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Owen L. Anderson

Kathie Anderson

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RANDY LEE, OUR FRIEND

OWEN L. ANDERSON* AND KATHIE ANDERSON**

Randy Lee was our friend. He was a devoted teacher of many law subjects, and he was devoted to the university community. He truly believed in and lived the life of a university professor and colleague. He actively and deeply cared about UND, about higher education, and about legal education.

Randy was brilliant, and his sage advice was often sought and always respected. Randy served on state and national legal committees on professionalism, ethics, and law school admissions. He was a scholar and expert of professional responsibility. Although he seldom published his legal scholarship, he answered hundreds of questions about professional responsibility, usually in writing, and always in a timely manner. He was direct, succinct, and usually correct. Randy did not suffer fools easily, but he was always respectful of other views, and he was a true and devoted friend in times of agreement or disagreement.

The UND law school, the North Dakota legal profession, and the people of North Dakota have lost a great teacher, a great lawyer, and above all a great human being. We will especially remember Randy as a good friend.

We met Randy and Paula when I was hired as a visiting law professor at UND law school. When we returned to our alma mater in 1979, Randy was acting dean, greeting us and making sure we were comfortable in our familiar yet new surroundings. We enjoyed being with Randy and Paula and the rest of the law school faculty group at hockey games and other social gatherings.

As a colleague he was helpful and generous. One of my new preparations was insurance law. Randy volunteered his teaching notes. His notes could have served as a rough draft of a hornbook on the subject, but I may have been the only other person to use them.

Randy loved music, particularly big band. Of course, this fact is well known—given his long-running Sunday morning big band music program on KFJM, now KUND. Randy and Paula could—and would—sing the

*J.D., University of North Dakota School of Law, 1974. Owen L. Anderson is the Eugene Kuntz Chair in Oil, Gas & Natural Resources at the University of Oklahoma.

**Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 2002. M.A., 1981, B.S., 1972, University of North Dakota.

words of nearly every popular song and dozens of past and present advertising jingles. They could also recite numerous poems.

Randy passed along hundreds of great stories—mostly clean ones—and dozens of interesting news clippings—mostly about legal matters or about humorous fortuities. He wrote thousands of pages of “Randy-grams,” his famous and occasionally infamous handwritten missives, ruminations, or chatty notes—customarily on a yellow legal pad—and later—much later than most—by email. Randy loved good stories, and we’ll remember his wonderful chuckle. Randy was a gifted writer, with a quick and clever wit.

Randy communicated with many former students and colleagues. His network kept us informed about activities at the law school and in North Dakota, including occasional gossip. He would have smiled as this same network of people around the country sought information about him after he was rushed to the hospital.

Randy loved food—at Whitey’s, fried fish at Oslo, turkey barbeque at Aneta, pitchfork barbeque at Medora, burgers at the Wood House in Bismarck, and numerous eateries throughout the United States. While his love of good food undoubtedly contributed to his untimely passing, we will remember the great conversations we had while dining.

Randy and Paula often joined us for Thanksgiving dinner, and one year when Paula was visiting her family at Christmas, Randy joined us at the farm near Jessie, which Randy took to calling the “Flying A,” a name originated by another lost friend and food connoisseur, Alan Larivee. When we entertained law students from Norway at the Flying A, Randy and Paula always pitched in to make the day a memorable one for our guests.

Randy and Paula visited us in Calgary and in Austin. During our summer and winter visits to North Dakota, they would come to the Flying A, and we would visit them in Grand Forks, usually meeting at Whitey’s or at “the lake”—a gazebo in their back yard where Randy and Paula would spend time conversing and watching birds. When they were at the farm last summer, Randy said they looked forward to visiting us in Oklahoma after his retirement, which he said he was eagerly anticipating.

Randy and Paula moved to Grand Forks from Baltimore, and became devoted to Grand Forks and to North Dakota. Randy once commented that in some other places, hospitality and friendships could be a mile wide, but only an inch deep. In North Dakota he said that hospitality and friendships were a mile deep.

We and many others lost a true friend. North Dakota and UND lost a legend.