



Vahe Boyajian

November 28, 1911 - March 15, 2015

Vahe Boyajian of Fort Collins, CO, passed away peacefully on March 15, 2015 at just over 103 years of age. Vahe was never old, but lived long. He was a true gentleman and a man of quality who lived purposefully. His gentle nature, honest curiosity, and potent respect for people and nature inspired these qualities in others.

Vahe was an explorer in the truest sense of the word; to him, life was to be explored and every step of the journey to be savored. His passion for living was defined by his desire to learn, eagerness to share, rich humor, disdain for mediocrity, and a boundless sense of child-like play.

Born in 1911 in Nashua, NH, Vahe lived through the depression, served in the army in WWII, was a musician and teacher upon his return from The War until well in the 1980's, was a tax counselor for almost 20 years, and a "backyard" carpenter of exceptional skill. Vahe's accomplishments are extensive and impressive and would make grand fodder for a book. He traveled with his family to almost every state in the US by car and towing a 26-foot Airstream travel trailer, sometimes only 40 or 50 miles a day, witnessing such sights as the Seattle World's Fair, Hoover Dam, Grand Coulee Dam, the construction of the Interstate roadway system, Death Valley, the Badlands, and all the major state parks throughout the Western and Eastern US. When asked what life was like in The Depression, Vahe replied surprisingly: "They were some of the

best days of my life.” Vahe graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music and opened a small music studio in Waltham, MA and at the same time opened a retail music store 17 miles west in Maynard, MA where he also taught and repaired instruments in addition to selling music, instruments, and supplies. Remarkably, he was the only employee in this undertaking and worked 18 hours a day, 6 days a week until he left the business in 1970. In addition, throughout the 1950's & 60's Vahe also hosted live radio shows and performed with various ensembles in the greater Boston area. In the late '60's, he trained to become a tax consultant and began a modest career preparing taxes. After moving to Fort Collins in 1970, he worked full time as a tax preparer for another 12 years before finally “retiring”.

“Retirement” for Vahe meant “opportunity” to learn something new. While in the tax business, he dabbled in investing, but once freed from tax preparation, he dedicated himself to learn more about investing and turned it into a full-time “job” which occupied him quite literally until the day he died. In fact, Vahe did not use his first computer until 1998 (he was 87 years old!). Not only did he migrate his experience from paper to the computer and the Internet, but he did so using the Linux OS and on-line investing services, which he ultimately used exclusively from 2008 on.

Proper use of language and proper “deportment” were emblematic of Vahe's personality. He was almost obsessive about using the English language correctly and enhancing and employing a robust vocabulary to express himself as effectively and eloquently as possible. A dictionary was never from Vahe's reach (they are peppered throughout his house) and he would often research a word's history to ensure he understood all it's meanings for correct usage given the context of a discussion. Likewise, Vahe was meticulous when presenting himself in public; invariably in a 3-piece suit with bow tie and hat. He often said “Never miss an opportunity to look your best for any situation.”, and he was fond of quoting Abraham Lincoln regarding verbal

presentation: "It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to speak out and remove all doubt."

These are but a very few highlights of Vahe's long, productive, creative, generous, and inspiring life. Growing up in The Depression, witnessing the development of the automobile, the atomic age, space travel, television, solid state electronics, the computer, the personal computer, the Internet, cell phones, inoculations, paved roads, Airlines, the Space Shuttle, and the human genome, and some of the darker facts of history such as "the bomb", the Cold War, "911", AIDS, epic water and air pollution, assassinations, drug abuse, and war after war after war. Vahe once said that "The hardest thing about living long is watching society make the same mistakes over and over again."

Following the death in 1998 of his wife of 42 years, Elsie E. Boyajian, Vahe's numerous friends and neighbors in Fort Collins became his greatest joy. They inspired him to keep learning, provided him with the human contact he always sought in all things, challenged him to never give up, and gave him opportunities to continue to conduct himself as a teacher, gentleman, and mentor, and to share his experiences and sense of humor. Vahe didn't survive to 103 years of age, he lived every moment of it. May we all be inspired to do the same with the time we have.

Vahe is survived by his two sons, Mark L. Boyajian and David C. Boyajian, his granddaughter Tannis L. Boyajian, and, of course, his cherished friends. Per Vahe's firm request no formal services will be held; only private remembrances. In lieu of flowers to the family, donations in Vahe's memory can be made to Fort Collins VA services (<http://www.volunteer.va.gov/apps/VolunteerNow/>) or Pathways Hospice (<http://pathways-care.org/giving/memorial-donations-gifts/>).

Tribute Wall

SS

“ In 1963 I began guitar lessons with Mr. Boyajian, after 2 previous years of lessons in Natick, with Joseph M. Estella. Mr. Boyajian put me on a fast track to learning my instrument. In two years - I was 11 - he had me sight reading and starting to play difficult pieces which, with his encouragement, attention, and attention, I was able to master. By that summer, high school kids were asking me to join their bands. Mr. Boyajian, along with my parents, was my biggest influence in my musical life. Later on, I graduated from Berklee College of Music as a guitar & education major. After graduation I wanted to reconnect with Mr. Boyajian. There was no internet at the time, and I was unable to locate him. I'm 70 now, still playing and having made seven records throughout the years. To this day I remain grateful to him. Who knew that in a small storefront in Maynard, was an American musical treasure? Mr Boyajian was one of a kind and I will always remember him. To Mr. Boyajian's family I send my condolences on his passing, and many thanks for sharing their father with me every week. Samantha Simcoe

Samantha Simcoe - August 30, 2024 at 02:23 PM



“ Vahe Boyajian

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM

RC

“*Mr. Vahe the Crow family will miss you dearly. I'll never forget coming over to help you fix your television and suddenly "The Simpsons" coming on the screen. After 2 or 3 minutes you told me to turn it off. I asked how long your TV had not been working... " six or seven years" you told me. Six or Seven years??? So funny! Miss you Vahe. - Robert, Jessica, Callum, Jesse and Gabe.*

robert crow - April 03, 2015 at 09:49 PM

MP

“*Hi Mark & David,
My sincerest condolences on the loss of your father. I know he was truly ready to have his life end, but it is always with some sadness that we say goodbye. It was a privilege to have known him and I know he will be deeply missed by so many nice folks. I wish you and all of them peace and rest.*

*Sincerely,
Mary Staley Pridgen*

Mary Pridgen - March 30, 2015 at 01:04 PM

RB

“ Hello Mark and David,

I am sad to hear of the passing and loss of your father. I hope all is well for you both otherwise, and that you have the love and support of your immediate families to help you through your loss. You are lucky, in that your dad lived a very long life, and was a gentle and quiet man. I will always remember times spent in the summer camping together in your families' trailer, and the fun spent in the evening, when your dad would play the guitar and we would all gather around the campfire, sing and have a good time building life's memories.

*Love,
Rick Bartlett*

Rick Bartlett - March 27, 2015 at 09:55 PM