



## Robert A. Longenbaugh

November 27, 1935 - October 17, 2020

ROBERT ALLEN LONGENBAUGH (Our Bob), 84 of Fort Collins passed peacefully Saturday, October 17th with family by his side. Robert was preceded in death by his parents Harry and Frances Longenbaugh and his sister Harriet Cox. He is survived by his wife Eulalia (Lale), niece Diana, niece Stephanie, 5 stepchildren, he considered his own, and many grand and great grandchildren. Robert was born in Durango, CO on November 27, 1935. He was a descendant of original Colorado Pioneer families and grew up in Cortez.

Robert graduated high school. In Cortez, CO and enrolled at Colorado A & M (CSU). He graduated from CSU in 1957 and was commissioned as an officer in the United States Air Force the same day. Robert was active duty in the Air Force as a meteorologist. He was stationed in Guam. Robert completed a Master of Science degree from CSU specializing in soil and water management. He was tenured assistant professor in Civil Engineering. As a faculty member Robert received awards and recognition related to his research on water issues and irrigation, working a great deal with farmers and politicians across the state and nation. In 1975 he was promoted to Associate Professor. In 1981 he retired from CSU to become the Assistant State Water Engineer for the State of Colorado. Even after retiring from that position, he remained active as a consultant and in educating people about the issues related to groundwater and the importance it has in agricultural life in Colorado.

Robert and Eulalia have created an endowed scholarship at CSU to support the studies of students interested in water resources and quality issues.

Robert greatly enjoyed hunting, fishing and visiting with friends and family growing up and well into his adult years. In 1982, he married the love of his life Eulalia (Lale) Muhlbradt. They enjoyed dancing, camping, and traveling the United States and Europe. They were avid CSU Rams and Bronco Fans traveling to and attending Bronco Super Bowls. Summertime fun included gardening and Rockies games, but family functions were always a priority.

Robert lived a full life. He was a greatly beloved husband, brother, uncle, grandpa, mentor, friend and neighbor. He will be dearly missed, but never forgotten. "Thank you for touching so many lives." We love you. . Rest in Peace.

A Visitation will be held at Bohlender Funeral Chapel, Thursday, October 22, 2020, 5-7 pm. The Rosary will begin at 7 p.m., immediately following the Visitation. A private funeral mass will be held at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton with an interment with military honors at Roselawn Cemetery.

# Events

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**OCT**   **Visitation**            05:00PM - 07:00PM

**22**

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Bohlender Funeral Chapel

121 W. Olive Street, Fort Collins, CO, US, 80524

**OCT**   **Rosary**                    07:00PM

**22**

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Bohlender Funeral Chapel

121 W. Olive Street, Fort Collins, CO, US, 80524

# Comments

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“ Bob's sterling Water reputation preceded my meeting him. But the first time I saw him testify at the capitol (2012) his passion and articulate/thorough presentation transcended any testimony I'd ever witnessed. But, the image of him, slumped shoulders as we left the Capitol is burned permanently in my memory. So I put my hand on his shoulder and suggested, "Bob. You take care of the hydrology, let me take care of the politics." Then on, Chuck, Bob and I became great friends. It never surprised us when he'd drop by the farm after he'd been measuring wells/water depths and every hydrological detail. I have files of information Bob gave me. And would have to say, "What I learned about the hydrological aspects of Water, I learned from Bob." Bob was deeply frustrated with the state engineers and representatives, repeating over the years, "they just don't get it. They just don't get it." My answer remained the same: "They do get it Bob. It's ALL about politics." Sometimes we'd get in go arounds about that, but with steadfast respect. In about 2018, Bob finally began to admit, that it was indeed politics that was getting in the way. Broke my heart to see his advisements go unheeded. His last testimonies, he'd end with, "Administer the water in prior appropriation." Bob gave that gift of clarity to me. I will try my best to move his request along, until the legislators/governor whoever, demands Water be "administered in prior appropriation!" Bless you Bob. You were a treasure... Chuck and I miss our kitchen table jawing with you. Sad.

