

Robert John Boyd

May 6, 1950 — June 18, 2027

On Friday, June 18, 2027 underneath some purple prairie clover alongside Lake Darling in Alexandria, Minnesota having attained the age of 77, I died.

I, Robert John Boyd, was born on May 6, 1950, a Saturday, around 2:30 in the afternoon to John and Ruth (Bartz) Boyd of Alexandria, Minnesota.



At a career day in my junior year at Jefferson High School, I learned the Alexandria Technical College was offering a course in computer programming. The only thing I knew about computers is that they did fantastic things in science fiction stories. It was irresistible!

The next two years were a blast! The custodians closed the school at 10 PM but let me stay all night. All of the computer manuals were in the storage room and it was easy to get ahead of the instructors. I left behind programs that tracked K-12 students with special needs for School District 206 utilizing a data storage system that the instructors hadn't learned yet leaving a genuine challenge for the student that got the application the next year.

The U. S. Army sent me to Korea in 1971. During peacetime, 100% of all aircraft in the country should be flyable every day of the year yet the percentage ready to fly had been in decline. On arrival, I was scooped up by a Command Sergeant Major looking for staff for an aviation battalion headquarters tasked with getting to the bottom of the aircraft readiness problem in Korea. I was awarded a Commendation while clerking for the battalion Logistics Officer for the handling of investigation reports.

In 1972, the Army sent me to Dunham Army Health Clinic at the U. S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Working in the medical records department, I noticed how record file folders could easily be misfiled and started to gain a reputation for digging up records that had been missing for years. Coworkers made fun of me by announcing a name, walking up to a cabinet, grabbing a folder at random, and saying, "Here it is!" which to their eyes is what I seemed to be doing.

The problem was simple. Because the cabinets were overstuffed, the folder markings did not line up and the narrow corridors between cabinets made it difficult to see the sequencing of those markings. I secured a couple of more

file cabinets and for increased visibility pushed them all up against the walls. I spent a weekend spreading all of the folders across the increased cabinet space. All of the missing record folders jumped out like a sore thumb do to their now easy to see unaligned markings and I was awarded a second Commendation.

My first job was a computer operator for State Bond & Mortgage in New Ulm, Minnesota processing checking, savings, and mutual fund accounts, loans, mortgages, and insurance policies.

In 1975, Decision Systems, Inc. in Minneapolis, Minnesota was a small startup less than a year old with less than half a dozen employees. I got the assignment to write time, billing, and accounts receivable software for Twin Cities' law firms. Working directly for the owner of a small company is the best employment. It's a blast and because you're having so much fun you stay up all night making it work your way. The company today has offices on 4 continents.

From 1988 to 2006, I was a Technical Consultant for Rust Consulting, Inc. also in Minneapolis creating and defining procedures for managing litigation and class action databases.

Going back to school in 2006 to Hennepin Technical College, I earned an Associate's Degree in Landscape Design and Horticulture. In 2007, I won third place in the school's landscape design competition. I was on the President's List from 2006 to 2008 and a member of the ΦΘΚ International Honor Society.

I fell in love with science fiction in the 5th grade. I was fascinated by how men were able to learn to live in spaceships and on other planets. That led me to philosophy because philosophy seeks to answer the question how does one live right here and now on this planet. Besides answering this all important question, philosophy gave me a wider framework for understanding science, economics, history, etc. That led to my understanding of how the world came to be the way it is now and more significantly allowed me to think rationally about how the world ought to be.

In 2009, I discovered the music I loved the most, K-pop (Korean popular music.) K-pop idols view themselves as rejuvenators of the spirit by providing love, joy, happiness, and strength through their music and performances. Through childlike magic, they reach out all the way from Korea, innocently hug you to them, and ask for your love. I fell dearly in love with the six girls of T-ara: Park Soyeon, Lee Qri, Hyomin, Park Jiyeon, Ham Eunjung, and Jeon

Boram. The girls look to me and all their fans for the love and support that revitalizes their spirits providing them joy, happiness, and strength.

Along with a striving to be the very best at everything they do, I discovered that this innocent, childlike, joyous outlook on life saturates Korean culture. I am most unworthy of these people from the Land of the Morning Calm. I wish very fervently that they will be able to spread their childlike love and joy across the whole planet.

I spent many happy, sweaty, muscle tiring days of many summers establishing a lake shore buffer zone on Lake Darling. But as a gardener I can tell you that protecting the lake is an excuse to plant a lake shore buffer zone—not a reason.

I was preceded in death by my parents; paternal grandparents Leon Jr. and Lita (Raiter) Boyd; maternal grandparents Rev. Albert and Bertha Bartz; aunt Magel Boyd; uncles Rev. Herb Bartz and Harold Bartz; and cousin Roger Bartz.

I am survived by my sister Nancy Starewicz of Valparaiso, Indiana; her husband Doug Starewicz; nephew Chris Gielow of San Diego, California; his wife Nora Byrne; nephew Chad Starewicz of Redondo Beach, California; niece Nicole “Nikki” Houser of Brandon, Florida; her husband James “JW” Houser; great nephew Damen Houser; great niece Dalia “Dolly” Houser; aunt Helen Bartz of Sunnyvale, California; uncle H. James “Jim” Boyd of Alexandria; cousins Jim Bartz, Beverlee (Bartz) Schultz, Lee Boyd, Rev. Mary (Boyd) Hovland, Anne (Boyd) Bartz; and a few dandelions.

Spend your life doing the things you like. Putting a roof over your head, clothes on your back, and food on the table are perks of the job—not a reason for working. Life is the journey—not the destination. You can enjoy the destination because your life took you there. Substituting the rewards of life for the living of it is a constant slap in the face that you that you never measured up.