



Eric Bodnar

February 23, 1969 - March 10, 2025

Eric Bodnar loved old Hollywood movies and politics. As a young boy, he put a photo of Ronald Reagan on his bedroom wall, signaling his emerging political loyalty. But he valued Hollywood cinema even more. Given a choice between attending a political debate or seeing a James Bond film, he would choose “OO7” every time. He excelled at selecting features for his family after dinner, offering expert commentary on actors and directors, and answering any questions his viewers had. He always knew the answer. When films from Hollywood’s classical era became available on Blu-ray, he enthusiastically embarked upon a collecting spree that made his days. No life event could interfere with his annual viewing of the Academy Awards. For Eric, Reagan was fine, but John Wayne was better.

Eric was born on a snowy night in Willimantic, Connecticut on February 23, 1969. Before he died on March 10, 2025, he earned an undergraduate degree in History and Political Science and a master’s degree in social studies education from Indiana University. He moved to Bloomington in 1981 after living in Hershey, Pennsylvania, where he regularly visited “Chocolate World.” He was also a 1987 graduate of Bloomington High School South (BHSS) where he took part in dramatic presentations, was on the Academic Decathlon Team, and served as an editorial editor for the school’s newspaper—The Optimist.

Students from the time of his editorship could read his commentary whether they agreed with him or not. In an editorial he wrote in *The Optimist* in 1986 he advocated for drug testing of athletes. He made the point that because athletes served as role models, they were obliged to set a standard of “drug-free living.” To reinforce his argument, he quoted—who else--Ronald Reagan who called upon citizens to “rise up together in defiance against the cancer of drugs.” He also treated readers of *The Optimist* to occasional movie reviews as well.

At the time of his passing, he worked at BHSS with special education pupils and tutored homebound students. Working with students and colleagues at BHSS was a great source of joy for Eric. In 2021 the school district awarded him a “Star of Excellence” certificate.

Eric is survived by his father, John Bodnar of Bloomington, his sister, Brenna Snider and brother-in-law Kipp Snider of Arlington, Virginia. His favorite movie audience consisted of his two nieces, Sophie Snider and Francesca Snider, and his nephew John Snider. Movies for them will never be the same. He is also survived by many cousins, aunts, uncles, and a host of stray cats he fed daily. His mother, Donna Bodnar, also a cherished member of his viewing public, predeceased him.

An open house reception in honor of Eric’s life will be held on Saturday, April 19, 2025, in the Federal Room at the Indiana Memorial Union, Bloomington, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. All are welcome. His family recommends donations be made to *The Optimist* at <http://www.bloomingtonsouthoptimist.org> or to the Monroe Country Humane Society.

Previous Events

Open House

APR **19**. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Indiana Memorial Union (Federal Room)
900 E 7th Street
Bloomington, IN 47405

Tribute Wall

SM

“ I graduated Bloomington high school south in 2010 and I still remember the kindness from Mr Eric bonder. He was one of my favorite people there he would walk with me in the hallways he would help me with my school work he was overall a very good kindhearted person and I will never forget him you are truly missed! Rest in peace gone too soon

steven meadows - April 01, 2025 at 12:43 PM

SM

“ I appreciated Eric's dry sense of humor and his calm demeanor. I know that he had a very challenging job at Bloomington High School South and over the years that I have taught with him, I always witnessed him treat students with respect. He was a very modest, gentle and compassionate soul, and I know that the faculty and students at Bloomington High School South will miss him. He made our school a better place for the students he taught and all of us.

Sheila McDermott-Sipe - March 30, 2025 at 09:32 PM



“ Though I didnt know Eric, following in his Father's Footsteps being a great Educator at my old High School I am sure he was a top notch Instructor. I took several classes in I.U. with Dr. Bodnar, and though I only minored in History, I took 64 Hours of History Courses there and Dr. Bodnar had an impact on my life for sure, so I think it would be safe to say that Eric touched lots of people the same way. Sorry to hear about this. Condolences to the Family.

Ted Welch - March 27, 2025 at 01:38 AM

KM

“ I am so thankful to have shared students with Mr. B., because it meant I got to witness first-hand his grace and compassion for both children and adults. He was incredibly important in our school, and I'm glad to have gotten to learn from his caring professionalism.


Kirstin Milks - March 26, 2025 at 09:11 PM

JD

“ Eric was such a wonderful part of the team at BHSS. He had endless patience, a gentle way, and empathy for all. He was truly "the person" for so many of our students, and he was especially "the person" for many of our most vulnerable. I keep looking around the corner to see him saunter towards me, hands behind his back, followed with his standard nod . . . A wonderful man that is missed by all who knew him.

Joe Doyle - March 26, 2025 at 03:40 PM

CG

“ Brenna—I am so sorry to hear this sad news—my heart goes out to you and your extended family. I had often heard of Eric's astonishing film knowledge and know he was beloved at South. Sending you all my sympathy, hugs and much 

carla gardner - March 25, 2025 at 03:00 PM

MC

Mr. Bodnar will forever be a legend. His resilient care for students was astonishing. I worked with him since around 2004. We shared a classroom at times and students at many levels and in many settings. Mr. Bodnar had a bottomless well of seeing good in his students. His consistency and level headedness has for a generation been the example of stability in a unstable world. Mr. Bodnar, thank you for the challenge you have set by your example as we hope to carry on your legacy of kindness and resilience as we empower those who need believed in the most.

Matt Corry - March 28, 2025 at 09:51 AM