



Richard W. "Dick" Bruner

June 26, 1926 - April 3, 2013

Richard Wallace Bruner died peacefully at the age of 86 at his daughter's home.

Born in Burlington, Iowa, he served in World War II after high school, serving as a company clerk in an otherwise all-black battalion.

Upon his return, he graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Minnesota and went on to a distinguished career as a writer.

He started at the Mankato Free Press (Minnesota) and went on to write the New York segment of the Huntley-Brinkley Report, the most popular television news program of its time. He was active in civil rights throughout his life and wrote two books for students, "Black Politicians" and a biography of Whitney Young, leader of the National Urban League.

He also wrote "Rush Toward Freedom," a highly acclaimed history of the civil rights movement that was made into a TV miniseries narrated by Julian Bond. His play, "A Small Disturbance," was produced off-Broadway.

He lived in Tucson, Ariz., for many years, where he continued to write, and he also founded the Tucson Farmers Market at St. Phillips Plaza. He moved to Budapest, Hungary, where he married and co-founded the first independent English language newspaper, "Budapest Week," along with his son, Rick. He is survived by his wife, Erzsebet of Budapest; his sons, Sean (Tucson) and Rick (Brooklyn); his daughter, Susan Medrano (Benicia); stepson, Marko Molnar (Budapest); five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Comments



“ Erzsebet Bruner lit a candle in memory of Richard W. "Dick" Bruner



Erzsebet Bruner - June 03, 2014 at 03:48 AM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Sue Medrano - May 03, 2013 at 12:10 AM



“ Very sorry to hear this. Dick inspired and encouraged me when I'd just started out as a journalist, a long, long way from Kansas. Rick, my condolences.-- Ken Kasriel

Ken Kasriel - April 26, 2013 at 04:09 AM



“ Even though you were at least sixty when you started your career as a eastern European foreign correspondent, you were younger than any of us at heart. Your energy and enthusiasm and life force and sense of humour and intelligence were an inspiration. Like Charlie Cootes, you'll be remembered as a pioneering Budapest correspondent -- one of the first ones, and one of the great ones. We miss you, Dick. And you'll continue to be missed.

John Nadler - April 26, 2013 at 01:13 AM



“ I know Dick Bruner as a journalist in Budapest, Hungary.

In mid 1990 I was just starting out as a freelance journalist, when Dick Bruner called me up out of the blue to invite me for dinner at his apartment on Real Tanoda utca. Dick had spotted an article I wrote for the Hungarian Observer and that evening he openly and cheerfully pumped me for my sources as he cooked the evening's meal. Dick was already in his sixties, a seasoned American journalist, and I was flattered just to be taken seriously by a gentleman with grey hair who actually made money from his writing.

Dick was a generous and eager host. He cooked a great meal and had a knack for cultivating eclectic friends and introducing them to each other. That meal was the first of many I would share at Dick's table, and although I might have met a few other people that first evening there is only one I remember clearly. That evening, Dick introduced me to his son, Rick Bruner, who had just arrived in town for a visit. Rick and Dick. Dick and Rick!

That evening would prove to be a seminal moment in my career, and perhaps to yours, because it was the first time I recall discussing the proposition that what Budapest really needed was an independent, English language newspaper. At the end of the night, I offered Rick a joint (brownie points if you can guess my source) and we just got to talking. How was I to know that roughly one year later, Rick and I would find ourselves standing at a street corner on Raday utca, holding our first copy of the Budapest Week.

It was Dick Bruner who first took the idea of a newspaper seriously. Dick's first act as our founding editor was to throw a party and invite all of his crazy friends who might be interested in taking part. That was the night I met Blake Steinberg, who became our first business manager. I believe that was also the first occasion I met Tibor Szendrei, a powerhouse of a journalist who would go on to write up to 20% of the Budapest Week for at least the first year. (This might even be an understatement.) The party broke up and we hadn't agreed to anything, but that was the evening our little pipedream became a distinct possibility.

Starting up an English-language newspaper with no capital whatsoever in a transitional, broken economy is a young man's job, and Dick Bruner wasn't interested in rolling up his sleeves. We didn't need him for that. Dick was our grey eminence, our ace in the hole. Dick was more than just a figurehead. In those critical first months he inspired us and dared us to take each other seriously.

Dick Bruner was something of a rebel rouser. He started his career as a labor activist and later campaigned as small town newspaper editor-slash-owner. Dick was a progressive, an advocate for Good Causes. He wanted to our little paper to do the same. And it did!

Rick and Tibor and I left the Budapest Week in 1993. Years later I met Esther Holbrook and Elysia Gallo who worked for Budapest Week in the late 90s. What struck me was they talked about the newspaper in the same way we did. The original

founders, writers and editors were long gone, but the values and culture persisted.

We on this mailing list share in Dick Bruner's legacy, which lives on with his friends, co-workers, and many other people down the line who took up the torch.

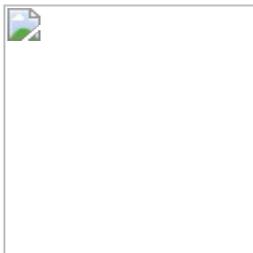
Dick Bruner was not a saint. Some found his American style of directness to be (shall we say) off-putting. Dick had strong opinions and not everybody agreed with him. He was passionate about his causes, and not always wise in picking them. But he was likeable. He was kind. Whatever you might say about Dick Bruner, his heart was always in the right place. I consider myself lucky to have known this man.

One of my fondest memories of Dick Bruner is the small part I played in facilitating his romance with his wife-to-be, Erzsebet (never Erszi!). Dick never learned Hungarian, and at the time he introduced us, Erzsebet could only manage a few simple sentences in English. By 1990, I had enough basic Hungarian under my belt to make simple translations. As I arrived for y

Steve Carlson - April 21, 2013 at 12:16 AM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Sue Medrano - April 06, 2013 at 12:21 AM



“ I'm so deeply grateful to the many people who helped to care for him and encourage him at all the various stages of a very long and hard 4 year journey, which he faced with grace and unbelievable gentle patience.

I love you and miss you Dad.

Sue Medrano - April 05, 2013 at 06:59 PM



“ I miss you, too, Dad. Thanks again, Sue, for your beautiful, selfless ministry to him in the last six months.

Rick - April 07, 2013 at 09:32 PM



“ Sue Medrano is following this tribute.

Sue Medrano - April 05, 2013 at 06:52 PM