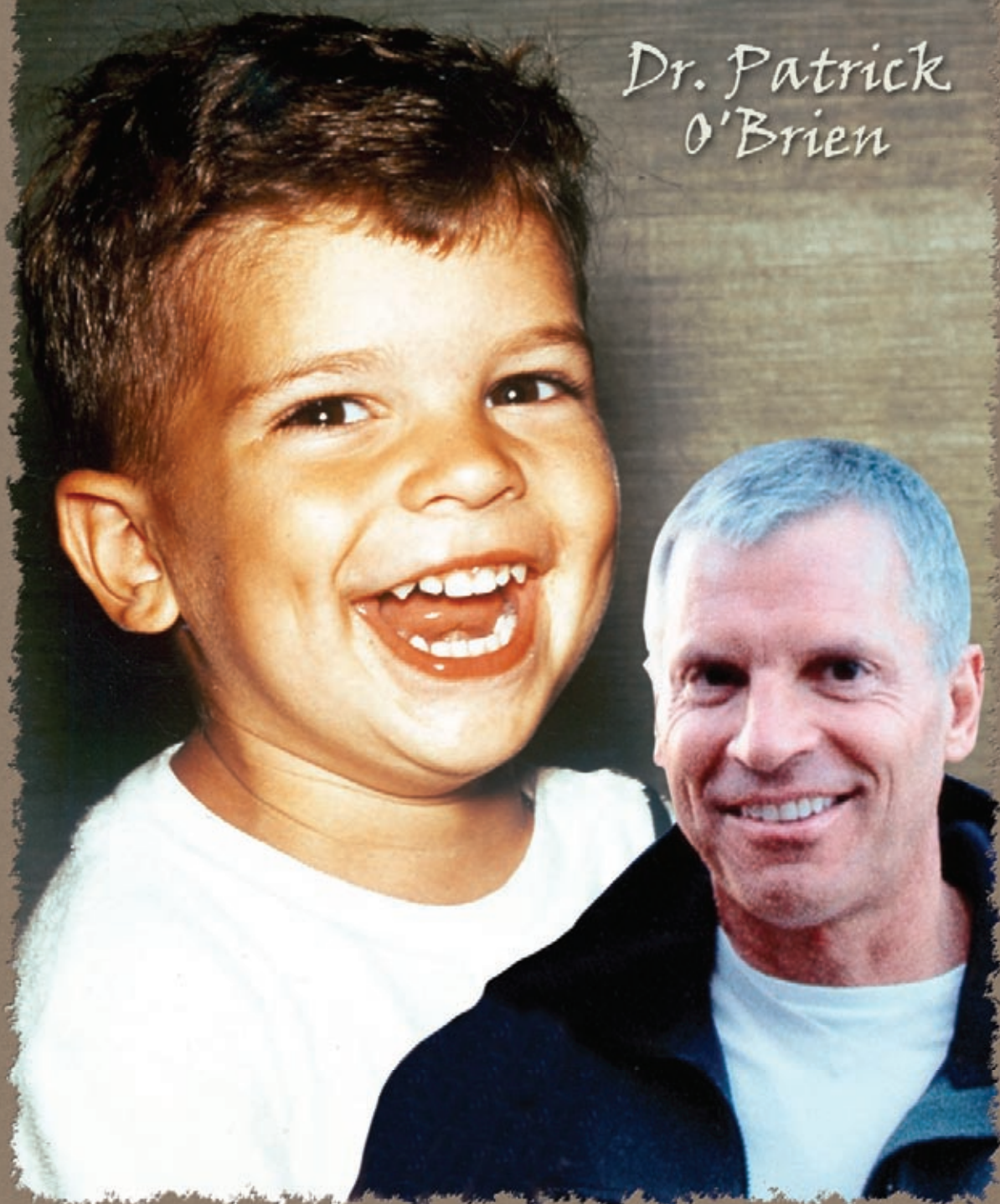


Dr. Patrick
O'Brien



Patrick's Life Story

Unconditional in his love, Patrick O'Brien was a man of integrity who gave his all in everything he did with an unwavering and optimistic demeanor. With faith as his guide, he accomplished much in life and

loved abundantly. He will be fondly remembered as a loving and dedicated husband, father, son, uncle, brother and friend to all who knew him.

The 1950s marked a quieter, more stable time in American history. Families did much together and evenings were spent watching favorite television programs like The Ed Sullivan Show or I Love Lucy. As Matchbox cars and Pez candy dispensers made their debut, manufacturing jobs were at an all time high. An age of innocence, the nation's culture was that of a quieter, more simplified lifestyle. But for Robert and Virginia (Bechtold) O'Brien of Grand Rapids, Michigan things changed rather quickly when on April 20, 1952 they welcomed into their loving arms the birth of a baby boy they named Patrick. The fourth of eventually eleven children, Patrick's infant brother Andrew sadly died at birth and throughout the years the family continued to share a close bond. His father supported their large family as a doctor in the field of dentistry and devout in their Catholic faith, mass was attended regularly. As a youngster Patrick also went to St. James Elementary School.

Patrick loved cars and as a young man always worked on making them look immaculate. He retrofitted the engines and did all the mechanical work they needed himself. Raised to appreciate and enjoy the outdoors, Patrick became an avid outdoorsman at a young age when he learned to bird hunt, snow ski, cross-country ski and later came to enjoy hiking and backpacking. During high school he was part of the swim team and excelled in his studies. With his love for music, he even played the guitar and while in high school he was part of a band called "The Reasons Why". It was also during his high school years when he began working for Meijer stocking shelves and unloading delivery trucks, but it was while working in his father's dental office that Patrick learned to share a love of dentistry.

