



Paul Duane Bolinger

October 16, 1934 - December 9, 2025

Paul Duane Bolinger passed away peacefully on December 9, 2025, surrounded by the love of his wife, daughter, and son-in-law while recuperating at his daughter's home in Sunnyslope, Washington. He was 91 years old.

Duane was the eldest son of Paul S. Bolinger and Erma Mary Heminger-Bolinger, born and raised in East Wenatchee, Washington, on his parents' apple orchard. Growing up in the Wenatchee Valley shaped who he was—instilling in him a fervent work ethic, resilience, and an enduring love for the land and community he called home.

He shared 69 devoted years of marriage with his beloved wife, Janet Johnson Bolinger, whom he married on July 22, 1956. Together, they built a life grounded in love, commitment, family, friendship, and adventure. Duane is survived by Janet; his children Jon Paul (Melissa) Bolinger and Kim (Phil) Bolinger Hanford; and by the loving memory of his daughter Kristi Lyn (Louie) Falco, who preceded him in death two years earlier.

Duane was a proud and devoted grandfather to Grant Falco (Andrea) of Spokane, Tyler Falco (Cara) of San Marcos, California, Phillip Hanford (Lauren) of East Wenatchee, and Kolby Falco (Jabarree) of Long Beach, California. He was also blessed with great-grandchildren, Louis, Theodore, Ava, and Banks Faith Falco of Spokane Valley, Washington, Grey and Louise

Falco of San Marcos, California, and, most recently, Hunter Hanford of East Wenatchee—each of whom brought him great joy.

He is also survived by his sister, Janis Colleen Cooper of Denver, Colorado, and his brother, Terry (Patricia) Bolinger of Yakima, Washington.

A graduate of Wenatchee High School, Duane was active in the Derby Club and later attended Wenatchee Valley Junior College. While in college, he drove a school bus—a job that led him to meet, court, and ultimately marry Janet, the love of his life.

During his junior college years, Duane formed a lifelong friendship with Gordon Ohme. Together they ventured into the high country near Blewett Pass to dig alpine trees for planting at Ohme Gardens, before slipping away to Lake Chelan to water ski. It was during those early years that Duane's lifelong love of Lake Chelan began.

Throughout high school and college, Duane worked in the parts department at North Central Chevrolet and Piston Service Parts. He later founded Applemasters Packing Shed and became a partner in—and eventually the owner of—Columbia Cold Storage, all while managing the family orchards following his father's early passing. Deeply valuing fellowship and friendship, Duane also worked tirelessly with Jim Parker to help start the GYRO Club in Wenatchee.

A devastating freeze struck the Wenatchee Valley, with temperatures plunging 25 degrees below zero for several days in the early 70's. The orchard trees split and deteriorated from the inside out, resulting in a total loss of the orchards. Though heartbreaking, this hardship became a defining turning point in Duane's life.

Determined to support his family and help care for his mother and siblings, Duane began working for Baker Forklift and later Norlift, a Clark forklift dealer in Spokane, where he eventually became sales manager. In 1978, he opened Mid Columbia Clarklift. The company grew into a leading material-handling provider—now Mid Columbia Forklift, Inc.—with locations in Wenatchee, Yakima, Pasco, and Auburn. Duane’s vision, integrity, and dedication remain a lasting part of the company’s success.

Above all, Duane loved his family. He also loved boating, fishing, camping, and computers.

Many weekends began before sunrise, with friendly competition among family members to see who could catch the largest fish. When not fishing, Duane and Janet devoted countless weekends to taking their son Jon and his friends—many whose families could not travel—on hockey trips throughout British Columbia. Duane also served as an officer in the Pacific Northwest Hockey Association, always giving his time generously to support youth and community.

He was the family computer geek, way before his time, and had every version of the Apple computer, starting with the first Macintosh. Visits to his adult kids’ homes required the dining room tabletop to be dominated by 3 computers, backup discs and cords. Special family meals were often eaten amid pretty place settings interspersed with monitors and computer accoutrements.

After retiring, Duane and Janet spent many happy years traveling the country in their motorcoach, forming lifelong friendships along the way. Wintering at Outdoor Resorts in Indio, California, became a cherished tradition of reuniting, socializing, celebrating, exploring, golfing, sunning, and relaxing. When Spring arrived, they headed north to prepare for their 30-year treasured tradition of

summering at Brown's Bay Fish Camp next to Campbell River, British Columbia, where they fished for salmon along Vancouver Island and watched cruise ships make their way up to Alaska. In addition, Duane, Janet, and friends enjoyed cruises to Panama and Alaska, as well as multiple fishing trips to Ketchikan. Hawaiian vacations brought tropical balance to their love of water and sunshine.

Fifteen years ago, Duane and Janet returned to the Wenatchee Valley to build their forever home overlooking beautiful Lake Chelan, where he was Treasurer of the HOA and helped lead the building of the Crystal View Marina. Annual late-summer family Stehekin boat trips created memories of laughter and bonding. At their home in Lake Chelan, countless family gatherings were hosted where food, sunshine, gorgeous views, and humorous tales were shared.

Duane's loyal golden mini labradoodle and constant companion of 15 years, Karma, will miss his dotting attention and steady presence. Duane will be remembered for his strength, leadership, kindness, warmth, laughter, storytelling, and treat drawer filled with all things chocolate. He leaves behind a legacy of love, wisdom, perseverance, adventure, and generosity that will live on in all who were blessed to know him.

Services will be held at Evergreen Memorial in East Wenatchee at 1:00 PM on February 21st, 2026, followed by a Celebration of Life at the Wenatchee Golf & Country Club in February 2026.

Arrangements by Jones & Jones Betts Funeral Home, Wenatchee, WA.

Previous Events

Service

FEB 21. 1:00 PM (PT)

Evergreen Memorial Park
1301 10th St NE
East Wentatchee, WA 98802
(509) 884-4651

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Paul Duane Bolinger.

February 19 at 02:50 PM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Paul Duane Bolinger.



February 19 at 02:50 PM



“ Love Tina and Allan Simpson purchased the Enc hanted Cottage for the family of Paul Duane Bolinger.



Love Tina and Allan Simpson - February 17 at 07:30 PM



“ Love Tina and Allan Simpson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Paul Duane Bolinger.

Love Tina and Allan Simpson - February 17 at 07:30 PM

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“ So very sorry to see this, Janet. You were my very first girlfriend•
... I think we were three??and were neighbors.
.. And now, here we are, my dear friend.Sending so much love.... how can so much time have passed!?'Hope to see you.again one day.Love always, Betty Kay.



Elizabeth England - December 19, 2025 at 11:23 PM