

About Gary Burlingame (July 1, 1952 – March 9, 2016)

I knew Gary from 1980 onward. And I am very disappointed that the only way I found out about his passing away was via an email list from ex-US West/Qwest/CenturyLink employees.

<http://www.tmi-america.com/cjessup/Gary-Burlingame.htm>

Gary was one of my best friends over the years. Luckily, I live in BC, about 20 miles from where Gary resided, in Bellingham, WA, during his final years. I recently had lunch with Gary about a week or so before his passing. I told him I had plans to go visit my son in Los Angeles, CA on March 9th, 2016... the day Gary died as it turns out? He asked me to say hi to Jason and my wife, Lois. He seemed to be hanging in there, even though his current meds did not seem to be working as well for him as they had for the prior couple of years. Still, he seemed upbeat about trying some new therapies that were being made available and he made me think he was going to keep going for a lot longer after his prior meds had bought him more time to try something new. Now I realize he simply did not want me to worry about how dire things were for him. He always thought of everyone but himself. That's the kind of guy he was.

Just to let folks know a bit more... Gary had been fighting a rare form of blood cancer from before when Qwest sold Bell Terrace to the city of Bellevue, WA... whenever that was. It is hard for me to recall exact dates. But I do recall that he did not come to work one week. He never missed a day of work. So I got worried and called him at home. Apparently he had been in the hospital, had just gotten out and he found out he had cancer, thanks to coming down with Pneumonia, which is how they diagnosed his condition. He asked me once, "Chuck. I am not too sure I should try to fight this battle. What do you think I should do?" I told him he better suck it up because I would not like to live life myself if he just gave up without a fight. So he did, for me, I guess. He fought the good fight for perhaps 14 extra years.

As it turns out he had some of the best cancer treatment in the world, as far as I am concerned, thanks to his medical coverage through both Qwest/CenturyLink and IBM and thanks to the doctors at **Seattle's Cancer Care Alliance**, **Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center** and **UW Medicine**. How they kept him going so long is beyond me. Apparently they are miracle workers.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seattle_Cancer_Care_Alliance

I have no idea how he went downhill that fast. Somehow, I always seem to be last to know. Knowing Gary, he probably did not want to burden anyone in his final days.

While Gary and I visited each other often, one of the best times in our life was when we decided to buy a boat together. For a few years we took up water skiing, did an adventurous trip into Canadian waters and often took my sons boating. We also hunted deer several years together. And we did some snow skiing and day hikes together. Gary was a great guy to hang out with and often gave me good advice when dealing with family matters as well.

One more note. Gary adopted Mitch and raised him alone until meeting his second wife, Marilyn, after which they adopted Gene; two great sons which Gary thought highly of. Gary was

farmed out to IBM as part of the typical Qwest force reduction tactics. As a senior IT employee he was a brilliant software engineer and storage management technician. He once wrote his own assembler language compiler for his home PC and he could code in just about any language that came down the pike. He was very helpful to me in my career at PNB, US West, and Qwest and he was an inspiration to all his fellow employees and co-workers. People like him are very hard to find now days. I loved him. And I certainly will miss him a lot.

Chuck Jessup