

# In memory of George W. Dana, Jr.

Karin Nickola, *Fluor Hanford*

As I write this memorial for George Dana, my mind is flooded with images and emotions. As easily as I see *the man* battling cancer, I see *the boy* who grew up across the street — playing the song “Tequila” on a saxophone at the age of 11, probably dreaming he and his childhood band were only a few short years away from musical fame and fortune.



And I wonder how I can ever adequately pay tribute to this wonderful friend who remained an integral part of my life for over 40 years — a man who not only made my life better just for knowing him, but who touched the lives of so many others.

Of one thing I am certain. At Hanford, George Dana will be remembered as much for the love and light he brought into our lives as he will be for his professional contributions to the site.

Born in Fond du lac, Wis., George Dana and his family moved to Richland from Portland, Ore., in 1963, when his father went to work for the Atomic Energy Commission, predecessor agency to the Department of Energy. George and his family were close, and he was excited when, as a teen, he landed a part-time Hanford job transporting payroll checks. Besides the wages — which were much better than what he received delivering flowers for Stanfield’s Floral or shining his flashlight on parked cars at the drive-in movie theater — the job afforded him the opportunity to occasionally share a working lunch with his dad.

After graduating from Columbia (Richland) High School in 1970, George enlisted in the Navy and spent several years aboard a nuclear submarine before returning home to attend college. His first “real” Hanford job was the position of planner/scheduler for United Engineers and Constructors. From December 1976 to November 1980, George directed the daily operations and maintenance of the computerized scheduling system at Washington Public Power Supply System’s WNP 1 and 4 reactors.

After working as a schedule engineer with J. A. Jones Construction and Kaiser Engineers Hanford in the 1980s and 1990s, in 1996 George accepted a position as senior contract administrator with what is now Fluor Federal Services, where he negotiated with contractors and administered unit and fixed-price contracts. George was proud to be a part of the FFS/Fluor Alaska team that successfully subcontracted the construction of facilities for the Ballistic Missile Defense System Test Bed project near Fort Greely, Alaska. He remained with Fluor Federal Services until health issues forced him to leave.

Always a professional with the highest of work ethics, George never ceased to recognize the relationship between worker morale and productivity. On the surface, “Doo Wop Central”— a joint venture with co-worker Bob Allen — was just a time to gather and listen to ’50s and ’60s music over a brown-bag lunch. “In reality, listening to the music gave our minds a respite from increasing demands brought about by accelerated cleanup,” said Allen. “And the short time we spent together really brought us together as a group. It was so positive. We became a stronger, more enthusiastic team. Suddenly, we seemed to care more about each other and the work we needed to accomplish.”

George was truly warmed by the outpouring of love he experienced during his final days. One personal donation effort led by a Fluor Hanford employee raised nearly \$8,000 to help George and his family with miscellaneous medical costs. Another effort funded by bake sales, soda sales, and chicken and spaghetti feeds, saw co-workers working with the City of Richland to secure a bench to be placed along the Columbia River walking and bike path near George’s childhood home. Other memorial events, including a ’50s and ’60s dance, are in the planning stages.

George Dana passed away on Saturday, Sept. 6. ■