Obituary

Obituary: A Remembrance of Karl Robert Hamson MD (1963–2014)

Clifford W. Colwell Jr MD

Karl R. Hamson MD, member of the Association of Bone and Joint Surgeons® (ABJS) passed away peacefully surrounded by his children, parents, and siblings on October 31, 2014 at the age of 51.

A skilled surgeon who was cherished and admired by his colleagues, patients, and staff, Karl (Fig. 1) began his professional career as an Attending Surgeon and Director of Orthopaedic Research at Phoenix Orthopaedic Residency Training Program in Phoenix, AZ, USA. In 2000, he moved to

the University of Maryland, as an Assistant Professor and Attending Surgeon in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. He was named Assistant Chief of the Orthopaedics Department at Kaiser Permanente

Riverside in Riverside, CA, USA. In that role, he was instrumental in overseeing the development and growth of the joint replacement service. Karl served for several years on the operating room utilization

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Fig. 1 Karl was a skilled surgeon who was cherished and admired by his colleagues, patients, and staff. (All images published with permission from Carmen Hamson.)

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Fig. 2 Along with his family, the most important thing to Karl was his faith. He was an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Karl is pictured with his wife, Carmen.

Fig. 3 Karl's favorite activities included skiing, hiking, and camping with his family.

committee helping develop plans and systems to make better use of the facilities, reducing the turnover times

between cases, and ultimately saving money. He was also involved in several committees, and was an active

member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons, and the Orthopaedic Research Society.

The staff at Kaiser Permanente adored Dr. Hamson. The nursing staff as a group gave a statement to *CORR*[®]: “Dr. Hamson was the first surgeon to see us in the morning. He was devoted to teaching us his ways, while also including us on the orthopaedic team. He had a confidence that is rare, not arrogant, but true, and a skillset to go along with it. His confidence that the patient would be fine no matter the degree of complexity inspired us to ensure success. As we saw him do the remarkable, so would we.”

According to his wife, Carmen (Fig. 2), Karl enjoyed learning about the world and diving into new technologies. Karl would edit old home videos, and turn photos into videos to share with his family. He loved to design, build, and fix things.

In working with Karl, I experienced his love for new technologies and ability to problem-solve first-hand. My own relationship with Karl started when he was accepted into our Lower Extremity Reconstruction Fellowship at the Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, CA, USA. At the time, the ABJS had tasked me with designing an upgraded version of an ABJS publication called the

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Orthopaedic Device Reference, an index of orthopaedic devices, their indications, uses, and manufacturers. With Karl's help, it became clear that an online version of the *Orthopaedic Device Reference* was the only way to keep the index updated in real time. Karl attended the ABJS board meeting with me as we presented our data and recommendations. The board was extremely impressed with Karl's computer knowledge and accepted our recommendation to halt an online version of the index based on Karl's financial analysis. Once he established himself in practice, Karl joined the ABJS, and remained a loyal member throughout his career.

Beyond his career, Karl loved to spend time with his family, including his wife and four kids, his parents, siblings, and their families. Some of

his favorite outdoor activities included water sports—sailing, snorkeling, water skiing, surfing—and he also enjoyed skiing, hiking, and camping (Fig. 3). Along with his family, the most important thing to Karl was his faith. He was an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

“During the time he was in the hospital prior to his death, the most encouraging and comforting element was the dozens and dozens of colleagues and staff members who came by to say good-bye to him and to share their love and respect for him with his family,” Carmen Hamson told *CORR*®. “It was clear that even those who did not share his religious beliefs had been touched by his example and the way he had interacted with them.”

Karl is survived by his parents, Robert L. (Bob) and Gloria Hamson, wife, Carmen, and four children, Robert, Erin, Michelle, and Julia. Karl is the third of nine children. He is also survived by his siblings, Debby Hamson Little, sister (Rexburg, ID, USA), David Hamson, brother (Lindon, UT, USA), Ben Hamson, brother (Encinitas, CA, USA), Matt Hamson, brother (Poway, CA, USA), Chris Hamson, brother (Richmond, VA, USA), Lisa Hamson Hele, sister (Apple Valley, CA, USA), Britt Hamson Kelly, sister (Houston, TX, USA), Norm Hamson, brother (Rancho Santa Fe, CA, USA), 25 nieces, and 16 nephews.

Family, friends, and colleagues can share their thoughts and memories of Karl with his family by sending messages to the following email address: KarlHamsonMemories@gmail.com.