



Siegfried "Zig" Engelmann

November 26, 1931 -

February 15, 2019

Siegfried "Zig" Engelmann died peacefully at his home in Eugene on February 15, of heart failure with his life partner of 35 years, Lou Bradley, by his side.

Zig was born on November 26, 1931 in south Chicago, the

second of three sons of Victor and Rose Engelmann. He was raised in his house with his grandfather, George Engelmann, a German immigrant who came to the United States in 1865. Zig graduated from Fenger High School in 1949. He attended the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Philosophy and met his future wife. He married Therese Piorkowski in 1953 and divorced in 1984. They had four children, moving to Oregon in 1970.

A pioneering scientist and educator for more than 50 years, Zig invented Direct Instruction (DI), an efficient and effective way to teach any skill. The first DI programs Zig developed focused on teaching foundational skills in reading, writing and math. As a professor of education at the University of Oregon and founder of the National Institute for Direct Instruction, he attracted graduate students from around the world. He eventually wrote more than 100 programs, covering core academic subjects from preschool to high school along with a variety of other important subjects. Millions of at-risk children learned when taught by teachers trained in DI, often when nothing else worked. He never gave up on a child or blamed children for the failings of the instruction they received. He lived by his motto: "If the student hasn't learned, the teacher hasn't taught."

Soon after Zig arrived in Oregon, he purchased 120 acres of logged property, which started his non-professional mission as a steward of the land. On most weekends, during the growing seasons, he and his sons (and later, he and his life partner) cleared trails and pruned trees. During trees' dormant months, they planted trees – lots of trees of many different varieties. If Zig wasn't working or riding one of his many motorcycles, he was on the land caring for trees and enjoying nature. Today, thousands of trees flourish in forests around Lane County because of Zig's stewardship.

He is survived by his brothers, Manfred and Gerhardt (Mary Ann), children Eric (Annette), Kurt (Dianna), Owen (Charlene) and Joyce, thirteen grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and his life partner, Lou Bradley, and her son, Devin.

There will be a memorial to celebrate Zig's life at 1pm on Saturday, April 13 at Venue 252, 252 Lawrence St., Eugene, Oregon, with a reception to follow.

Donations in Zig's name can be made to the Engelmann Foundation <https://www.engelmannfoundation.org>, PO Box 448, Eugene, Oregon, 97440 or to the McKenzie River Trust at mckenzie-river.org

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