



Bob Stearn's Eulogy for his friend Lynn Boardman who passed away Friday 2/19/21

When you play with the same bridge partner for roughly 25 years, on average once a week, you get to know him well, not only as a bridge player but as one of your closest friends. When you do the math you can calculate that you played well over 10,000 hands of bridge together. I was privileged to have Lynn Boardman as my partner for a quarter of a century.

Lynn established his own “rules of play” that he used to keep himself sharp. Make attacking leads against game contracts, passive leads against part score contracts. Don’t compete to the five level unless you have a singleton or void in the opponents’ suit. Never lead a diamond against three no trump (later amended by adding “unless it’s right”). The best bidding defense against one no

trump is Brozel. And so on and so on. Shame on any partner who broke his rules and got a bad result.

He had his quirks as a partner and player that made him a special character. He was well known for walking in at the last minute before the game would be starting. When his opponents tried to suggest a better line of play after a hand was finished, Lynn would reply, "I'm not that smart," and the conversation would end. When I would suggest a better line of play between rounds, Lynn would tell me, "I didn't see it then, I don't see it now, and I probably won't see it next week."

But he was really that smart and in our post-game discussions he would always "see it." We held extensive post mortems after every game and both figured that our mistakes evened themselves out (how else could you play with someone for 25 years?). He was gracious in discussing his mistakes and gentle when discussing mine. It was a perfect learning experience.

He encouraged other bridge players, especially those who were new to duplicate bridge. My wife, Bev, always appreciated his pep talks and support. We both loved his enthusiasm for music, good food, and stage events. Normally when he came to our house, he would enter singing the last fifties song he had just heard on his car radio.

The friendship that he and I formed was as important to me as the bridge games. He was a “gentle giant;” without a mean bone in his body. He never shied away from any favor that I asked, and I tried to reciprocate as best as I could. When my car was in need of repair, he would drive from Gaithersburg to Chevy Chase to pick me up and go from there to the bridge game. His trip home required a drive back to Chevy Chase before heading for Gaithersburg. When I called him, I most often began our conversation by asking, “Is this “Lucky Lynn?” He would reply, “Ace insurance peddler” (he sold health insurance for a living). We would take it from there.

His generosity to his family was especially impressive. He helped his daughter, Deborah, as she worked her way through law school and he became the proudest Papa I have ever known when she became a U.S. Magistrate Judge. While his mother was still alive, he would drive down to her house in North Carolina and take her out to a local tournament for a weekend of bridge. He never stopped loving his son Michael through all the disagreements that they had.

When you read in the news that 500,000 in the U.S. have died from COVID-19, it’s an abstract number; one that is sad but hardly comprehensible. When your favorite partner makes it 500,000+1, you

realize the horror that so many families and family friends have had to endure. I heard it said that in heaven, all your finesses work and you never forget that the nine of diamonds is the highest diamond left unplayed. If this is true then he really will be “Lucky Lynn,” for I have no doubt that is where he is headed.

