

In Memorium - Neal Vonada

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For those who are interested in family history, we often find a great deal of passion associated with our research and enjoy sharing this passion with others. Neal Vonada was such a person and I was fortunate about 2002 to begin a relationship with him that I consider to be extraordinary - the kind that you hope to develop at some point in your lifetime.

For those who are interested in family history, we often find a great deal of passion associated with our research and enjoy sharing this passion with others. Neal Vonada was such a person and I was fortunate about 2002 to begin a relationship with him that I consider to be extraordinary - the kind that you hope to develop at some point in your lifetime. Although we never met in person, there were hundreds, probably thousands, of e-mail messages between us as we explored and compared our family history and other subjects. Within a short time Neal had outlined his family line back to about the year 1250 in Germany and I compared it with my research of the Nida family line that included two trips to Germany to the areas where our ancestors had lived. A connection was established for the first time that united the Vonada family in America with the Nida/Niday family in America through our German family, the von Nida's. This was a huge breakthrough in our family history that Neal had provided and it cemented a bond between us for the rest of our lives.

There has always been an admiration for the accomplishments that Neal has performed in his lifetime. I spent many weeks of sorting through notes, papers, manuscripts and photos that he had sent to me from his home in Seattle. Several hundreds of Vonada family names and information were added to the third printing of The Family von Nida book in 2004 as a result of his research and that of other family members that he had introduced to me. This consolidation has now expanded to over 32,000 connecting names that allows us to assist others in their quest to establish their family roots through his website and other media. When he asked if I would be a co-moderator of his Yahoo sponsored VonNida website, I gladly accepted the challenge. He believed that we could build it together and exchange ideas for improving the communication to our family members around the world.

I followed his association with the Mensa groups and marveled at the many things he did to promote their organizations. His Grandpatime website is akin to reading an action packed novel from around the world. His love for his family was extraordinary and was demonstrated through his messages and photos to me. I looked forward to his e-mails with the enthusiasm of a child looking forward to Christmas.

Neal will be missed by many throughout the world but his memory will live long in our hearts and his spirit will be with us always. His contributions to our family history will be documented for centuries to come. Rest easy dear friend until we meet again.

Jack Nida