Roni Sylvester - December 03, 2020 at 07:04 PM

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“ My deepest sympathies to the Longenbaugh family. Bob touched so many lives through his passion for groundwater, service and Colorado State University. He was also, to many of my generation, a great mentor and role model on being engaged in the water community.

I will always have two fond memories of Bob. The first is our in-person discussions, sometimes heated, in my office at CSU. Bob always came with a stack of maps, papers, and other data etc. to present his case. He always left on good terms and with a handshake whether we came to an agreement or not. The second was having the privilege and honor to present Bob with the Friends of the South Platte Award at the 2015 South Platte Forum. Bob will be missed but not forgotten.

Troy Bauder  
Fort Collins, CO

**Troy Bauder** - October 27, 2020 at 03:01 PM

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“ Robert was passionate about Colorado water. His help for the designated basins was tremendous. We had lots of conversations at GMDA conferences and at commission meetings. He was always there to do the right thing and not the politically correct thing. He was the most ethical water engineer I've ever known!  
We'll miss you Robert and keep your family in our prayers. Til we meet again. RIP  
Tom Sauter

**Tom Sauter** - October 27, 2020 at 12:15 AM

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“ I met Bob when I joined the South Platte Basin Round Table and was immediately drawn to his gentle, kind way and learned as much as I could from him. He was so passionate about the world of water, especially groundwater. Others who wrote a note here said it so much better than I could - Bob was so knowledgeable and dedicated to Colorado's water. Colorado definitely owes him a world of gratitude for all he did, even years after retirement.  
Thank you, Bob, for all you taught me with joy in your heart, a sparkle in your eye and a tenacity to solve issues. You left your mark on this world and will be missed. You also left some big shoes to fill.

Lynda James  
Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District's member on the South Platte Basin Round Table.



Lynda James - October 26, 2020 at 04:52 PM

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“ I have known Robert for 20 plus years and I have learned so much from him about the water industry. I helped prepare some of his reports, presentations, and many letters over the years. I admired his passion, determination, his vast knowledge, and many years of experience. He was a kind gentle soul. Rest in Peace Robert. You will be missed.

Lynn Kasten - October 23, 2020 at 04:35 PM

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“ Mrs. Longenbaugh:  
You have lost someone who's been an important part of your life. Many friends in Montezuma County also feel your loss. Please remember all the good times you shared as a family and they will help you at this time. My sympathy to your family.  
June Head

June Head - October 23, 2020 at 04:04 PM

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“ It was a privilege knowing and working with Bob. I will always cherish our friendship.

Reiner

Reiner Haubold - October 23, 2020 at 03:03 PM

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“ I remember Robert in high school in Cortez. I was in Harriet's class and Robert was in my brother, Kelly's class. Kelly and Robert both went to CSU and shared an old packer car. I recently visited with Robert and he reminded me of the car and how they had to push it to get it started, go to class, and then were afraid to turn it off for fear they couldn't start it after class. So they worked out their schedules so one or the other had the car and could pick up the other.

Robert and I reconnected when he joined the Montezuma County Historical Society and as Chairman of the Board of Directors, I reached out to the membership. It was a delight to visit with him about the "old days of growing up in Cortez", the 4-H fairs, the trips to Fort Collins to State 4-H conferences, the high school football games, and all aspects of life on the farm.

He was as enthusiastic as I am with the possibility of a new Montezuma Heritage Museum in Cortez to Tell the Stories of the entire county. His enthusiasm will be recognized and honored in the new museum, along with the generations before him. Thank you Robert for your love of your roots and all you have done to help solidify your legacy and the legacy of your family in this community.

Prayers for you and the family. Sincerely,

Ann Wilson Brown, Chairman, Montezuma County Historical Society. Cortez  
Colorado

Ann Brown - October 23, 2020 at 01:44 PM

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“ I have known Bob as an outstanding professional colleague since the late 1980s. Bob and I worked on a number of groundwater management issues over the years and though we did not always agree I had tremendous respect for Bob. He was a true Coloradan and was maybe the most knowledgeable person in the State regarding Colorado's very complicated water rights system -especially groundwater. For those of us in the field of groundwater / hydrogeology Bob was a "groundwater guy" -there is no higher compliment.

