99, during which he was chairman for four years.

Most recently, he was a leader in efforts to reform Lucas County government.

"What motivated him? It was for the community," said Thomas Palmer, another leader in the ongoing effort and a partner in the law firm of Marshall & Melhorn.

Dr. Ruppert was hired to lead MCO in 1977, succeeding Dr. Marion Anderson as president. The school's first president was Dr. Glidden Brooks.

"He was passionate about making progress," his wife said. "It was personally not a job. It was a commitment to make this a first-class medical college."

When he arrived, MCO had in essence two campuses, few buildings, and had graduated only six medical classes. In his previous job as vice chancellor for health affairs at the Ohio Board of Regents, he helped win funding for an MCO Hospital. That building was not completed until late 1979.

Other multimillion-dollar building projects during his tenure included Dowling Hall and the Coghlin rehabilitation pavilion; the Kobacker Center; the Henry L. Morse Sports Center, and an ambulatory care center, which in 1993 the board of trustees named for Dr. Ruppert.

In addition, he oversaw several hundred full-time and part-time faculty

members.

The school developed a school of nursing and of allied health and developed graduate programs under his watch. Its clinical and doctoral programs received accreditations.

"Dr. Ruppert more than anyone else built that campus," said John Robinson Block, publisher and editor-in-chief of The Blade. "He was the consummate politician, the perfect guy to get MCO built because he knew how to go to Columbus and get money. He knew how to pull the levers in Columbus.

"Dr. Ruppert was clearly a strong leader," Mr. Block said. "Faculty are hard to manage in the best of situations, and Ruppert was a strong-willed administrator who got things done. You had faculty and department heads who absolutely loved him, and others who left because they couldn't work with him."

He made MCO "into a real medical school," said Allan Block, a former member of the MCO Board of Trustees who is chairman of Block Communications Inc., parent company of The Blade.

"It is my strong belief that Richard Ruppert made this a real school you could take seriously," Mr. Block said. "There have been very few leaders of any kind in Toledo that combined ability in a profession with leadership and administrative ability and political ability. He had a broad range of skills you don't normally find in one person.

"He stood for excellence," Allan Block said. "He knew how to hire top-level people and organize that as a team. He generated loyalty that was as high as I've seen in any organization."

The first chairman of the MCO Board of Trustees was Paul Block, Jr., the late co-publisher of The Blade, and Allan and John Robinson Block's father.

Dr. Ruppert was open to faculty ideas and to conversation, said Dr. S. Amjad Hussain, a retired Toledo surgeon and a professor of surgery emeritus.

"He strengthened the academic work at the institution," Dr. Hussain said.

When Dr. Ruppert retired, MCO had 2,000 alumni physicians in 48 states, according to the spring, 1993, MCO Magazine. Many graduates of MCO's nursing and allied health schools stayed in Ohio, if not northwest Ohio, his wife said.

"His accomplishments have and will continue to earn real dividends for all of us in the area," Dr. Elizabeth Ruppert said.

In 2006, MCO - by then called the Medical University of Ohio - and the University of Toledo merged.

"I was a friend and admirer of Dick Ruppert's," said Dr. Lloyd Jacobs, UT president who became the sixth president of MCO in 2003. "Dick Ruppert was one of the great leaders in our community.

"He had a wonderful vision and a driving ambition to achieve that vision - build a better world, a better Toledo, a better MCO," Dr. Jacobs said.

His attributes included strong ideas and a strong personality, Dr. Jacobs said.

"We disagreed from time to time. He was reasonable, logical. Never was he discourteous," Dr. Jacobs said.

The Toledo area remained home for the Rupperts, who have had homes in Ottawa Hills and on Catawba Island along Lake Erie.

In retirement, "he did not just gallop into the sunset," Dr. Hussain said. The Rupperts "could have gone someplace else, but they both decided to stay in Toledo. He decided to contribute to the community. He's an example for many of us."

When he stepped down as port board chairman in 1997, he was lauded for his leadership there.

He helped shape the Regional Growth Partnership, an economic development agency, and oversaw renovation of the passenger terminal at Toledo Express Airport even as he worked behind the scenes with area businesses.

"Dick had vision in everything he did," said Mr. Palmer, who after Dr. Ruppert's term joined the port board and later became a board chairman. "He had courage and conviction to stand up for what he believed in. At the port, at the medical college, in the face of any challenge, he took it head on, out of commitment to the community."

Dr. Ruppert was board president of the Fort Meigs Historical Society and a former board president of the Ohio Historical Society. He was on the board of the Hayes Presidential Center.

He was a former campaign chairman for the United Way of Greater Toledo and a former president of the Toledo Rotary Club.

He was born May 1, 1931, in Middletown, Ohio, to Paul and Sarah Elizabeth Ruppert. He was the sixth of 10 Ruppert children and worked on the family

farm, helping out for five years after his 1949 graduation from Franklin, Ohio, High School. He was first in his class and class president. He went to Ohio State University to study agriculture and found an interest in science.

"He did exceedingly well in anatomy and chemistry and physics," his wife said. "He'd always been a humanistic-oriented individual. He felt medicine was the right track, and he made the right decision."

He continued his studies at Ohio State's college of medicine. He and his wife met in gross anatomy class.

After his 1961 medical school graduation, he became an internist with additional training in gastroenterology, his wife said.

