

USA-NKF Says Goodbye to a Dear Friend

I have been asked by Sensei Jarrett to comprise a tribute to my husband, Shihan Richard Boeckholt who died July 28, 2008 after collapsing suddenly from apparent heart attack. I have been trying to think of the best way to describe the man I knew for nearly 40 years. Richard was a man of immense integrity and honor. He was a man who came from a background of poverty and abuse and was a man who was a true survivor. His first passion was the law, but after a disheartening loss of a case, he re-directed that passion to karate, kobudo and iai-do. He was also a man who loved life.



Richard loved teaching and learning. After walking away from martial arts earlier in life, that love was re-kindled by Hanshi Miki (from San Diego). His martial arts training was broadened when he met Sensei Oshiro and adopted Yamanni-ryu kobudo and further expanded to include Muso jikiden eishen-ryu iai-do. Richard was absolutely in his element when he walked onto the dojo floor. He always had a smile on his face, a light hearted quip for his students and a hearty laugh during class. He spent upwards of twenty hours a day studying videos, tapes and anything he could get his hands on that he thought would help him to improve and teach his students.

He embraced the Seito Shito-ryu style of karate. He wanted the very best instruction for his students and constantly strived to encourage each and every one to excel to the very best of their abilities. He truly loved his students and their families and was always very proud of them. In addition to teaching class himself, he embraced the additional roles of judge, referee, and coach. Richard was never a politician and was surprised when he was asked to vice-chair the RSO of Northern California with Sensei Gene Tibon. He felt it was important to show his support of karate and graciously accepted the post with humility and honor.

Finally, Richard was my best friend, my soul-mate, and a wonderful husband. I truly believe that had he lived, he would have made extraordinary contributions to the world of karate. He had so many wonderful dreams and hopes for the future of karate, his school, and for the future of his students. I loved him very much and I know he will be missed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Marie (Gidget) Boeckholt
Sensei and Wife