



Gary W. Bowman

December 13, 1948 - December 2, 2025

Gary W. Bowman, age 76, of Peoria, passed away at 11:13 a.m. on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at OSF St Francis Medical Center in Peoria.

He was born December 13, 1948 in Peoria to Ellsworth and Luella (Schuster) Bowman. They preceded him in death along with his sister, Janice Hutchcraft. Gary leaves behind three daughters: Staci (Jim) Fairchild of St Charles, MO, Rachel (Andrew Brinker) Bowman of Bartonville, Samantha (Douglas) Nelson of Livingston, MT, five grandchildren: Hayley Fairchild of Bloomington, IL, Jimmy Fairchild of St Charles, MO, Theo Nelson of Livingston, MT, Zach Nelson of Peoria, and Lane Nelson of Peoria. Also surviving are one niece, Julie (Chad) Barrow of Canton, Great nephew, Dalton (Allie) Nack of Morton, their son and Gary's first-great-great-nephew, Becket, great nephew, Cruz Barrow of Canton, and step-great-niece, Peyton (Hunter) Fouts and their son, Asa, and several cousins.

Gary graduated from Peoria High School and retired from Caterpillar, Inc. He has a passion for baseball and played on men's teams for many years. He loved all sports, but he especially loved St. Louis Cardinals baseball. When it came to basketball, he absolutely had to watch the Illini and Bradley Braves. Gary loved spending summers at Lake Osakis, Minnesota fishing with family and friends.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A celebration of Gary's life will be at a later date.

Memorials may be made to St. Jude Children's Research, T.A.P.S., P.A.W.S.,

or the Fulton County Humane Society.

Tribute Wall

SK

“ Gary and I were classmates at PHS (class of '66). He was always pleasant to be with and around. The last time we were together was a class reunion, and he immediately told stories of our youth. What a lovely and caring man. Sympathies to his family and friends. Our lives were better for knowing him.

Steven Kossman - December 13, 2025 at 12:50 PM



“ Sorry, this is a little long, but I’ll try to tell this true story about Bobo to the best of my recollection. It was in 1982. The St. Louis Cardinals were appearing in the World Series against the Milwaukee Brewers. Bobo and two other friends, Bud Livingston and Bob Livingston, one night at Two Brothers Bar over a few beers decided to travel to St. Louis the next day hoping to procure tickets to that days game (Game 2) from one of the many scalpers around the stadium. Before going to the stadium they had a bite to eat at one of the local bar/restaurants in St. Louis, Captain Hooks, a few block from the Busch Stadium. While enjoying their meal they asked around the crowded bar if anyone one had spare tickets they’d like to sell. No one had any, but a group of sports writers that were to be covering the game told Bobo that they had an extra press pass that he could have which might, at least, get him into the game. Bobo snatched it up and the three of them left for the stadium. They found the press entrance and while Bud and Bob watched in disbelief, Bobo flashed the press pass and entered the stadium with all the other sports writers. Bud and Bob managed to buy a couple of tickets from a scalper and then proceeded to their nose-bleed seats.

The Cardinals were still having batting practice when Bud & Bob reached their seats. As they watched the activities on the field, who appeared in the Cardinal dugout but Bobo on his way onto the field in his hard-to-miss purple and gold Two Bros. jacket with a professional looking instamatic camera dangling from his hand. He headed for the batting cage where Darrell Porter, Cardinals catcher, was waiting for his turn at the plate. Bobo struck up a conversation with Porter that lasted until it was Porters turn to bat. Then Bobo made the rounds to the other available players until it was time to leave the playing field. Hearing Bud and Bob’s description of this had me laughing until I had tears in my eyes.

After leaving the field, Bobo was ushered to his press box seat where he was seated next to Bill Veeck, one time owner of the Chicago White Sox. Needless to say, Bobo struck up a conversation with Veeck while he also enjoyed the free buffet and bar provided to

the press by the Cardinals. The Cardinals won that game and after the game the press was allowed into the Cardinal dressing room where Bobo struck up another conversation with the game winning pitcher, Bruce Sutter. Bobo took the attached photo of Sutter that night.

The next three games were in Milwaukee, where the Brewers won two out of the three games before returning to St. Louis for the next two. Remember the photo he took of Sutter, well he had some copies made and after game six when he was again in the Cardinal locker room, where he had Sutter autograph them. He gave me the attached autographed photo which hangs on my office wall to this day.

Now the rest of the story. While driving on his way home that night, he had an appendix rupture and barely made it home and to the hospital where he had an emergency appendectomy and spent some time in the hospital. I've heard this whole story multiple times over the years from both Bobo and the Livingstons, so I hope I got all the facts correct. Remember, this was 43 years ago.

Bobo was a good friend to many, including me. I first met him back in 1972 when he started playing softball with our Two Bros. Team. Over the next 25 years we played a lot together on numerous Two Bros., Coach's Corner and Wisconsin Tap teams. He was a good ball player, but most of all, he was dependable, and we always knew he's be there, never missing a game and always giving his 110% on the field. After softball we kept in touch, mostly on the phone. He loved talking sports, but I don't think he had a clock because most of his calls were in the late evening hours after all the TV games were over. I'll miss those calls, but I know he's finally at peace. See you on the other side, Bobo.





Keith Vala - December 07, 2025 at 04:12 PM

CM

“ I'm so sorry to hear this. He and Gene played softball together for many years, I have lots of memories of watching the Two Brother's team. RIP Bow.

Christy Meier - December 06, 2025 at 02:11 PM

ME

“ I'm so sorry to hear of Gary's passing. We went to PHS together.

Marti Enslin - December 06, 2025 at 11:12 AM

SS

“ Sorry for your loss. Gary was a great guy. We played a lot of softball together back in our younger days. I always loved running into him and reminiscing at Crusens. RIP Bow.

Scott Schifeling

Scott Schifeling - December 05, 2025 at 09:02 PM

DK

“ So sorry to see this, Bow & I go back to our high school days & working together at Cat. He was a good guy.

Dave Krueger - December 05, 2025 at 08:21 PM

MB

“ Gary and I went to grade school and high school together and I will really miss talking to him!!! My sympathy to all his family!!!

Melody Bridges - December 05, 2025 at 07:10 PM

DM

My deepest sympathy. Dory Mullen

Dory Mullen - December 05, 2025 at 08:52 PM

BT

I worked with Gary at Cat. He was a really good guy with a great personality.

Bob Toniny - December 06, 2025 at 11:55 AM

HM

“ Gary and I were PHS 🦁 classmates. Remember his happy smile. All my sympathy to his family
Heidi Anderson McCabe

Heidi Anderson McCabe - December 05, 2025 at 06:13 PM

JV

“ Gary wasn't just a baseball player, he was a darn good player on our High school varsity team. More importantly, he was a great friend to all. I will miss him. Sympathies to all his family. Joe Vespa

Joe Vespa - December 05, 2025 at 05:06 PM