



January 2005

Randy Lee

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Recommended Citation

Kraft, Larry (2005) "Randy Lee," *North Dakota Law Review*. Vol. 81: No. 3, Article 4.
Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/ndlr/vol81/iss3/4>

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RANDY LEE

LARRY KRAFT*

Randy was a large man. But, it takes a big body to house a heart that held so much love for so many. A large chunk of that heart was reserved for his only true love, his bride, “the lovely Miss Paula.”

Like many of you, I was Randy’s best friend. He had a lot of best friends. I was privileged to be one of his oldest. He was always busy, but never too busy. I watched him daily churn out three page detailed letters of recommendation, each tailored to the student who was its subject. Those letters were carefully crafted works of art. I am certain that a large number of you got positions because of those wonderful Randy letters.

There are so many things we will miss about this quintessential Renaissance man. You knew him well, so I will not detail his interests. But, he had many. They ranged from music and literature to hockey and baseball. One of his saddest days was the day the Flood of 1997 took from him the autographed baseball collection he had started as a young boy in Baltimore. He and I shared many things these past 30 years. Countless hours of faculty meetings, among them. We had an agreement that the first one to arrive at the meeting room would save a seat for the other. That way we could entertain each other when the meetings got dull, as those meetings often did.

Randy was a fan and admirer of H.L. Mencken, as am I. Mencken, like Randy, lived in Baltimore. Had Randy been born a few years earlier, he and Mencken would no doubt have been best friends. Mencken belonged to a men’s club that met once a week to drink beer and tell truths. My guess is that Mencken started a similar club when he got to heaven, and that Randy has already been invited to join. Right now they are probably getting a good laugh from the Epitaph Mencken suggested in *Smart Set*: “If, after I depart this vale, you ever remember me and have thought to please my ghost, forgive some sinner and wink your eye at some homely girl.”

I hope Randy is saving a seat for me at the Mencken meetings. It would be great fun to spend an eternity sitting next to him again.

Rest in Peace, Randy.

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