

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: Gary Falkenstein

Chris Beytes



Well-known horticulture industry executive Gary Falkenstein passed away June 5 from complications following surgery. He was 75.

Gary was a graduate of Michigan State University in 1966 with a degree in floriculture business. The Boulder, Colorado, resident held high-level positions in many companies, including Ball Seed, where he was marketing manager; Fischer USA, where as president starting in 1994 he help build the brand in North America; and at Syngenta after it acquired Fischer. Most recently, in 2013, he launched ePlantsource, an online brokerage, where he served as President and CEO.

Gary is survived by Marguerite, his wife of 54 years; son Kevin and daughters Stephanie and Suzanne, and six grandchildren.

Pictured: Gary Falkenstein speaking during a greenhouse tour in China.

Gary's long-time friend and colleague Karl Trellinger sent a note about Gary's passing. Karl said, "Gary had ... been strongly involved in the overall Fischer organization regarding worldwide cutting supply, the creation of an integrated computer system and developing geranium varieties specifically for the North American market. There was literally nothing that Gary had not been involved in, always providing his unique perspective and valuable advice.

"Equally striking had been Gary's strong empathy for people, honesty, enjoyment of life and a wonderful sense of humor with an infectious laughter. Working with Gary was always a combination of being inspiring, problem solving, evaluating what can be done better and all that while having a lot of fun. Additionally, it was always a special treat to experience Gary as the life of the party at the many dinners and parties over the years.

"Gary was an extraordinary human being and will be strongly missed by all who knew and worked with him."

A tentative celebration of life is being planned for his birthday, August 24, 2020. In addition, a memorial fund has been set up in Gary's name with JDRF to support the fight against type 1 diabetes. For more information, visit www2.jdrf.org/goto/garyfalkenstein. **GT**