

Dr. George and Margaret (Peg) Griese
Nominated by their children: Lynne
Alexander, Greg Griese, Chris Griese,
Carolyn Griese, Jeff Griese and Meg
Nordstrom

George and Margaret (Peg) Griese were long-time residents of Marshfield. They were leaders and active patrons of so much of what made – and still makes – Marshfield a vital and interesting community.

After George, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, completed his medical training at Western Reserve in Cleveland and his internship and residency in pediatric cardiology at Philadelphia General Hospital and St. Christopher's Children's Hospital, he and Peg moved their young and growing family to Marshfield in 1957. Attracted by the idea of a collegial environment and the opportunity to focus on both pediatrics and cardiology, George joined the Marshfield Clinic as its 32nd physician. He practiced pediatrics and pediatric cardiology there for the next 30 years. He was deeply involved in the evolution of the Clinic over the years as it expanded its scope and outreach. Doc Griese, with his black leather medical bag, was a familiar sight to many households in the days of house calls.



Particularly interested in the relationship between childhood diet and adult heart disease, George initiated Heartwatch, a landmark study of 3,600 school children (K-12) in central Wisconsin to help identify risk factors in the development of heart disease among family groups. He was also engaged with the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation, working with other dedicated physicians like Dean Emanuel and Ben Sauter, in developing surgical and catheterization techniques on infants. George touched the lives of literally thousands of children – and their parents – across the years, from healthy, active children to neo-natal babies with severe heart issues. Over his career he remained a tireless advocate for the benefit of children. A member of the American Heart Association of Wisconsin, he served as its president from 1981 to 1983, and he was honored to receive the Association's Grand Award in 1986. George was beloved by his patients and respected and admired by his colleagues and friends. He is remembered for his humor, keen intelligence, kindness and innate sense of fairness. He was a gentleman in the very best sense of the word.

Although Peg grew up in Ohio, she embraced Marshfield's small-town lifestyle. She raised their six children on the 40 acre "farm" at the south end of Apple Avenue, also known as "Peace and Plenty." That number swelled as she and George frequently opened their home to any and all

during the socially turbulent 60's and 70's. At various times, Peg served as president of PEO, the local branch of the Unitarian Universalist Church, and the American Field Service (AFS). She was also active with Partners with St. Joseph's Hospital. And, not surprisingly, she led various Cub Scout and Bluebird groups. Peg had a number of passions, starting with an abiding love for her family. She was the glue that held it all together. She was actively involved in Marshfield's theater and arts communities, assisting in the establishment of the New Visions Gallery. She loved the outdoors, including such pursuits as gardening, camping, walking and horseback riding. An avid reader and lifelong learner, she frequently attended classes on a wide array of subjects. She excelled at listening and at giving sage advice to any and all who asked and perhaps to some who didn't ask but nonetheless needed good counsel.

When George and Peg eventually retired to Bayfield, they donated 20 acres, half of their farmland, to the City of Marshfield for development as a soccer and recreational park, what is now Griese Park. The park is allowing future generations of children to enjoy the fields their own children had enjoyed while growing up in Marshfield.

George passed away in 2006 and Peg in 2016. They were beloved by all who knew them, and they left an enduring legacy for the city they had adopted as their home.

Submitted lovingly by their children,

Lynne Alexander, Greg Griese, Chris Griese, Carolyn Griese, Jeff Griese and Meg Nordstrom