



George Lindeman

June 3, 1934 - April 17, 2020

George Lindeman threw his last pitch on the ballfield of life on April 17, 2020.

George signed on to team Lindeman headquartered in Caledonia, Wisconsin, on June 3, 1934. He was the sixth of seven children. His family were dairy farmers and also operated a milk hauling business. George said he began working at age 8 and credited farm life with giving him not only strong muscles from lifting 80-pound milk cans, but a strong work ethic.

George and his brother Ray walked one-half mile to New Road School (yes, uphill both ways) and also walked home for lunch. New Road was a one-room school which usually had just enough kids in the eight grades for a softball team. George began pitching on the ball field of that school yard. He went on to Racine Lutheran High School.

First in his family to attend college, George graduated summa cum laude from the University of Wisconsin with a Bachelor of Science degree. With a low draft number and graduation looming, George took the offer of United States Marine Corp recruiters who were in the Student Union one day. He attended Officers Training in Quantico, Virginia, and then flight training at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida, where he pitched for the Marine Aviator's team. George recalled that one time he got a "down" on his flight lesson that would have kept him from playing on the baseball team. One of his teammates, who

was a flight instructor, took him aside and said, "Never mind, I'll take you up tomorrow. You are going to pitch for this game." The attached photo was taken after the Marine team shutout the Naval team.

During his four years of active duty, George served in Okinawa, Japan, Hong Kong, Formosa, Hawaii, and the Philippines. He also served three months on a carrier in the South China Sea where darkness was complete and absolute. Although he was fearless, George did express concern about how he would have found his way back to the carrier if the navigation equipment had failed on a night flight. George earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and served in the active and inactive reserves for 38 years, 5 months and 18 days.

George married Carol Lehman in 1958 and they had four sons. His career after active duty included farming, several years with the Farmers' Home Administration at multiple Wisconsin locations and Boulder, Colorado, a stint with the Food and Drug Administration, and running a real estate business in Portland, Oregon, buying and managing rentals.

During all these years he continued to play ball. In Lancaster, Wisconsin, he played for his church team and earned the nickname "King of the Mound". A beat-up pitchers mitt mounted on a homemade plaque honored his pitching for the Central Lutheran championship in 1972.

In the early 80's George was divorced and moved to Seattle, Washington, where he worked for the Small Business Administration as a loan officer. He played softball with the SBA team and in one memorable game got hit with a line drive in his non-pitching arm. George finished pitching the game, but went on the disabled list when he discovered he had a break in the ulna. His motto was, "The game must go on."

In 1991, he met Susan Erickson, the love of his life, and they realized they

were members of an exclusive club: ex-spouses of ex-deans. After moving to Bellingham, Washington, they married in 2001. George continued to play softball with local intramural teams. He opted to continue using his fifty-year old mitt which he patched and stitched together each year.

George was known for wearing shorts no matter what the weather. He remained conflicted about what he might wear as a burial outfit – shorts or his Marine officer's uniform. He was also known for his pronounced penchant for puns – some were bloopers, others brilliant.

George considered one of his major life accomplishments the founding of Excellence Northwest in Whatcom County, a series of personal development courses whose mission is to “strengthen the fabric of good will in the world through innovative courses that support people to create lives they love.” Both George and Susan were active in this organization. Together they also enjoyed trips to Ghost Ranch in New Mexico to hike, yoga classes and retreats, and travel to Japan and Italy.

George was diagnosed with Stage 1 pancreatic cancer in June of 2018. He received chemotherapy and underwent surgery (the Whipple procedure). Throughout his treatment his attitude was always optimistic. His modus operandi was, “It's just details to handle.” No wonder he managed to beat the odds and survive for almost two years.

George is survived by his wife, Susan Erickson; children, Tim Lindeman, Steven Lindeman and Naomi Clarke, Michael Lindeman and his wife, Judy, Dan Lindeman and his wife, Siobhan Murphy, Jessica Thorud and Aaron Thorud; grandchildren, Brittany Lindeman, David Lindeman, Gregory Lindeman, Nicholas Lindeman, Rohan Lindeman, Cole Maguire and Quinn Maguire.

He is also survived by sisters Ruth Vierk and Lola Hanson and brother, Ray Lindeman.

A family-only graveside ceremony with military honors will be held at Bayview Cemetery in Bellingham when gatherings are possible. A memorial service will be held at a date and time to be announced. Suggested memorials are: Excellence Northwest and Whatcom Hospice.

In honor of George, the family recommends following George's telephone message advice: "Do something nice for yourself today."

Tribute Wall

NB

“ Dear Sue and family,
Almost a year has passed since George left this earthly baseball diamond. An earlier posting of mine expressing my sorrow at his loss somehow did not register, due no doubt to my own technical user-error. I'm sure George would understand and laugh with me. George combined eclectic passions and qualities. To me he was not only a friend but a generous and welcoming host and fine chef, in concert with you, dear Sue. He'd serve deluxe organic granola in the morning and then share his addiction to bull-riding competitions on TV in the evening. In the hours in-between he'd be quietly making life more wonderful for many. He was genteel, kind, funny, and a wonderful listener. He truly wanted others to succeed, and would find out what any of us were passionate about so that he could best support us.

George's founding of Excellence Northwest had a major impact on me, on friends I referred, and on many businesses and relationships in Bellingham and beyond. I would drive down with great enthusiasm from north of the border to attend workshops, eager for the growth and learning. I discovered that several Bellingham business owners and their staff members went through the programs, with rich rewards for attendees' personal lives, businesses and the community. George was very humble about his part in the creation of ENW; It took me years to realize he was the founder!

Sue, I know you must miss George as much as ever... and as the first year anniversary of his last pitch approaches, I'm sending love and so much appreciation for the many kindnesses from George and you. I look back with great fondness to his sparkling eyes, his ready smile, his gentle wisdom, and his big big heart, which had room for so many.

Nancy Barker - April 17, 2021 at 12:00 AM

PH

“ To Susan and to George’s family and family of friends, Lori and I extend our heartfelt condolences.

In the 38 or so years I knew George I have amassed countless ways describe him. Rather than list them all I think it is sufficient to say that in my experience George was an exemplary human who was more than worthy of the respect and high regard by those who knew him, and I, held him.

As I go forward in my life I am remembering George’s essential goodness and kindness. I intend to honor his memory by doing my best to emulate that goodness and kindness.

Phil Holcomb & Lori Marcoux

Phil Holcomb - June 05, 2020 at 12:00 AM