



Dr. I.L. "Len" Sumner

OCT 30, 1935 - MAR 20, 2018



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Dr. I.L. "Len" Sumner

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Dr. Len Sumner, former headmaster of Presbyterian Day School, passed away on March 20, 2018. Born October 30, 1935 in Greenville, SC, he was a graduate of Clemson University. Len had a noteworthy career as a tennis player, serving as captain and number one player at Clemson and winning several city and state titles. He taught English at the Baylor School in Chattanooga for thirteen years, where he was also varsity tennis coach. Sumner's Baylor teams were unbeaten in his tenure, winning 71 consecutive matches, 3 state titles, and 2 national titles. Prior to joining PDS in 1979, Len was headmaster of the Deerfield-Windsor School in Albany, Georgia. He received his masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Tennessee Chattanooga and University of Memphis respectively. During his years at PDS, he served terms as president of the Memphis and Tennessee Associations of Independent Schools. Len loved his twenty-one years at PDS and felt them to be a true blessing. He loved his students, teachers, parents and board members. Upon his retirement, the TAIS honored him with the Sawney Webb Award for distinguished service to independent schools. PDS honored him by naming the school library Sumner Library. As a hobby, Len studied and admired grizzly bears for many years and participated in grizzly bear institutes in the Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks. He is survived by a daughter, Elizabeth Wafler (Porter); a son, Robert Sumner (Mary) and two granddaughters, Olivia Wafler and Katie Sumner. Though she did not survive him, Len adored Sibyl, his high school sweetheart and wife of fifty-three years. Visitation will be Saturday, March 24, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in the Connector at Second Presbyterian Church with the funeral service at 3:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Burial will be at Memorial Park immediately following the service. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to the PDS Teachers Endowment Fund or the Alzheimer's Association.



Tribute Wall

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LD

Lana, Jason And Jeremy Dowdy posted:

Dr Sumner will be truly missed. A true southern gentleman that left us all with a legacy of integrity, honesty and compassion. He was so important to our boys at PDS. and we will always thank him for his mark he left on so many boys lives. You will always be in our hearts.

March 23 at 5:46 PM

LJ

Laverne Jones posted:

I am sorry for your loss. We can look forward to the time when "No one will say I am sick," and God is going to "swallow up death forever". Isaiah 33:24; 25:8 Please accept my condolences at this time.

March 22 at 8:01 AM

LM

Lou Flowers Martin posted:

Dr . Sumner hired me 2 years out of college . He encouraged and under his leadership I received my masters . He recognized the importance of life long learning and was a cheerleader for me getting my doctorate. I think of my PDS days often and he is always in them with smiles – and of course Dinstuhl mints!! His Christmas tradition passed on to me !

March 22 at 7:15 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring I.L. by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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