



## Walker Lewis Wellford III

April 26, 1936 - June 5, 2020

Walker Lewis Wellford III, a lifelong resident of Memphis, TN, passed away on June 5, 2020, of multiple myeloma. He was born April 23, 1936, to Minnie Bernard Lundy Wellford and Walker Lewis Wellford, Jr. He was predeceased by his wife of 59 years, Diane McMillan Wellford. He leaves behind two children, Lauren Wellford Deming (Will) of Portland, OR and Walker L. Wellford IV (Cheryl) of Atlanta, GA; five grandsons: David and Jonathan Deming, and Walker, William, and Jack Wellford; and many, many Wellfords.

Walker was a graduate of East High School and Southwestern (now Rhodes College) where he was a four-year letterman on the tennis team and president of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity. After graduation he worked at Memphis Bank and Trust for twenty years. In 1979 he started at MassMutual and was named Rookie of the Year followed in 1980 with Man of the Year honors. He qualified repeatedly for the Leaders Club and the Million Dollar Round Table; and he served the industry as president of NAIFA and the CLU chapter. In 2014 NAIFA honored him as Man of the Year. At his retirement party in February 2020, he said he kept going because his friends became his clients and his clients became his friends. For forty years he was proud of helping people make sound financial decisions to take care of themselves and their families.

Walker grew into Christian faith at Idlewild Presbyterian Church and remained an active member of the congregation throughout his life. He served as a deacon, elder, trustee, and Sunday school teacher. He chaired diverse committees including personnel, recreation, endowment, building, and stewardship. Additionally, he was chosen by the presbytery to serve as a delegate to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). He and Diane loved being advisors to the youth group in the 1960's and taking their children again and again to NaCoMe for Idlewild's Family Camp.

Walker volunteered in several Memphis charities, serving as chairman of the Memphis chapter of the American Red Cross and chairman of the board of the World Cataract Foundation. He served as president of the Kiwanis Club of Memphis and was honored as Kiwanian of the Year in 2004. He briefly served our nation in the Air Force National Guard

during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Tennis was a constant throughout Walker's life; he played several times per week from his early teens until just months before his death. His family recognizes the importance of the friendships he made and the value he put on those relationships. The behavior he displayed on the court carried over into his business and personal life: Show up on time. Play hard. Play fair. Be a good sport. And don't drop shot the oldest guy on the court.

He liked fast pitch softball when he was younger and golf as he grew older. He coached his son's t-ball, baseball, and basketball teams and spent hours cheering on the sidelines in later years. He extended his softball career for several years in order to enjoy playing alongside his son. He was a season ticket holder of the Memphis Grizzlies and often traveled to St. Louis with family and church friends for Cardinal baseball games.

Walker's family wishes to thank the fine people from Attendant Care Services, Trezevant Terrace Assisted Living and Methodist Hospice House who provided him with such good care.

Due to coronavirus restrictions, a small family service will be livestreamed on Friday, June 12th at 10 a.m. We invited friends to join us virtually at [livestream.com/Idlewild](https://livestream.com/Idlewild).

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Idlewild Presbyterian Church or to the charity of the donor's choice.