
LINES FROM LINDA

WAYNE BOYD

BELOVED FRIEND

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BY LINDA AYERS TURNER KNORR



Friends are the most wonderful part of living, and my family is truly blessed that Wayne Boyd was one of our most special ones! Known as a fierce competitor in the show ring, to us, Wayne was a man with a huge heart and a tremendous love for his family and friends. He knew how to express himself and show his love and concern for others. It was his natural way of life.

Unforgettable for his tremendous contributions to the sport of purebred dogs, Wayne bred and exhibited multiple all-breed Best in Show winners. For many years, he represented the Bayou Kennel Club as their American Kennel Club Delegate. Along with his wife, Jean, he enjoyed judging both here and abroad.

In a chance encounter in the hall of a hotel in Columbia, South Carolina, I first met “Waldo,” aka Ch. Bandogs Crowdaddy Gumbo as he and Wayne were heading back from a walk. My father, the late all-breed judge Roy Ayers, had shared with me that this was one of his very favorite dogs of the time. When Boyd’s special Bullmastiff greeted me, I could see why.

From Bullmastiffs to, later, Great Pyrenees, Wayne and Jean Boyd have been consistently breeding, winning, and sharing their knowledge as ambassadors of their breed. For example, their Rivergrove Great Pyrenees have garnered 13 Bests of Breed at their National Specialties.



Roy Ayers, Sr. awarding Group 1 to Ch. Rivergrove's Run For The Roses, "TR," owned by Jean Boyd and Judith Cooper. Shown by Wayne Boyd.

“...Wayne was a man with a huge heart and a tremendous love for his family and friends.”

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The sentiments shared by the following friends portray the kind of person Wayne Boyd was to them:

"We are deeply saddened by the news that we lost yet another icon in our breed. Wayne Boyd was a highly respected breeder/owner/handler of the world-famous line of Rivergrove Pyrenees with his wife Jean Boyd. But he also influenced the Bullmastiff breed more than 35 years ago with two other highly successful dogs. Wayne piloted the top-winning Bullmastiff of all time, Ch. Bandog's Crawdaddy Gumbo GROM, to No. 1 Working Dog and No. 2 All-Breed in the mid 1980s. Before that, he owned Ch. Huck's Last Hurrah who became the first multiple Best in Show Bullmastiff. These two Bullmastiffs were proudly co-bred by Louise Sanders and myself. I will miss Wayne's yearly holiday calls to say hello and reminisce those successful years watching these two Bullmastiffs in the ring. Wayne would always shed a tear when speaking, especially of Waldo who lived to be 14. Now many will shed a tear when we remember those dog show days with Wayne. My sincere condolences to Jean and family and all his friends."

— Helene Nietsch



"Waldo" and Wayne



Wayne with Ch. Bandogs Crawdaddy Gumbo, "Waldo"

Lauren Hall reminisced about her days as a Junior Handler, when Wayne encouraged her:

"I've been at a loss for most of the day after reading about the passing of someone who had an enormous impact on many of us in the dog community, and my breed especially... A man who largely influenced my love for the Great Pyrenees. I genuinely do not think I would be as involved as I am in this breed if it hadn't been for Wayne and Jean Boyd."

When I first met Wayne and Jean, I was barely tall enough to even see over a Great Pyr. My Dad and I were at the Syracuse Dog Show where we watched Wayne and 'Trump,' his special at the time, win the Breed and compete in the Group."

Over the years, Wayne continuously encouraged and cheered me on in Juniors. Anytime he saw me with a dog besides one of my Great Pyrs, he would always say something along the lines of, 'Where's your Pyrenees!? You gotta show a Pyr in Juniors! Stick with the Pyrs!' He would brag to anyone sitting with him, saying, 'This young lady shows a Pyr in Juniors. She always does such a tremendous job.' He always asked how my dad was doing, always asked how things in life were going, if I graduated school yet, if I got a job."

His love for the sport, this breed, and his friends and family were very apparent. If he wasn't in the ring, he could ALWAYS be found seated at one of the ring corners to watch the showing. His support was endless, no matter who you were, and he was always welcoming."

I'll forever be grateful for his kindness and encouragement."

— Lauren Hall

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Angela Lloyd and Wayne, all smiles after winning another Group 1 at the Greenville Kennel Club.

One of Wayne's very favorite people was his Professional Handler and family friend, Angela Lloyd. The following are remarks from Angela:

"Wayne was larger than life in all aspects, his love for the dog show community was pure and strong, and his love for his Family and Friends was even greater. He was my biggest fan and biggest critic all rolled into one, and I am so grateful to have known him so many years of my life, and even more so in the last eight. To know him was to love him, or to not... but for me, it was like having an extra parent. Thank you for that, Wayne! God broke the mold on you! You are a Legend."

— Angela Lloyd

My brother, Roy Ayers, Jr., sums up the enduring relationship we have been blessed to enjoy with Wayne:

"Wayne Boyd was a game changer. And he had fun being one. Life was not too large for him and he carried that enthusiasm to others. Wayne was also FUN to be around. He knew how to reach for the Brass Ring."

My introduction to Wayne and Jean came through our families and our love for the sport of dogs. That was an admission ticket to a personality that brightened my day with each encounter.

Some of my fond memories were spent at the Rivergrove property. He loved to entertain. The Boyd's annual lobster feast was greatly anticipated by all who enjoyed the privilege of eating more fresh lobster than should be humanly feasible. And, of course, no visit to Rivergrove would be complete without hanging out in the kennel with the Greats like Waldo and TR.

My sister, Linda, and my nephew, Todd Turner, and I will forevermore be grateful for the support we received from the Boyds during the hospital stay of our parents, Roy and Hazel Ayers, following a tragic accident that occurred enroute to the Atlanta Airport as they were about to fly to New York for a judging assignment. Wayne was there in support. True friends never hesitate in times of need! Later, Wayne returned from Maryland to Georgia for our father's funeral services in 1993.

Every Christmas morning, our family received the first phone call from Wayne Boyd.



"TR" and Wayne avoiding the mud.



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Roy Ayers, Jr. entertains the Boyds at his home in Alexandria, Virginia.

Wayne and Jean were regular fixtures for poolside parties at my home in Alexandria, Virginia. When Linda moved from Atlanta to Greenville, South Carolina, the Boyds were some of her first guests. In 2011, during our mother's last days, again Wayne flew in, loaded down with her favorite red roses.

Wayne was unfiltered, which, to me, is a fabulous trait. Ordinary, run of the mill and boring are not terms that applied to Wayne.

My family will always cherish the friendship we were privileged to share with Wayne Boyd. Long live the memory of one of the coolest T-Rex personalities to ever roam Planet Earth. He always gave more than he received."

— Roy Ayers, Jr.



Time presses on, but we do not forget the precious memories of those who are engraved in our hearts forever. The world is a better place because Wayne Boyd was here. Others will remember him fondly, as I do. It is a measure of greatness to live on in the hearts of friends.

"Life has to end, love doesn't." —Mitch Albom ■

