

In Memoriam: Gerry Bengler

by M.P.B. Nicolas and C. Epp

Gerald Leonard Bengler passed away in Winnipeg on July 1, 2019 at the age of 60. He was born in Winnipeg on May 24, 1959 where he grew up in St. James and raised his family. Gerry was married to the love of his life Debbie for 36 years. Together they had two sons they adored, Matthew (Caitlynn) and Andrew. Gerry loved sports and was a competitive swimmer from the age of 4. He enjoyed playing water polo, hockey and spending time on the lake with his Laser sailboat. He also was a coach for his sons' hockey and soccer teams. During his retirement, he and Debbie had extensive vacation stays in Mexico, and loved to spend their summers at the family cottage in Laclu, Ontario.

Gerry attended the University of Winnipeg receiving his B.Sc. in Physical Geography. Following his graduation he worked as a summer student for Hugh McCabe before permanently joining the Manitoba Geological Survey (MGS). Through his 35-year career, Gerry worked as a drill rig operator, laboratory technician, conference organizer and lab manager, making lifelong friends along the way. Most of his career in the field working on the stratigraphic drillcore program involved drilling, boxing and labelling long lengths of precious Phanerozoic core. His great sense of humour and fun personality made the weeks on the drill much more bearable, setting apart the usual mood of "an adventure for the first two days and then you are just cold and wet on a drill for 14 hours straight" (Rick Unruh). Gerry was detail-orientated and took great care in this work, making sure all core was accurate and available for the geologists who were waiting patiently for it, as well as for the archival record it was generating. Back in the core lab, he prepared samples that came back from the geologists in the field, and laid out core for viewing by staff and clients. Each fall, Gerry helped organize the annual Manitoba Mining and Minerals Convention where he was responsible for organizing floor plans, setting up the convention area and being the go-to person if any problems arose. Gerry was well known by all on the



convention floor. Later in his career, he became the Core Lab Manager. In this role he had the opportunity to closely mentor and inspire many students.

Gerry was an honourable person and a trusted friend, who was always willing to help and lend a hand when needed. He knew how to get people working together and made sure you had what you needed to do your work efficiently and effectively. He was always kind and considerate, had a great work ethic and was well respected by his peers. His positive attitude and laugh was infectious and his smile was always genuine and welcoming.

Gerry retired in May 2016 where he looked forward to spending his retirement with Debbie and his family at the cottage and travelling.