

REMEMBERING GARRY TERRILL



Garry and Sharon Terrill celebrating New Year 2019 on December 31, 2018 at the Gaslight Theatre.

Our friend, Garrett “Garry” Terrill, passed away suddenly in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Garry contracted the coronavirus, which exacerbated his bout with aspiration pneumonia along with other physical problems. He was a long-time bridge player and supporter of the Adobe Bridge Club. He is survived by his wife, Sharon, who was also a long-time Adobe player, board member, and director. He also left a son in South Dakota, Gerald Terrill.

Garry was born in Evanston, Illinois, on November 30, 1944. While he was growing up, his parents would play social and competitive bridge. One of his parents preferred Goren, and the other preferred the Schenken club system. They taught Garry to play and he would fill in a table with his family. He continued to play bridge when he attended the University of Illinois, where he majored in Mechanical Engineering. Upon graduation, Gary joined the Air Force and tried to get into computer technical training, but eventually was placed as an X-ray technician in the Air Force medical corps. He served for 4 years. While he was stationed in San Angelo, Texas, he met his first wife, Lynda. They were married and started a family with 1 boy and 2 girls.

Garry began working as a mechanical engineer for Mueller corporation in Decatur, Illinois. He designed and helped produce water valves for cities and industries. Tragedy struck Garry’s family when Lynda died of lung cancer. He was left taking care of the 3 children. Tragedy struck again when he lost one daughter in a car accident and then the other daughter to illness.

Eventually he met his second wife, Sharon. He proposed by telling Sharon, “I need a regular bridge partner, and I think you will be a really good bridge player!”

During their marriage, they were playing duplicate bridge on a regular basis. They moved to Monroe, North Carolina. Gary worked and played bridge regularly, and Sharon did the same and began directing at club games. They moved back to Rockford, Illinois, still playing bridge. Both became life masters. Sharon chuckles and claims she made life master shortly before he did. He must have been a good teacher!

The Terrills retired from their jobs and moved to Wilmot, South Dakota. They soon embarked on a “pastime” job of selling Garry’s Kettle Corn (along with other food items). They rolled their popping truck throughout the Midwest selling their popcorn and hotdogs at fairs and exhibitions. It was during this time, a good friend of theirs, Mary Primeau, invited them to visit Tucson and play bridge at the Adobe Bridge Club. They enjoyed the weather, the people at Adobe, and their friends. They also enjoyed the Tucson Gem Show and decided to sell kettle corn near the exhibition. They soon became “snowbirds,” migrating back and forth between South Dakota and Tucson. They sold popcorn at the Gem Show while they were here.

Garry would play bridge with Sharon (his favorite partner) most of the time. He also partnered with Steve Pozez, Betsy O’Dell, Cathy Ball, Karen Barth, Marlyss Johansson, and Gene Hendricks. He was always game to travel and attended bridge retreats all over Arizona and Mexico. He was liked by all. He had the uncanny knack to blurt out funny quips spontaneously even though he was genuinely a quiet person most of the time. He always had with a twinkle in his eye and a sly smile. Garry will always be remembered, and he will be missed.



Garry and Sharon Terrill enjoying a bridge retreat May, 2019, in Las Conchas, Mexico.