



Roy Eugene Bennett

May 5, 1949 - April 12, 2015

The Passing of a Great, Noble Being

Roy Bennett, 65, of Corvallis died April 12.

Roy Bennett was born on May 5, 1949, gifted with many talents and great intellect. At a very young age, he always had books with him, and his ability to comprehend was well beyond that of his age group. His elementary teacher once told his mom, "I can't teach your son anything new, because he already knows."

Once Roy felt fascinated by linguistics, he was able to learn the reading and writing of four foreign languages within a few months. Another time he took up the challenge of playing the national chess champion and he even won one of the four games without any professional training in chess. His brother Randy admiringly stated, "When there was a room of men together, Roy was always looked upon as the smartest and wisest."

Roy's best friend, Kent Buys, owner of Troubadour Music Center and Instrument Repair Shop, added that "Roy was also an avid historian of not only Civil War history, but also the history of Corvallis and the music history from pioneer days to the present in Corvallis and Oregon." Roy's breadth of interests and knowledge, brilliance and unusual intellect are well known

among all his friends.

But Roy didn't choose the path of becoming a scholar or scientist or being rich; his great compassion led him to a path of selfless service and helping the people and community he lived in. His friend Kent summarized, "Roy is always known for his modesty, his brilliant mind, his generosity and kindness to his friends and strangers."

In his 40-plus years of living in Corvallis, Roy had touched many hearts, and made significant contributions to the community and the history of Corvallis through his volunteer work, as well as his regular jobs, working as a Laundromat technician, classic cinema owner, and Hewlett-Packard Co. ink lab programmer.

Roy couldn't bear human suffering and the injustice of this world, and as such he once chose some of the most challenging volunteer work. For more than 10 years he volunteered at Benton Hospice Service, where he helped dying persons and their families, easing their suffering, providing comfort, honoring dignity and supporting grief. This volunteer service provided him with a much deeper understanding of life and its ephemeral nature.

Due to his love of the Corvallis community, Roy created a website called CorvallisCommunityPages.com, where Corvallis is shared with the world through current news and historical content. The site also was intended for promoting and enhancing understanding of individual freedom and cultural similarities and differences. Statistics showed that there were more than 100,000 viewers from all over the world on a monthly basis.

Roy spent an average of four hours per day for more than eight years updating news and maintaining the site, which is more than 14,680 volunteer hours that he contributed to his beloved community and people.

One of Roy's most significant contributions to Corvallis is his book titled "The Story of Corvallis." This book is an overview covering 1,500 years of the historical aspects of human presence in the mid-Willamette area. Roy worked day and night after his retirement and finished this 300-page, 250,000-word history book in less than seven months, which was an extraordinary accomplishment.

The book has been purchased by many libraries in Oregon and beyond, and also has been sold on Amazon.com. Roy decided that this book would sell at cost and there will be no profit, since it's his gift to the community he loved for life.

Roy was passionate about history and music. In 2010, Roy directed and coordinated the Corvallis Music History Project, which was to encourage arts and music, to support musicians and live music, and to contribute to the music history of Corvallis.

He invited 130 musicians and bands from Corvallis and all over Oregon to show their talents at the Old World Deli stage, and he coordinated an interview team which conducted as many as 300 personal interviews to recognize the musicians' talents. After the filming, Roy spent more than 5,000 hours editing the audio and video recordings with added historical context, and he uploaded the music onto the website for the purpose of sharing and archiving.

Giving was Roy's nature, such that he always gave without thinking whenever he saw a need. Roy made the community a much better place through his loving-kindness and generosity toward friends and strangers. He would buy hot meals for the homeless, and provide cash assistance to needy families,

paying rent, utilities, phone bills, etc., to help reduce the financial burden of others.

He enjoyed it so much more when others would harvest his garden produce. He always picked and cut the first and biggest melon from the HP garden to share with his co-workers. If anyone liked anything he had, he would give without hesitation and would enjoy seeing happiness in others.

Roy's HP manager stated, "Roy tried to deflect recognition, higher performance ratings and pay increases. When I would give him gift cards to thank him for something he did, he held onto them and gave them to others to show his appreciation for their help. He tried to get me to pass his pay increases on to others, which I could not do, and when he received an increase he said he would give it to someone who needed it. During the workforce reductions he would tell me that if I needed to reduce my staff, he would be fine if he lost his job. He was a very kind person with a heart of gold."

Roy lived a very simple life with minimum necessities; he used the rest to help others and donate to charity organizations for good causes.

Roy's generosity expanded from humans to animals. He kept a constant supply of shelled peanuts in his backyard and always enjoyed birds' visiting; he would leave the berries in his garden unpicked, thinking that the deer would love them. When wild rabbits ate the vegetables in his garden, he was joyful to share the news that the rabbits had visited his backyard and loved the tender lettuce.

Roy kept a vegetarian diet during his later years because of his compassion for animals, and other, health-related reasons.

Roy treated people with great respect, especially those from another country or a different cultural background. Roy would study about other countries so he could treat people with understanding and sensitivity.

When a student from Saudi Arabia moved to Roy's apartment building, Roy consulted an Oregon State University professor three times regarding Muslim traditions, in order to know more about their culture, so he could relate more appropriately to this student and make him feel valued, accepted and loved.

Roy assisted many students from other countries at OSU through means such as helping them improve their English, providing car rides or anything he could offer help with.

