1992

Frank Kenneth Ramsey - A Tribute

John H. Greve  
*Iowa State University*

John P. Kluge  
*Iowa State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian)

Part of the [Higher Education Commons](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian), and the [Veterinary Medicine Commons](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian)

**Recommended Citation**

Available at: [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian/vol54/iss1/2](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian/vol54/iss1/2)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Iowa State University Veterinarian by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
In the midmorning of Thursday, January 9, there was a routine cataract removal, an uneventful postoperative period, and the drive home. He lay down for a nap in the early afternoon, but he never awoke. The impact of the loss of Dr. Frank Ramsey is widely and keenly felt in the College of Veterinary Medicine, across the university, and in uncountable veterinary offices around the world. As evidence of what he had meant to the college, he was named Clarence Covault Distinguished Professor, and he carried numerous other honors, such as Cardinal Key and Professor of the Year. As evidence of his impact on the international scene, he had been invited to visit in several countries on most of the continents to share his expertise on veterinary education and bovine mucosal disease. For several days after his death, flags in front of the College of Veterinary Medicine were flying at half-mast, because the college mourned the loss of one of her most illustrious sons.

For hundreds and hundreds of students and colleagues, Dr. Ramsey was a friend and mentor as well as an admired teacher and scientist. He often told us about one of his principal precepts, “mediocrity is the most available commodity on the market.” He shunned mediocrity and anything he felt would lead to mediocrity. Dr. Ramsey had an unerring knack for hiring persons who worked well together and who avoided the warning inherent in his pet precept, and because of this his department flourished under his leadership as Head from 1957 to 1975.

One accomplishment for which he was very proud was the construction of the new veterinary complex, which was completed in 1976. He chaired the Building Committee, a task that consumed much of his time for several years. Through diplomacy, he was able to get all departments to plan, alter plans, and sacrifice together. Whenever cuts in space had to be made, they were made first in his own Department of Pathology, because he never would expect another to do something that he had not already done. To embellish this fine building, it was his dream to remodel a large, unfinished area into a nicely appointed meeting room that eventually evolved into the Alumni Room. This room is used frequently for seminars, small classes, group meetings, and parties.

Perhaps it was during this construction period that the administration realized what an effective fund raiser Dr. Ramsey was. He was perfect for the assignment - he knew everyone, everyone respected him, he was persistent and would not accept “no” for an answer, he had the energy and enthusiasm to see details through to completion, he was daunted by no one. Largely because of his efforts, the Veterinary Medicine Endowment Fund and related special funds stand at $5.3 million, in itself a marvelous tribute to this man, his vision, and his energy. With earnings from the Endowment Fund, many thousands of dollars in scholarships are awarded each year to deserving veterinary students.

The memory of Dr. Frank Ramsey and acknowledgment of his strong interest in academic excellence will be perpetuated among students and faculty for decades to come through the establishment of the Frank K. Ramsey Endowed Professorship. This professorship is being funded by memorial donations. With a goal of $1 million, the endowment currently stands at $565 thousand. Contributions to this professorship can be addressed to Associate Dean D. D. Draper.

*Dr. Greve and Kluge are both Professors in the Department of Veterinary Pathology at Iowa State University.
Veterinary Medicine Professor Had Enthusiasm for Learning

Anne Doian
Staff writer for The Daily Tribune

Frank Ramsey, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Veterinary Pathology at Iowa State University, will be remembered for his enthusiasm and his dedication to his work even after his retirement in June 1980.

Ramsey died Thursday (January 9, 1992) of apparent heart failure.

Lawrence Arp, chairman of ISU’s Veterinary Pathology department, said it was Ramsey’s enthusiasm for his work that resulted in Arp’s choosing pathology for a specialty and in his choosing Iowa State as an employer.

“He inspired so many people here; he was the natural choice for that contact,” Arp said.

Even though Ramsey retired nearly 12 years ago, Arp said Ramsey kept an office at the college and “probably put in more hours than a lot faculty members.”

Ramsey was involved in the college’s endowment fund and kept contact with many of the department’s alumni.

He inspired so many people here; he was the natural choice for that contact,” Arp said.

Ron Myers, who joined the Veterinary Pathology Department as a faculty member in 1982, used the office adjoining Ramsey’s. He met Ramsey shortly after he came to ISU and calls him the department’s historical and spiritual center.

“I was pleased to have him here as a sage and a mentor. When I had concerns about teaching or research, I talked to him,” Myers said. “He transmitted a culture of care and enthusiasm to everyone.”

Myers said students (who’d never had Ramsey as a teacher) were in his office an hour or two every day. Up until several years ago, Ramsey addressed students in the first pathology class each fall.

“He didn’t talk much about pathology. He talked about enthusiasm for learning and for the profession,” Myers said. “The first time I heard him I thought, ‘No one ever talks to students like this.’”

While receiving his D.V.M. (1946) and his Doctorate (1955) form Iowa State University, Ramsey was an instructor and later assistant professor of Veterinary Anatomy.

He was the first recipient to the Clarence Covault Distinguished Professorship award in 1957 and named Professor of the Year in the college in 1960 and 1973. He was head of the Department of Veterinary Pathology from 1957 to 1975.

In his honor, the F.K. Ramsey lecture series was established in the college in May 1975.

A Tribute to Dr. Ramsey

If I had a name for you it would be friend - friend to all.
You saw the soul in everyone and without question would lift it to the light,
give without asking,
delight in the simplest of things
and be a blessing without knowing it.

A good shepherd tends the flock
knowing the value of each of God’s creatures -
good shepherd,
good friend.
You always lit a path for whomever you met
and that light continues to burn today,
even though you are gone.
God bless you now and always.
1/10/92 S. Start