



**For those who wish, memorial donations may be made to:**

*Doctors Without Borders, 333 7th Ave. 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10001*

*C.A.M.P. c/o Unitarian Society of Ridgewood, 113 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ 07450*

**Acknowledgments:**

Flowers and greenery: Anniek Hansen

Reception: Elisabeth's Women's group (*Denny Chandler, Mary Franklin, Dana Grzymkowski, Ginny Jones, Carol Loscalzo, Carolyn Musser, June Ritter, Jeanne Short, Marcia Spitz, Roberta Svarre, Becky Zoler*) and Marianne Ramirez

Greeters: Nell Seymour, Alexandra Kennedy and Kathryn Krause

## *Wesley Bunnell Smith*

Like many others of his generation who were born in the Rutherford area, Wesley was helped into the world in a hospital in Passaic by William Carlos Williams, pediatrician and poet. His father, George, was then a young lawyer in Rutherford and a friend and admirer of Dr. Williams. George remained throughout his life an avid reader of great literature and imparted his love of reading to his son. From his mother Lulu he learned to love and respect nature. Through her he became a knowledgeable and keen observer of birds and plants. Lu, a former math teacher, also taught him to have fun with numbers which resulted in a lifelong fascination with all things mathematical.

In Rutherford, Wes grew up with geese as pets and when the family moved to Succasunna in 1947, there was a large wooded property with a brook running through it and his mother's famed Bantam chickens dotting the landscape. He built "his" beloved pond which he dredged every year long after he had left home. It provided a good excuse for playing in the mud!

Wes went to Roxbury High School, where he took every elective and every advanced course the school had to offer. He was not much of an athlete, but loved sports and managed the football team. He was admitted to Harvard where he majored in economics, was a manager of the football and squash teams and enrolled in the ROTC program. While at Harvard, he discovered his love of Bach and his love of jazz. He always claimed that the B-minor Mass got him through his exams. He heard many jazz greats in Cambridge and Boston and loved to listen to his ever-expanding jazz collection throughout his life. He always said that the best course he took in college was "Music Appreciation". His taste in music was very catholic: It encompassed everything from Gregorian chant to the Beatles, with the Beethoven and Bartok string quartets particular favorites.

After college he served three years as a lieutenant in the army in Germany, having first spent several intense weeks learning German the total-immersion-way at the Army Language School in Monterey, CA. Supposedly the only way he successfully conquered the pitfalls of the German grammar was through the charity of the teacher who used to announce ahead of time if it was a "der", a "die" or a "das" day. While stationed in Germany, he and some of his army buddies explored all of Europe and became experts in the various local breweries.

He entered Harvard Law School after his return to the US. While there, he was most influenced by working with Roger Fisher who later founded the Harvard Negotiation Project and the Conflict Management Group. Having obtained his law degree, he went to work for Dewey Ballantine in New York. However, he soon was unhappy with the lack of human contact with clients in such a large corporate law firm, and decided to join his father's law firm in Rutherford. His desire was to help people with their problems and he never regretted dedicating his life to being a small-town lawyer. He truly loved his work. He served his clients with integrity and compassion.

When his father retired, Wes became the attorney for Boiling Springs Savings Bank in Rutherford, an association that he enjoyed and that lasted until his death.

In 1971, the year we got married, I was a young miniskirted literature student from Heidelberg, Germany whom he had met 3 years earlier. We spent part of our honeymoon working in a vineyard in St. Emilion, France (his idea, not mine - but never regretted!). Before we were married, his notion of a great vacation had been to make maple syrup in upstate New York. We moved to Ridgewood in 1973. He immediately put in a vegetable garden. He was an avid gardener, I was at first a reluctant one. Pretty soon we had a community garden going with five neighbors in the half acre backyard of the maritime lawyer across the street! Our son Benjamin was born in 1975 and our daughter Katrina in 1986. He delighted in his children and was happy to see them grow into fine adults. He regularly engaged them at the dinner table with challenging topics. He had an astounding intellectual curiosity, as evidenced by his many files of clippings from the NYT on political, social and medical issues he was interested in. He was generous in sharing his knowledge and talents.

In 1982, while on a visit to Germany, he had to be hospitalized with a pulmonary embolism resulting from a blood clot in the leg. He developed a clotting disorder, which resulted in a heart attack the next year and amputation of part of his foot. In time, diminished circulation in his legs caused increasing pain with which he dealt with admirable stoicism and the wry sense of humor that was his trademark. He loved life, loved and was loved by his immediate and extended family and will be terribly missed by all whose life he touched.

— Elisabeth