Mike Wireman  
Boulder, Colorado

Mike Wireman - October 23, 2020 at 12:50 PM

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“ When my office phone rang and the digital readout said “Bob Longenbaugh” I knew I needed to put aside whatever I was working on and settle in for a long call. And a long call it would certainly be. Bob was such a deep well of knowledge about all things water in Colorado. Long conversations overflowed with knowledge, wisdom, and just a hint of opinion. The depth of his knowledge and span of experience always amazed me and Colorado owes him gratitude for the critical part he played in the administration of our most vital natural resource. His calls always left me a bit richer in my own knowledge, but I humbly realize I will never reach his lofty level. I will miss you Bob.

Peter Barkmann  
Hydrogeologist

Peter Barkmann - October 23, 2020 at 11:25 AM

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“ The groundwater community has lost its most influential, vocal, and knowledgeable spokesperson and advocate. I became aware of Bob Longenbaugh's achievements 20 years ago researching publications on Colorado's groundwater resources. Shortly thereafter, I met the man and was immediately impressed by his depth of knowledge. Bob was a scientist engineer who understood groundwater hydrology and formulated his analysis, conclusions, and recommendations based on his experience, available data, and previous investigations. Bob challenged institutional concepts of groundwater administration and management when science suggested an alternate outcome. Though he often battled as the minority voice on several groundwater issues, Bob got it right.

Even in his later years and through failing health, Bob remained actively engaged in groundwater affairs traveling hundreds of miles to attend meetings, make presentations, and help organize seminars. His perseverance, stamina, and willingness to educate were extraordinary for a man in his late 70s and early 80s. I was always amazed that at his capacity to cite authors and investigations from the 1950s and 60s or more recently relevant to the groundwater issues at hand. I was fortunate to share a few years with him as a participant on the river basin roundtables where he was a dominant voice for groundwater users and issues.

I can only hope that sometime in the future another champion of Colorado's groundwater resources can fill his shoes. Bob will be sorely missed by his peers in the groundwater community. To me, his was a legend. Rest in peace.

Ralf Topper  
Senior Hydrogeologist (retired)

Ralf Topper - October 22, 2020 at 10:51 PM

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“ My sincere condolences. I worked with Bob for many years at the Division of Water Resources. So many memories. Passionate about water issues and a man on the go, I will always remember him.

**Paula Lacey** - October 22, 2020 at 09:16 PM

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“ I had the opportunity to interact with Bob on a fairly recent groundwater evaluation. I appreciated his perspectives and admired his passion. He was an engineer to the core, and I am glad to have known him.

- Matt Lindburg

**Matt Lindburg** - October 22, 2020 at 01:23 PM

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“ Lynn Kasten purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Robert A. Longenbaugh.



**Lynn Kasten** - October 22, 2020 at 12:44 PM

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“ We are pleased to see so many "greats" in Colorado water give tribute to Bob Longenbaugh. No one worked harder to raise awareness and push for reform in the arena of groundwater in the South Platte. Listening to Bob push his ideas could be tiresome, especially for those of us who felt we were working hard to enact important policy change already, but we never lost respect for his passion. To Bob's family: we share in your sadness as we say goodbye to this good man.  
MaryLou and Stephen Smith

**MaryLou Smith** - October 22, 2020 at 10:40 AM

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“ I had the pleasure of working with Bob as a consultant on the Arkansas River litigation and later as a co-worker with the State in the development of the Colorado's Decision Support Systems. Bob's passion for groundwater was contagious, his knowledge was unmatched and his commitment to do what was right were second to none. Bob was an Engineer's Engineer. He will be missed..

