



Dustin Harold Kassman

May 7, 1959 - November 13, 2023

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If you are reading this, either you knew me or my birth year is close enough to yours to raise your curiosity about the cause of my death, just in case it is something you need to worry about. For the former, welcome, nothing you read here will be news. For the latter, you can relax, it is unlikely that you will die from ALS (Lou Gehrig disease), as I did, thank goodness.

I guess I could make this like any other obituary and talk about how I was born in Ritzville, Washington in 1959 to Harold and Trudy Kassman. That I spent my first years in Sprague, Washington before moving to Nyssa, Oregon, where I grew up; followed by both undergraduate and graduate degrees from Oregon State University in Corvallis; married Robin Wells and had two wonderful kids, Anne and Ty, but very little of this matters to anyone who did not know me, and those who did know me already know this stuff.

So, what should I say? I mean, what do I want people to know about me? That I worked hard for 24 years at Hewlett-Packard, and another 15 at Integrated Computer Solutions? That I loved my family? That I was a devout Christian? That I was kind? That I made people laugh? That I had a weird way of looking at life? All true, whether good or bad.

My only desire in life was to leave this world a better place than when I entered it. I did not start a large company that provided employment for thousands, or invent a cure that affected even more. No, my effect is going to have to be measured in much more subtle ways, like, being one-half of a successful marriage for 38 years, thus proving that “being the right partner is more important than finding the right partner.” This marriage produced two beautiful children, who went on to successful careers and loving marriages of their own. Not shabby.

I guess I could mention that I was a motorcyclist and taught motorcycle safety classes for thirty-three years. While over 2800 students attended courses I taught, I know that my

instruction had a much broader reach than those students. Beyond motorcycles, I also held various positions with Boy Scouts of America, most notably, as Eagle Advancement Chair for the Benton District.

I think, though, one of the most important things about me is that I was a writer. Why do I say this? Because writers have impact; a writer can change the way a person feels - even if just for a short moment - and, perhaps, change the way they think. And, he or she can continue to do these things long after they are gone, if they are lucky. That is a pretty powerful gift.

I will be the fourth person to die in my family, following my dad, Harold, my father-in-law, Dean, and my mother-in-law, Gerrie. I will miss most of all my wife, Robin; daughter, Anne "Victoria" Wilkerson (Kirby); son, Tynan Kassman (Aly and two daughters); mother, Trudy; sisters, Robin Lewis (Lowell and family), Beth Ann Christensen (Harold), & Linda Dahlman (Mark and family); brother-in-law, John Wells (LaVonne and family). And, of course, my two "other wives", Laurie Godfrey and Les Anderson. A huge dose of love to those who willingly took me places or just came to spend time with me, your generosity made all the difference in my life.

I don't think I can sum it up any better than the character of Death, who in *Good Omens* by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman, said, "Don't think of it as dying early, just think of it as avoiding the rush."

If you feel like extending my impact in this world consider giving a donation to Team Gleason Foundation (<https://teamgleason.org/donate/>) or Shriners Children's Hospital (<https://www.shrinerschildrens.org/en/giving>).

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

DEC 1. 11:00 AM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
501 NW 25th St.
Corvallis, OR

Tribute Wall

AL

“ *Based on his clever and powerful obituary, I wish I had known Dustin.*

May his friends and family find strength in their faith and memories and relish that they knew Dustin. Hopefully he is in a better place.

Alan - November 17, 2023 at 12:19 AM

RB

“ *I am so sad to hear about Dustin and pray strength and comfort to his family who no doubt were his strength and support throughout his battle with the bad stuff that attacked his body. Duane and I knew his parents and enjoyed playing bridge with them in Nyssa. Blessings to Dustin's family.*

Ruth Buchtel - November 16, 2023 at 07:11 PM

VC

My condolences to Dustin's immediate family and his mom and siblings.

Vedas Estrada Crane - November 17, 2023 at 09:10 AM

LW

So sorry for this huge loss. Dustin lived two houses from the home I grew up in. Praying that his family will be blessed with peace and comfort during this difficult time.

Larry Wood - November 17, 2023 at 02:19 PM