



Walter Henry Gates

August 4, 1922 - October 8, 2009

Walter Henry Gates, beloved husband, father, brother, grandfather and great grandfather left this world on Thursday October 8, 2009. Walter was born to Rufus Colburn Gates and Mildred Voigt Gates on August 4, 1922 in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. He later married Mary Ellen Yates on August 4, 1945 in Oklahoma City, Okla. Together they had four sons, Tom, Jerry, Steve, and Mike. Walt served in World War II as a naval aviator. After the military, he operated a small airport in Douglas, Wyo., and later was a corporate pilot in Fort Collins. He moved to Denver and completed a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of Denver. He worked in Denver for IBM in computer programming. After a few years Walt and Mary Ellen moved to Climax, Colo., where Walt continued his work with computer systems. After two years Walt had enough of corporate life and moved his family to Leadville, Colo., where he opened and operated an A&W Root Beer stand. While in Leadville he built and managed a bowling center and ventured into the motel and restaurant business. He moved back to Fort Collins in 1973 where he acquired and remodeled the Holiday Inn on Mulberry Street. In 1975 he purchased the Coach House in Loveland and managed it with his son Jerry until its sale in 2000. Walter was an active Lifetime Achievement Award Winning Member of the Fort Collins Lions Club. He was a member of the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce for many years. Walt enjoyed many years of playing duplicate bridge he even played bridge on a beach in the Bahamas one year. His greatest joys were his family, friends, growing Orchids, Roses,

African Violets and traveling. His travels included sailing with his wife Mary Ellen and his son Jerry on their own sailboat to the South Pacific. From cruising the Canals of Europe, Mary Ellen and Walt also explored New Zealand and Australia. They traveled throughout Central and North America. He loved the Rocky Mountains, fishing and spending time at his cabin in the Redstone Canyon, a place that holds many special memories to his surviving wife Mary Ellen, his sister Frances Lydia Geisick, son Tom and wife Cathy, son Jerry and wife Bonnie, four grandchildren Trina, Jeff, Jason and Lindsay, two step grandchildren Jonathan and Jennifer, one great grandchild Kylie and numerous valued extended family and friends. Walt enjoyed life to the fullest. Although we mourn him today he will never be forgotten. A funeral service will be held 2 p.m. Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at Bohlender Funeral Chapel. Pastor Joel Kershaw will officiate. Interment with military honors by the Ft. Collins All Veterans Honor Guard will follow at Grandview Cemetery.

Tribute Wall

EC

“ Dear Friends and Family, It has been our great honor to have known Walt and Mary Ellen. Walt was a loving and kind caregiver who shared and helped others as they took on the caregiving role. We send our deepest sympathy to the family. Sincerely, Emmalie Conner Regional Director Alzheimer's Association

Emmalie Conner - November 19, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ I did not know Walt for a long period of time. He was always very kind to me when I lived in your neighborhood. I am so sorry for your loss. Janet Dobransky

Janet Dobransky - October 13, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ Mary Ellen, Kaye and I had the great pleasure of sailing with Walt and Mary Ellen and Orm and Sharon Sherwood in the San Juan's for a week in 1979. They had the boat for a month and invited different couples to join them each for a week. We were the 3rd couple. We had a wonderful time sailing this 41 foot wooden Ketch. Kaye and I slept in the aft bunks and each morning Walt would chop wood with a hatchet for the wood stove. Right by our bunks. After Kaye died two years ago I found a journal she had kept and in it noted how much fun we had with all on the sail, but then surprised me by telling how she left a gift for the couple coming after us: she hid the hatchet. But the week with them and Walt's superb sailsmanship was a delight. I'm sorry to read of his passing. John Arnold formerly of Fort Collins Topeka, KS

John E Arnold - October 12, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ We are sorry for your loss. You are all in our prayers. Cooper Family

Scott Cooper - October 11, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PG

“ I had the GREAT honor of working for Walt for the past 6 months. He was the kindest, most interesting person! I loved listening to his stories! We had so much fun together. We spent so much time laughing. It was the highlight of my day to go to Walt's house and talk with him. I am going to truly miss him and he will always be one of my favorite people. I was truly blessed to meet Walt and have him in my life! I am SO sorry for your loss!!

Patti Gordon - October 11, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CO

“ All our love,we are thinking of you.

Connie - October 10, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KD

“ My thoughts and prayers are with the family, Walt was a dear dear friend to me, I absolutely adored him and am saddened to lose such a wonderful friend.

Karolyn DeShazer - October 10, 2009 at 12:00 AM

GG

“ I met "Mr." Walter over 15 years ago through his son Jerry. Through the years, as I addressed him as " Mr. Gates", he would always say that his dad was "Mr. Gates" and that you can call me " Walt". He was one of the gifted few who could put you at ease immediately. Walt passed his love for the outdoors and his search for adventure on to his son Jerry. I believe that Jerry was greatly influenced by his time spent with his dad in all the sailing excursions and mountain activities, etc.. What a great tribute to a man and his character, to have his son share his passions. God Bless, "Mr. Gates".

Greg Genotte - October 10, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ Jerry, Tom and Family, We will truly miss Walt as he certainly lived a full life. We always enjoyed his sense of humor, ability to include everyone and his wonderful stories, especially about my Grampa Bud. We know he and Bud will be playing cards and telling stories up in Heaven. All the best to you and your families during this time of sorrow. The Mark Brase Family

Mark Brase - October 10, 2009 at 12:00 AM