

February 18, 2023

Dear Fellow NBEICers,

We are writing to you today to let you know that our Principal Co-Founder and long-term member, Bruce Lippke, passed away in his sleep on February 14. All six of us who founded NBEIC were members of the Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates (WEFA) forecasting group. When their meetings got larger with less time for discussion of economic data and issues, Bruce ardently expounded on the need for finding a way to continue the in-depth conversations that helped all of us understand more fully what was really happening in the US and global economies and how the outlook might change over the next decade or so.

His efforts led to the formation of the “Secret Six” (See the “A History” section of your *NBEIC Handbook* for more details). That eventually led to the creation of NBEIC, which has met every three months since August 1, 1979. Without all of Bruce’s hard work, there never would have been an NBEIC.

At the October 1981 NBEIC Meeting on Nantucket Island, which was hosted by Judy Markland of John Hancock, the other Principal Co-Founder of NBEIC, we learned that Lawrence Klein, the founder of WEFA, 1980 Nobel Laureate in Economic Science and Benjamin Franklin Professor of Economics at the University of Pennsylvania, had recruited Bruce to be the new President of WEFA.

In that capacity, many NBEIC members worked for him. They include Nariman Behraves, David Berson, Doug Handler, Steve Sexauer, Jim Smith, and Rob Wescott. Other NBEIC members including Peter Jaquette, Lynn Michaelis, and Don Straszheim worked for Bruce at Weyerhaeuser.

Bruce was truly a “Renaissance Man.” He was literally a rocket scientist, having shot off many missiles while in the US Navy at White Sands Proving Grounds and in the early days of NASA at Cape Canaveral. He worked at one time as an Arthur Murray dance instructor and was an expert on skis, both on the snow and in the water. He built much of his own furniture and since he was an electrical engineer, wired much of each of the houses he lived in to make them more livable.

When he was at Boeing, he saved his staff, the Operations Research Group, from major layoffs in the wake of cuts in defense spending as the Vietnam War wound down. His innovative solution was to create a very successful subsidiary, Boeing Computer Services, that sold computer time to other companies from the excess capacity on Boeing’s massive mainframe computers.

Bruce was asked to join Weyerhaeuser Company in 1970 to head the Marketing and Economic Research Department. The company was in the process of modernizing the planning process under a relatively new CEO, George Weyerhaeuser. Bruce was successful in establishing a respected and involved department that became successful in an otherwise staff-averse culture. He brought his learnings from Boeing and established the group as one of the first staff departments that charged each business for services provided. This innovation proved very important during the routine staff reduction efforts at Weyerhaeuser.

After leaving WEFA, he returned to Seattle and became the first Director of the Center for International Trade in Forest Products (CINTRAFOR) at the University of Washington. He subsequently served there as an Associate Dean in the School of Environmental and Forest

Sciences. When he retired, the faculty unanimously voted to make him a Professor *Emeritus*, a very special honor.

Bruce remained active in NBEIC. He attended both the Key West (February 2019) and La Jolla (February 2020) meetings and was very helpful in the planning for the August 2022 meetings in Rapid City, SD. He grew up on a farm near Aberdeen, SD, and always had fond memories of the state.

All of us who knew and especially those of us who ever worked for him revered him as a friend and mentor. He and his wife Barbara (Barb) were renowned party givers and organizers. They especially excelled in “mixers” and wine-related events. I am sure no one ever attended one of their parties without coming out with new friends and some great stories from the people they met there.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by their three children, all of whom have attended NBEIC meetings, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by all of them and all of us who knew him.

Written by Jim Smith, David Berson, and Lynn Michaelis, all of whom greatly admired Bruce and were glad to be his friends.