Dear Nancee, Rob and cousins,

While I deeply regret not being able to join you this Saturday in Asheville for Kirk’s memorial service and to celebrate with you his remarkable life, I would like to share some reflections about my dear first cousin.

Among all us cousins, I am I believe the closest in age to Kirk who was born in 1939, three years before me.   My first recollections of Kirk were periodic Sunday afternoons at my parents small backyard

swimming pool when I was about four and he was seven. Those were always fun filled occasions and I  always enjoyed being around Kirk with whom I had a brotherly kind of relationship, except that he and I never had a fight.  Kirk was from the beginning always kind and considerate of others as he was, as we know, throughout his life.  Kirk was someone whom I greatly admired and looked up to as a role model.

During those early years we enjoyed the occasional weekend sleepovers, usually at Aunt Emily’s house in mid-town. What I recall most at that time was Kirk’s fascination with his student chemistry set, given to him when he was about eight or nine years old.  On sleepovers, I sometimes served as his marginally qualified laboratory assistant, observing his total absorption in chemistry experiments and first witnessing his intellectual curiosity and brilliance for which he was known throughout his stellar career.

By the time I was twelve or thirteen, Kirk was off to prep school on scholarship at Phillips Exeter Academy where he excelled in academics and in competitive rowing and track. Usually we reconnected only at the traditional Wallace family Thanksgiving reunions in Tupelo after Emily married Julius Berry in 1955.

I attended Kirk’s and Rosalie’s wedding in Nashville around 1962 and then we reconnected in 1963-64 while we were both at Harvard University. Kirk was half way through Harvard Medical School for his M.D. degree and I was just starting my four year program for a Master in Architecture.  Kirk and Rosalie were very helpful in finding me an apartment within two blocks of the Harvard Yard where the Harvard Graduate School of Design was located.  They invited me to dinner a few times while they were living in the charming Boston suburb of Wellesley.

Although our paths rarely crossed after graduate school, we saw each other on his periodic visits to Memphis and my father and I were able to spend a delightful afternoon with Kirk and Nancee at their mountain home retreat on the Cumberland Plateau about twenty years ago.

In reflecting on Kirk’s personal life and professional career in healthcare education,  I am filled with affection, awe and admiration for his exceptional devotion to his family and for his immensely successful award-winning career in medical education, training hundreds of physicians in the treatment of infectious diseases.

Kirk will live on in our fondest memories of him.  Today I join you from afar in celebrating his life and accomplishments.

Cousin Met