OBITUARY

Arlan Dean Kaufman

OCTOBER 17, 1936 – JANUARY 25, 2021

Arlan Dean Kaufman died on January 18, 2021 after an extended illness. Arlan was born on October 17, 1936 in Beatrice, NE to Alma N. (Schrag) and Menno S. Kaufman. He graduated from Newton (KS) high school and Bethel College (North Newton, KS) with a degree in natural sciences in 1959. After college, Arlan spent 18 months performing voluntary service on a Native American reservation near Clinton, OK, an experience that piqued his interest in mental health and social work.

After earning a Masters in Social Work from the University of Kansas, Arlan began working in Kansas City, KS in the area of child and family services. While in Kansas City, he met his wife Linda Fletcher and they were married in June 1966. From 1968-1971, Arlan attended Ohio State University as a fellow of the National Institutes of Mental Health, earning a Ph.D. in social work.

Arlan and Linda moved back to Newton, KS in 1971, where Arlan served as the founder and chair of the Social Work department at Bethel College. This began a 30-year career in teaching and professional practice in Newton, during which Arlan directed a 10-county area Agency on Aging and was honored as an appointee to President Jimmy Carter's task force on mental health professional development. Arlan also served as chair of the Kansas South Central National Association of Social Work (NASW) Chapter and as a board member of the Kansas State Board of NASW.

As longtime residents of Newton, KS, Arlan and Linda were members of Faith Mennonite Church. They were both committed to their family and instilled the value of education in their three children. Linda and Arlan were both avid readers and engaged in lifelong learning, particularly about the topics of health and religion.

Arlan had a great mechanical mind and always seemed to be building or repairing something in his free time. After working in a trailer house factory during college, he built himself a mobile trailer house where he lived in Oklahoma, Lawrence and Kansas City. A lifelong DIY'er, he never hesitated to tackle new home repairs and projects. He passed on these handy skills to his children. Some of their most cherished memories include "helping" dad with a project. Arlan was also was a hobby farmer and spent the summers growing wheat, milo and soybeans on a family farm near Potwin, KS. This too provided a volume of family memories.

Arlan was a man of strong faith and convictions, even in the face of controversy. He felt that all lives are given a greater purpose and as children of God we should try to learn from each situation. He is survived by his three children Michael, Cheryl (Mast), and David, their spouses and eight grandchildren, his sister Donna Neufeld, six brother/sister-in-laws, and multiple nieces and nephews.

Private services were held by the family.

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