



Benjamin P. Granger

August 6, 1931 - January 9, 2015

Ben Granger, the longtime professor and former director of the School of Social Work at Colorado State University and the co-director of Human Animal Bond in Colorado (HABIC), died on January 9, 2015. He was 83.

The cause was complications from Multiple Myeloma.

Granger was one of six children of a Depression-era Congregationalist minister. He was born in Mexico, while his parents were missionaries, and grew up moving from town to town as his father ministered to the needs of various constituencies around North-Central California. Ben was educated at Whittier College, served in the Army during the Korean War and completed his education with Masters Degrees from the University of Southern California and a PhD from Brandeis University.

Granger's career was devoted to advocating for disadvantaged and disenfranchised members of our society and then educating multiple generations of social welfare professionals. As a young man he pioneered the concept of residential group homes for mentally handicapped adults. He worked in the youth prison system in California and was associate director of the San Diego Children's Home. Up until his death, he had been working as an advocate for young offenders at Platte Valley Youth Correctional Facility.

Prior to moving to Colorado State, Granger was the associate Dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Kentucky and then began a 19-year tenure as Dean of the College of Social Work at the University of Tennessee.

He met and married the former Georgia Brown at Whittier College. For more than thirty years of their six-decade marriage, they have blended their personal and professional lives. At Tennessee, Georgia Granger developed and built Human Animal Bond in Tennessee (HABIT), a sprawling organization through which certified animal-assisted therapy dogs worked with professional therapists on treatment protocols that addressed challenges as varied as head trauma, elder issues and autism. When they moved to Colorado, Georgia created Human Animal Bond In Colorado and Ben eventually became its co-director. HABIC, now in operation for twenty years, is run under the umbrella of the College of Health and Human Sciences and currently operates 54 distinct programs that are staffed by 150 human-animal teams.

Ben and Georgia have three children: David, from New York who is the Editor of Esquire Magazine; Becky, from Colorado Springs, where she is a mom and is active in Bible Study Fellowship, and Mark, from Knoxville, TN, where he is a business manager for Emerson Process Management. They also have eight grandchildren, each of whom just could not stop laughing at their grandfather's jokes and funny faces.

Ben had an interesting and wide-ranging athletic career. At Whittier College, he played football for eventual Pro Football Hall of Fame coach George Allen. He ran 15 marathons, including 2 Boston Marathons. Once he stopped running, he was an avid tennis player who was scheduled to play in the USTA super senior nationals in March. He and Georgia won their division of HABIC's annual Diggin' Doubles tournament just over a year ago. And he celebrated his 80th birthday by water-skiing on Norris Lake in east Tennessee. He was also a standout performer in the annual Granger Family Olympics.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Ben's memory to HUMAN ANIMAL BOND IN COLORADO (Checks can be made out to HABIC): 127 Education Building, Fort Collins, Colorado 80523.

A Memorial Service will be held Wednesday, January 14 at 4:00 p.m. at Plymouth Congregational Church, 916 W. Prospect. Reception to follow.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 14. 4:00 PM (MT)

Plymouth Congregational Church
916 E. Prospect Fort Collins, CO US 80524
Collins, CO 80524

Tribute Wall

PK

“ I worked with Ben at The University of Tennessee and just saw where he had passed, I am so sorry to hear the news, even if it is late, I just wanted to let his family know that I thought he was a wonderful man. I hated it when he stepped down as Dean and even worse when he decided to leave the University. There are no professors or anyone who is still there after all this time. I remember those days fondly. There are only a few of us old timers left!

RIP

Pat McDaniel Kerschieter

Knoxville, Tn.

Pat McDaniel Kerschieter - May 14, 2015 at 08:48 PM

 William
Cherry

“ I just completed reading David's Esquire column where he spoke of Dr. Granger's death, and suggested readers read Dr. Granger's obituary. I'm glad I did. What a remarkable man and wife! Rest in peace, Dr. Granger and God's blessings to Mrs. Granger and their family

William Cherry - February 13, 2015 at 09:43 AM

SH

“ Dear Georgia and Family,
My heartfelt sympathy to each of you.
Ben's heart was always doing the right thing. A perfect role model for how to treat others. His love for Georgia was beautiful. Having the opportunity to share with Ben through the H.A.B.I.C. program was always amazing. Ben's focus and care for his client and his dog were something to behold. There was an aura of a gentle shepherd guiding and supporting with great care and and compassion. One young boy developed his first relationship with a male through Ben and Casey. Witnessing this bonding would always lift my spirit and bring a warm smile.
What a joy I feel for having a friendship with Ben. My heart is sad, my memories are a treasure.
With Love,
Sara Hoff

Sara Hoff - January 13, 2015 at 10:47 AM