**Ray Bennett** - October 22, 2020 at 10:12 AM

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“ Bob was a gifted educator: I think there were few if any practitioners in the hydrologic sciences in Colorado who didn't learn from him in some way. I say this as someone who crossed swords with Bob on many contentious cases, and also worked with him side by side on other cases. His dedication to ferreting out arcane details of complex groundwater situations was legendary. Whether working alongside or in opposition, it was impossible to be in contact with Bob without being swept along in his passion and enthusiasm for his chosen field. He was truly one of a kind. -- Eric Harmon (HRS Water, retired)

**Eric Harmon** - October 22, 2020 at 10:05 AM

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“ Bob ws often on the otherside of my clients issues. But I always enjoyed being around him a fair, balanced and a friend. Curt Wells

**curt wells** - October 22, 2020 at 12:22 AM

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“ Bob was one of the most dedicated guy I ever knew! It was a privilege to work with him. We love you Lela.

**Jeris Allan Danielson** - October 21, 2020 at 03:33 PM

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“ To all of Bob's family - we are so very sorry for your loss!  
Bob was the best neighbor anybody could ever hope to have. His willingness to help, to share his knowledge, his tools and his vegetables was always greatly appreciated. He was always ready for a joke, a laugh, and a nice word for everybody. It's hard to think of not seeing him around anymore, we will really miss him!  
Claudia and Byron

**Claudia Brown** - October 21, 2020 at 03:15 PM

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“ My condolences to the family. I worked with Bob since 1985 as a young paralegal, a legal coordinator, and then Hearing Officer for the Ground Water Commission where he would testify in cases before me. I have never met a man with such dedication and passion for the groundwater users of this state. He will be truly missed and may he rest in peace. I will always remember him as a mentor and friend.

**Joseph B Grantham** - October 21, 2020 at 01:13 PM

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“ I will miss Bob a lot. He had a love for CSU, our water programs, and improving groundwater management for everyone in the state. He was the ultimate “Ram.” As assistant State engineer, Bob was a leader in establishing the water records that drive water management in the state. He had started that project while still at CSU and was a pioneer in applying computer methods, which were just evolving. Bob had a big heart. You could count on him when you needed him. He was a real advocate. When he stopped by to talk to you, you knew he was going to be pushing something hard. Usually it would be a groundwater issue of one kind or another. We were all blessed by having Bob with us.

Neil Grigg

**Neil Grigg** - October 21, 2020 at 07:55 AM

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“ I always admired Bob’s dedication and tenacity as an water engineer. He had an enduring passion as an educator and always believed in advancing the best of science and engineering. Above all Bob was a friend who will be dearly missed. Rest In Peace my friend.

Dick Wolfe  
Retired State Engineer (2007-2017)

Dick Wolfe - October 20, 2020 at 09:05 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Ray Hanson - October 20, 2020 at 09:00 PM



“ Bob was a good gardener

Ray Hanson - October 20, 2020 at 09:01 PM



“ Bob was passionate about everything he did. It was to my lasting benefit that I got to know Bob while working on the Water Data Bank project at CSU. Later, I witnessed his strong concern for water resources in general, and groundwater in particular, when he was Assistant State Engineer.

And what a wild experience it was to play golf with him!

A great guy! A strong friend!

Will Burt

Will Burt - October 22, 2020 at 03:49 PM

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“ Bob was a great neighbor that always was willing to lend a hand. He always said he could predict a storm based on my travels. When I left on a bicycle tour a snow storm or hail storm was soon to follow. We had a great rivalry during football season. He of course was a Bronco fan while I backed the Raiders. A six pack of beer was on the line. The last game they played had Bob delivering beer to me. I still had one left which I toasted to my friend Bob after the Broncos victory over the Patriots this past Sunday. He will be greatly missed. Ray Hanson

Ray Hanson - October 20, 2020 at 08:47 PM

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“ The ladies at EyeCare: Cathy, Dawn & Sheridan purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Robert A. Longenbaugh.



The ladies at EyeCare: Cathy, Dawn & Sheridan - October 20, 2020 at 06:16 PM

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“ EyeCare for You purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Robert A. Longenbaugh.



EyeCare for You - October 20, 2020 at 05:49 PM

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“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Robert A. Longenbaugh.



October 20, 2020 at 03:39 PM