Roy always held a tender heart toward kids. His nieces recall that Roy always played with them when they were young. "I remember hating to hear the busy phone signal because that meant Uncle Roy was not awake yet, and the wait seemed to take forever ... I had never heard him raise his voice ... I loved getting Christmas presents from Uncle Roy ... inside his wrapping was always something unique and amazing."

Roy left behind beautiful memories in the childhood of his nieces and, as a result, they treated him like their own father.

In addition to his high IQ, Roy's emotional intelligence also was very high, so that he knew how to talk to people of all ages, young or old, woman or man. His neighbor and coworker shared that, "Whenever you want someone to talk to, Roy is always there for you." Roy had acted as a counselor to many of his friends when they were in distress and needing support.

Once Roy saw an old man in the HP garden who seemed to have pain in walking. Roy silently waited off to the side until the old man started to leave,

then Roy communicated with sign language and a gesture so as to give him a car ride home.

Roy's last text message to me was "When you see him (a homeless person Roy had helped), remember to tell him how great he looks after the haircut."

Roy always was respectful and encouraging toward youth. Roy would not reject a youth approaching him for fundraising. He would treat them tenderly and donate to encourage their volunteer work.

When Roy decided to write "The Story of Corvallis," he chose my 14-year-old daughter to design the book cover. Roy didn't give any requirements for the cover and he showed a total trust in my teenage daughter's ability to create. Once the design was done, Roy showed total satisfaction and acceptance, in that he didn't request any changes.

Because of Roy, my daughter feels much more confident in her artistic skills. Because of Roy, my son has more confidence in his technical abilities. In his unique way, Roy has influenced so many youth in helping them build better characters for future success.

Even though Roy's health became weaker and weaker during the last six months of his life, he remained calm and often comforted his concerned friends by saying, "I am fine; I am getting better." Knowing his time was short, Roy did several things for the people with whom he shared his house, such as replacing the thermostat and installing energy-efficient light bulbs throughout the house to save electricity consumption for the long term.

Three days prior to his departure, he even hosted meals for his friends and some OSU students. One day before his passing, he paid his last visit to his

favorite place, the Beanery, to connect with his friends.

Many friends and family members regretted not knowing the seriousness of Roy's health condition prior to his passing, but Roy wouldn't show it. He said in spirit, "I will not tell; I could never burden those I love."

Due to space limitation, we can share only some of Roy's stories so as to have a glance at an unforgettable human being.

Roy's life was all about selfless service, all about giving, all about unconditional love and all about protection of others. We all will miss Roy forever.

Please join in Roy's memorial service at 11 a.m. April 24 at McHenry Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall

LJ

“ I am an old friend of Roy Bennett who graduated from Lee High in Columbus, Miss. in 1967. I have not heard from Roy in many years. I assume this is my old friend. If you know if this is my old friend, please email me at jjones@bdbc.com. Also the Roy I knew had a brother Terry Bennett. If you have contact inform for Terry, please forward to me. Thank you.

Larry Jones

Larry Jones - January 15, 2017 at 02:20 PM

LW

“ Roy, how was it I was guided to the ol' Community Pages just now, after such a long lapse, to learn that I won't see you again? Just when I was looking forward to coming down to the Bean. I have no doubt you are on wing. Thank you for being such a friend.
--Larry

Larry Weymouth - April 28, 2015 at 11:20 PM

SB

“ Roy, when I heard from friends, I couldn't process that you passed on. We sure did bump heads many a time during conversations at the Bean. Old Draper would sit there with a smile on his face, loving the political debate. I'm sure you are involved in shenanigans no matter where you are :-)
Rest in Peace old.
Slainte
Susan B.

Susan Burke - April 28, 2015 at 12:29 PM

XC

“ You may get to know more about Roy's life from the Obituary on Corvallis Gazette Times:

http://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/obituaries/roy-bennett/article_27345565-b031-524b-8b32-69d7cf03ec54.html

Xuan Cheng - April 23, 2015 at 06:02 PM

WS

“ I just discovered that my long time friend Roy had died. I seem to be losing a lot of old friends lately ...so I'm not surprised, just a bit sad that we won't be bumping into each other on the streets of Corvallis as we have for the last 38 years . Bill Shumway

william shumway - April 21, 2015 at 06:58 PM

JB

“ I met Roy early on in my career with HP and always enjoyed talking with him. I found Roy to be a fair and honest man who stood behind what he believed in, including his friends. I will miss seeing Roy from time to time and especially our conversations. Good bye my friend.

John Berg - April 16, 2015 at 11:33 PM

NS

“ Roy was a kind soul who gave me great encouragement during the times we talked. It has been years since working at hp where I met him but I've never forgotten his soul-searching conversations. He was a gentleman.

Nancy Swain

Nancy Swain - April 15, 2015 at 12:49 PM



“ Roy was like a sudo grandparent. I only knew him for a short time but he would always take the time to talk to me and ask me how I was doing, "hey girl, how ya doin?" I would answer and he would smile and wink. Making Roy laugh was one of my favorite things, he was always someone I enjoyed sharing my stories with, he even inspired me to start writing a couple of books. He said it was easy to get published, and that he would help me get it figured out.

Jordan Erdman - April 15, 2015 at 12:44 PM



“ I am glad that I could call Roy a friend, what a thoughtful kind man! My thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.

Darci Garwood - April 15, 2015 at 12:14 PM