Following graduation from West Catholic High School in 1970 Patrick began attending Grand Rapids Junior College before going on to Western Michigan University. With sights on a career in dentistry, he eventually graduated with honors from the

University of Michigan School of Dentistry. In time he joined his father's practice and along with his brother Jon, Patrick became a third generation of dentists in his family. It was also during this time that Patrick met a young woman

named Patricia Maitner at a party. After dating for several years they were married in 1978 at St. Isadore's Catholic Church



in Grand Rapids. Beginning their new life together, they lived on Jane Street NE for two years before eventually moving to Cheshire NW where they began to raise their family over the next 20 years. Blessed with the birth of son Andrew in 1981, he was followed by Michael in 1983 and Daniel came along in 1985. Their daughter Mary Frances completed their family in 1987.

As a family, Patrick and Patricia did much with their children and enjoyed memorable summers at their family cottage along Lake Michigan. A devoted Red Wings fan, Patrick was a great supporter of the Detroit Lions and of course U of M football. Throughout his life Patrick pursued his love for the outdoors while immensely enjoying the company of Libby his black lab and Rossi his yellow lab who were dedicated in their devotion to Patrick. He continued to be sports minded and many wonderful family vacations were spent skiing the slopes and whitewater rafting in Colorado or backpacking and camping along with sailing. In fact, Patrick and Andy spent a memorable trip to New Zealand on a ten day backpacking excursion that truly became a highlight in their lives. As always, faith played an important role in Patrick's life and he made it a priority to attend weekly mass with his family. In 2002, circumstances eventually led Patrick and Patricia to part ways and they divorced.

Putting his efforts into his faith, family and profession, Patrick continued to be sports minded in the many activities he so enjoyed over the years. In 2003 his life took a new direction when he was introduced to someone very special through a mutual friend. After meeting Nancy the two dated for the next four years and were married at St. John's Mission Church in Claybanks, Michigan on June 30, 2007. Making their home together in Belmont, Michigan, the couple built a summer home on the shores of Lake Michigan where they enjoyed spending summers on the beach entertaining family and friends. A wonderful grill master, Patrick loved to eat, especially pasta and Italian dishes. He possessed a never ending sweet tooth for anything chocolate and loved sour candies which was a paradox given his profession! With a talent for carpentry, Patrick always had a project or two in the works.

A severe accident in 2004 left Patrick laid up for four months after he was run over by a school bus. Never once did he complain as Nancy lovingly nursed him back to health. Always concerned for his patients, Patrick's brother ran their dental practice O'Brien and O'Brien Family Dentistry until Patrick, eager to return, could continue doing what he loved. Having a special way with his patients Patrick's





warm demeanor and calming sense of humor put them at ease as they entrusted their care to him, especially children. Not only was Patrick a talented dentist, he was also sincere at listening to his patient's everyday concerns, troubles and triumphs. With a heart for the disadvantaged

he often performed work for them at no charge.

One of Patrick's greatest teachers was his father whom he held in high regard and Patrick played a large role in having his father recognized by his colleagues in the dental profession. But that was Patrick, dedicated and genuine in all that he did. Loved and respected by both patients and colleagues alike, Patrick was a member of the American Dental Association, the Michigan Dental Association, the West Michigan District Dental Association and the Kent County District Dental Association.



Just as life is filled with unexpected pleasures, it is also filled with unforeseen tragedy. On Friday afternoon, September 11, 2009 at the age of 57 while backpacking on the Holy Cross Trail with his son Andy in Minturn, Colorado, Patrick felt faint and collapsed. Despite a tireless effort, Andy was unable to revive his dad. Comfort can be found knowing that Patrick left doing what he loved in the open spaces of the great outdoors. He will remain in the hearts of many and will be sorely missed.

Patrick is survived by his wife, Nancy O'Brien (Parramore); children, Andrew O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Daniel O'Brien, and Mary Frances O'Brien; his parents, Dr. Robert and Virginia O'Brien DDS; brothers and sisters, Kathy (Jim) Mathews, Dr. Jon (Michelle) O'Brien DDS, Robert (Ellie) O'Brien, Michael (Tracey) O'Brien, Timothy (Laurie) O'Brien, Lori (Ken) Zost, Bill (Kelly) O'Brien, Terry (Colleen) O'Brien, and Erin (Jon) Dault; many nieces and nephews whom he loved dearly and many friends. The Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated on Thursday, September 17, 2009, 10:00 AM at St. Alphonsus Catholic Church, 224 Carrier NE (please meet at the church). Relatives and friends may meet his family on Wednesday, 2-4 and 7-9 PM with a Vigil Service at 7:00 PM at Heritage Life Story Funeral Home-Alt & Shawmut Hills Chapel, 2120 Lake Michigan Dr. NW. In lieu of flowers, please consider contributions in his memory to Kids Food Basket, 1203 Butterworth St. SW or a charity of your choice. Please visit www.lifestorynet.com to leave a favorite memory or photo or to sign Patrick's online guest book.



Visit www.lifestorynet.com to connect with your friends and family, share stories, and sign the guestbook. Life Story Funeral Homes® are the exclusive providers of the Life Story Experience™.

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