His internship was at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago. Back at Ohio State, he became chief resident. He later was a professor of gastroenterology. His potential was noticed early on, and he was tapped for activities that were stepping stones to jobs in administration.

He was an assistant dean for the college of medicine, then medical director for patient services - and was the college's 1970 man of the year.

"He knew how to collaborate, and he knew how to lead," his wife said.

He was the state board of regents' vice chancellor for health affairs from 1974-1977.

He was a recipient in 2009 of a Jefferson Award for public service. He was in the halls of fame for his high school and for Ottawa Hills. In 2007, he was named a master fellow of the American College of Physicians.

At home, he was skilled at woodworking and home repair.

Surviving are his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Ruppert, whom he married Aug. 31, 1959; daughters, Victoria Ruppert Ridge, Elizabeth Morgan Ruppert, Rebecca Ruppert McMahon, and Julie Ruppert Schulte; sisters, Patricia Talbot, Libby Hannah Wade, and Nancy Ruppert; brothers, James Ruppert and Rupert Earl Ruppert, and seven grandchildren.

The family will receive friends from 2-8 p.m. Friday in the Coyle Funeral Home. Services will be at 11 a.m. Saturday in Christ Presbyterian Church, which he attended.

The family suggests tributes to the Richard D. Ruppert scholarship fund at the UT college of medicine or the Anne Grady Prescribed Pediatric Center.

Contact Blade staff writer Mark Zaborney at: mzaborney@theblade.com, or 419-724-6182.

Published in Toledo Blade on October 24, 2012

Tribute Wall



“ I am so sorry to hear of your loss. Dr. Ruppert was one of the most gentle, unassuming men I had ever met. He always had a smile and a firm handshake for me ever time I saw him; mostly in Wooster for the Light Opera. I know he will be missed. I am honored having known him. God Bless you all and I pray for healing and peace for you all.##imported-begin##David Lyon
lyonde2001@yahoo.com##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Libby, I was so sorry to hear oif Dick"s sudden passing. It was so nice to have been able to visit at the reunion. My heart goes out to you.

Ted Huston##imported-begin##Ted Huston##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ We are so sorry to learn of Dick's passing- he was a dandy! He was loved by all & will be missed by all.
Our family's thoughts and prayers go out to Aunt Libby and family.##imported-begin##Donna (Talbert) Karda thekardas@fuse.net##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Julie, Sorry to hear about the passing of you Dad. We really enjoyed meeting your parents and our thoughts and prayers are with you this week.##imported-begin##The Kirkham's##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *Dr. Ruppert was the greatest president. I send my prayers with the family.##imported-begin##Janine DeMott##imported-end##*

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *We are deeply saddened by the sudden death of Dick. We are honored to have known such a kind, giving and brilliant person. Our prayers and thoughts are with you Libby and with those he left behind.##imported-begin##Vicki and Bruce Snyder btsnyder@bex.net##imported-end##*

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *To Lib and the girls:
Sue and I are so saddened to hear of the unexpected passing of our good friend and neighbor. What a wonderful man. So strong and firm, yet kind and gentle. He had a great way of dealing with people and getting his message heard by all that dealt with him. The community has lost a champion and leader, a void that will be felt by all. Unfortunately, Sue and I will not be in Toledo on Friday, as we have headed to Florida for the month. You all are in our thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Sue and Jim White jwhite@slk-law.com##imported-end##*

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *Becky,*
My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family to help you through this very difficult time.
Gather and hold all the best of him in your heart always.##imported-begin##Sue Williams##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *Becky,*

I am sorry to hear of your father's passing. Clearly, he was an extraordinary man and his, unquestionably, was a life well led.

Mike##imported-begin##Mike Axel##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *Julie, so sorry to hear of the sudden passing of your father. What a delightful man who seemed to not meet a stranger. Although only a couple of times, we enjoyed talking with him about OSU and other topics. He will be missed. Thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Mike and Rhonda Fox##imported-end##*

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Perhaps like others I assumed our community would always have Dick's leadership and amazing good sense available. It's shocking to realize it is suddenly gone. He (and Libby as well) gave tremendously to United Way - where I was fortunate to work with him. I deeply appreciate what this wonderful couple have given to our community and extend my wishes for comfort to Libby and the family at this time of loss.##imported-begin##Glenn Richter Grichter 1396@gmail.com##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Libby and Family;

Our thoughts are with you at this very sad and difficult time.

Dick certainly lived a full and meaningful life, both personally and professionally. Chuck recalls being recruited by him to the "glass house" on the OSU medical campus. Dick's genuine enthusiasm and commitment to medical education were contagious.

Obviously, in addition to all his medical accomplishments, he also contributed in great measure to the local community and the northwest Ohio area. To use a good Yiddish word, Dick was mench!

We will be thinking of you as you adjust to this radically different phase in all your lives.

Fondly,

Chuck and Connie Block##imported-begin##Chuck and Connie Block##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Lib, I was really sorry to hear about Dick. There is no question that the two of you have left a lasting legacy in Toledo - and he was a tremendous help to me getting started at Ohio State in 1968. Earl##imported-begin##Earl N. Metz##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ a tribute to a wonderful man who loved his family more than life. He is a role model to look up to and he will be missed. Although, we did not see each other often , he had a profound effect on us. His accomplishments both professionally and personally are unmatched. God Bless the Ruppert Family.##imported-begin##don and nancy maltby donmaltby@aol.com##imported-end##

October 22, 2012 at 12:00 AM