



Jack Dean Poland

January 30, 1930 - February 18, 2022

On a cold winter night, January 30, 1930, a third son was born to Pinkney and Bessie (Hamm) Poland in their farmhouse near the small town of Isabel, Kansas. They named him Jack Dean. He was called Jackie Dean in those early childhood years and by some people, even longer. There had been a daughter who died at about one year of age, but Jack did not get to know her. He grew up on that farm with his parents and brothers—Gene, seven years older and Don, three years older. His dad, called Pink, was a big man, six foot two, one not to be crossed lightly, and fear inspiring to a little boy. He had gone to an auto mechanics school in Kansas City and used that knowledge all his life to keep the farm vehicles and machinery in good repair. Jack learned a lot from working with him and was good at fixing things. He observed his dad being a caring person for poor and disadvantaged people and tried to emulate that compassion.

Jack said of his mother, “She was a very gentle person and a strong Christian as were most of her family of 12 brothers and sisters. She was a firm disciplinarian. I often wondered how she could see me doing something that I should not have been doing and for which I was appropriately punished.”

His brother, Gene, and two cousins joined the Army Air Corps in 1941 as WWII was beginning. Gene was in flight training at an air base near Independence, Kansas. In his 2nd year during night training exercises, he and another trainee collided, and both were killed. As years went by Jack felt that because his talented brother died, and he was alive that he should make up for his brother’s loss by doing exceptionally good work.

Jack went to the local Isabel school and participated in music festivals, drama, the school paper and sports. There were 12 students in his 1948 graduating class. Soon he would be leaving his home community, but the discipline of hard work on the farm, the love and guidance of the many aunts and uncles, the small church in Isabel, song leading, Bible study, his love for animals—all these influences were with him for life.

After high school Jack went to Pratt Junior College, stayed with Aunt Lucy in Pratt, and

went home on weekends. There he became more focused on science courses and less extracurricular activities. In 1951 he enrolled in Harding College at Searcy, Arkansas (now Harding University), met Sue Allen in the registration line, which ultimately changed his life. He majored in biology, took whatever science classes were available and did well in all of them and began to think of “what’s next?.” By the time of graduation, Jack and Sue were engaged and Jack applied to the University of Texas for graduate school. He was accepted, but the draft board kept nagging him, so he decided to quit getting deferments for education and was inducted into the Army for two years—first stationed at Fort Ord, California, then Camp Pickett, Virginia. Next would be Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio but he had some leave time and stopped in Arkansas to marry Sue on Christmas Eve, 1952. After Christmas, on to San Antonio and the Army Pharmacy School. No more pharmacists were needed, so he was assigned to the burn unit at the hospital. There he ran an artificial kidney—a new procedure at the time saving many lives. Contact there with physicians encouraged him to go to medical school after Army duty was over. Back in Kansas, Jack got a job teaching 7th grade science in Wichita for one year which gave him time to apply for medical school at Kansas University in Lawrence, Kansas. He memorized the names of nerves, muscles, bones, blood vessels, and was near the top of his class. He decided he didn’t need to work that hard, but he always did work hard. The next three years were in Kansas City where their first-born child, Robert was born during his senior year of medical school during his obstetrics rotation.

Internship was next at the Public Health Hospital in Norfolk, Virginia. The obstetrics rotation was at the Portsmouth Naval Hospital. He was proud to have delivered 140 babies in those two months. Sometime during that year, he heard of the Epidemic Intelligence Service, and he thought, “I want to do that.” So, he applied and after internship went to Atlanta for six weeks training. He was assigned to the Kansas City Field Station but before he could move there, he was sent to Providence, RI for a polio investigation. Life was like that for a time—sudden calls to go various places where EIS officers were needed. Daughter, Cindy, was born in Kansas City in 1962. In 1963, another move, this time to Ann Arbor, Michigan for one year of pediatric residency and another year of study for a Master of Public Health Degree, and then back to Kansas City in 1965. By then he was chief of the virus section there.

There were many more trips. An unusual one was in the spring of 1967 when a plague outbreak occurred in Indonesia and a team of people including Jack went there to help that country which was very educational for Jack—learning about plague and even saw a case of smallpox in his six weeks there.

Sometime after that we learned that the plague lab which had been in San Francisco was moving to Fort Collins, Colorado and CDC wanted Jack to be chief of that. So, soon the

Poland family was moving to Fort Collins. That was to be our last move as a family in August of 1968. Soon after we got here, Jack and Dr. Barnes were sent to Vietnam for a month to see that plague was not being spread by all the travel going on because of the Vietnam War. There were many more trips to control plague in the Southwest United States in hippie communes and the Navajo areas, and encephalitis outbreaks in Minnesota. In 1981, Sue got to go along with him to Hong Kong as the authorities in that country were worried that plague might be carried in by all the boat people. In 1984 plague was reported in Saudi Arabia and Jack and Dr. Barnes went there twice to advise them on that.

During his 25 years with the US Public Health Service, his scientific highlights included elucidating the biology of Colorado Tick Fever, decreasing the incidence of human plague and evaluating the Japanese Encephalitis vaccine.

In all those busy years Jack was active in the church wherever we were. In the 70's and 80's Colorado had a law requiring kids who went to summer camp to have a physical exam signed by a physician. Jack spent many Sunday afternoons taking care of those needs to save the parents money. He also taught bible classes, served as an elder at the Meadowlark Church of Christ for a time and hosted many small group Bible studies in our home.

Jack passed from this life on February 18, 2022, at the age of 92. He is survived by his wife, Sue Allen Poland, his son Robert (Barbara), daughter Cindy Burnham (Bruce); grandchildren Gene Poland; Holly Bernardi (Mark); Luke Burnham (Mellissa); Lauren Duff (Cameron) and four great grandchildren, plus several nieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions may be made to Mountain States Children's Home c/o Bohlender Funeral Chapel

A memorial service will be held 11 am, Saturday May 12, 2022 at Meadowlark Church of Christ, 2810 Meadowlark Ave.

Events

MAR **Memorial Service** 11:00AM
12

Meadowlark Church of Christ
2810 Meadowlark Ave, Fort Collins, US, 80526

Comments



“ Christmas in Kansas included Uncle Jack and Aunt Sue and then later, Robert and Cindy. One Christmas I remember looking out the south door of the home of my folks and saw Grandpa Poland and Uncle Jack putting up a swing set in our back yard. That swing set stayed in the yard for 50 years. Uncle Jack went to school while my dad farmed. Uncle Jack and Aunt Sue were/are examples of kindness and an intellectual inspiration to me. I think of Uncle Jack with coffee cup in hand and an interested smile on his face.

Rita Kendall - March 12 at 10:26 AM



“ Blessings and Love to Sue and all of your family. I enjoyed helping you repairing your sewing machine back in the day, and enjoying talking with Jack as well.

I also send a Say Hey! to Bruce, my book selling buddy many years ago.

Much Love to you all.
Larry Werth

Larry Werth - March 12 at 10:03 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jack Dean Poland.



March 08 at 02:49 PM