



Samuel Keeper

January 10, 1926 - October 24, 2016

On October 24th, Sam Keeper, who once proclaimed that he would probably have been a hermit, left behind an adoring wife, Cele, a devoted daughter, Lauren, and enough loving family, friends, colleagues, mentees and admirers to fill the Brown Convention Center.

Sam was way-laid by various serious illnesses these last six years, but his brilliant, curious mind and delightful sense of humor never faltered. As the 2016 election drew closer, he said the good news was that if Trump were elected, he wouldn't have to be around to endure it.

Born in Houston to Rose and Joe Keeper on January 10, 1926, Sam was joined at the hip (and heart) with Cele, for more than 67 years and was blessed with two exceptional children, Gary, who died before him, and Lauren.

He was a wonderful husband, parent, friend, citizen, community participant, employee, boss and professional.

Sam was, at various times, a committee chair of the Harris County Democratic Party, and the Houston Chamber of Commerce (now Greater Houston Partnership); an executive committee member of the Houston Grand Opera; a board member of the Houston Symphony Society, the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston and the Houston chapter of the Public Relations Society of America; a consultant to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts; president of the

Mental Health Association of Houston (now Mental Health America of Greater Houston); and a member of Congregation Emanu El.

One of his most satisfying volunteer jobs was as chair of voter registration for our local League of Women Voters. This past year, the local chapter inaugurated the Sam Keeper Award for Excellence in Voter Services which is presented in recognition of the quality and scope of the recipient's contribution to the program.

Did I mention Sam had a day job? In charge of the Houston office, he was a public relations executive for many years with Ruder and Finn, a New York based firm. His later business years were with Omaha based, Bozell and Jacobs heading up their Houston office until his retirement.

The picture above was on his business card many years ago. Sam graduated from the University of Texas with a B.S. in Physics (physics?) And he served in the Navy in World War II.

He savored, both alone and in groups, biking (he once rode his bicycle around Lake Champlain) and hiking expeditions. He went hiking in the Swiss Alps with a French environmental group. They called him "Texas." Sam was fluent in Spanish, handled himself very well in French and dabbled in Italian.

And oh, how Sam relished good conversation, the kind with ideas, differing opinions and give and take on challenging topics. The Saturday morning breakfast club he and Cele attended for many years was a highlight of the week.

If you wish make a contribution in Sam's memory, he was supportive of the League of Women Voters Education Fund, Partners in Health, the Southern Poverty Law Center, Planned Parenthood, The Houston Symphony, Houston

Grand Opera, The Houston Area Parkinson's Society and of course, the Harris County Democratic Party, or one of your own choice.

A private family graveside service will be held on Sunday, October 30, 2016.

Then there will be a celebration of Sam's full and generous life to be announced at a later date.

There are no words to describe the loss we feel, those of us who knew and loved him.