



## Martin Eugene Berger

September 3, 2019

Martin Eugene Berger, retired pediatrician, died peacefully at Hospice of the Valley in Surprise, Arizona, on July 11, 2019, surrounded by family and friends.

Marty was born in Newark, New Jersey on September 19, 1929, to Rose Bierer Berger and Joseph Berger. He graduated from Weequahic High School in 1946 and began his undergraduate studies at Tulane University.

While in school Marty married Phyllis Joy Satz, and their daughter Barbara was born two years later.

At Rutgers University College of Pharmacy Marty joined AZO fraternity and played Jr. Varsity and Varsity basketball. He graduated in 1953 and started work as a pharmacist at a drugstore owned by a family friend.

Late that same year he was accepted into the medical school at the Ghent University and the family set sail for Belgium on the Queen Mary. On their first evening in Ghent, as they were eating dinner in a local cafe, Marty was recruited by the local basketball team. Traveling to games all over Europe was a wonderful experience for the whole family and resulted in lifelong friendships.

In 1955 a son, Joe, was born. In 1959 Marty finished his medical studies and the family returned to the US for the first time in six years. He completed his internship at Children's Hospital in Youngstown Ohio, and then moved west to become Chief Resident at Maricopa County Hospital in Phoenix, Arizona.

In 1962 he opened Maryvale Pediatric Clinic, which eventually grew to a large practice with three offices, half a dozen partners, and a close-knit office staff, many of whom had worked with him for years. He retired in 2012 after fifty years in practice, proud to have taken care of the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of his original patients.

Marty and Phyllis divorced when Barbara and Joe were teenagers, and in 1969 he married Patricia Nasmyth, who brought two small children, Larry and Carol to the family. In 1971 Marty and Pat had a daughter, Kathleen, and two years later a son, Jesse. Family life with six children of varying ages was busy and a lot of fun, and Marty took a great deal of pleasure in the warm and close relationships that developed between his kids.

Marty loved sports. He played basketball as a young man and was an avid golfer after he settled in Phoenix. He faithfully attended his kids' tennis matches, swim meets, football and soccer games. He had season's tickets to ASU football. He and his brother Neal, also a local pediatrician, spent hours on the phone talking sports statistics.

He loved politics, classical music, opera, Broadway shows and theater. When his kids got interested in musical theater in the '80s he thought he'd give it a try, too, and went on to perform scores of roles in community theater. He especially enjoyed Shakespeare and was thrilled to win an AriZoni award for the role of King Lear when he was 75 years old!

Marty is survived by his wife of 50 years, Pat; daughters Barbara Daniel and

her husband Brian of Phoenix, Arizona; Carol Sexton of Scappoose, Oregon; Kathleen Berger and her husband Manuel Alba Garrido of Litchfield Park, Arizona; sons Joe Berger of New York City; Larry Crawford and his wife Karen of Abiquiu, New Mexico; and Jesse and his wife Laura of Glendale, Arizona. He also leaves eleven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren: Kenny Crawford, his wife Angela and their son Kenny; Aubrey LaRosa, husband Nick and their twins Corrado and Romello; Wayne McColgan, wife Krystal and their sons Wayne and James; Amanda, Samantha, and Joe Sexton; twins Aaron and Manuel Alba Berger; and Isaac and Ian Berger. He was predeceased by his parents, his younger brother Neal Berger, and his grandson Lucas Daniel.

A memorial service will be held the first week in December at The Peoria Center for the Arts.