

ISDS Central Western Trustee Dies

Posted: July 6, 2010

Members of the Illinois State Dental Society were saddened by the news of Dr. Gary M. Bunger's death on July 1, 2010, in Island Park, Idaho. He was 55 and a practicing dentist in Quincy. Dr. Bunger began his three-year term as ISDS trustee in September 2009. He was born on October 16, 1954 in Glenwood, IL, the son of Charles H. & Jane (Haight) Bunger. On March 3, 1999, he married Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon Dr. Coletta Miller in Tortola, British Virgin Islands.

After graduating from Mariam Catholic High School in Chicago Heights, IL in 1972, Dr. Bunger moved to Winona, MN where he attended St. Mary's University. There, he was awarded a BA degree in Biology & Psychology in 1976. He then went on to receive his DMD in 1980 from SIU at Edwardsville. After performing his General Practice Residency at the University of Chicago's Billings Hospital, Dr. Bunger returned to where he received his dentistry degree at SIU to teach at the School of Dental Medicine, becoming the Assistant Clinical Professor for the Department of Emergency and Oral Diagnosis. He served this position from 1981 to 1985. Dr. Bunger held private practices in both Collinsville, IL during his teaching period and in Quincy.

Dr. Bunger was a member of the American Dental Association, the Illinois State Dental Society, the Chicago Dental Society, the Madison District Dental Society, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the T.L. Gilmer Dental Society. He served many positions with these organizations including Board Liaison and Trustee positions with the ISDS, as well as holding Past Presidency positions with the SIUE School of Dental Medicine Alumni Association, the Central Illinois Academy of General Dentistry, the Madison District Dental Society, and with the T.L. Gilmer Dental Society. His awards include ISDS Foundation Benefactor as well as Fellowship Awards in both the Academy of General Dentistry and the Pierre Fauchard Academy. Dr. Bunger was passionate about Give Kids A Smile and the inaugural ISDS Foundation Mission of Mercy in June; fittingly, he served as Board Liaison to the ISDS Access to Care Committee.

He was also a recent member of Noon Kiwanis Club and was passionate about everything he did. He loved his profession and cared deeply for his patients. He had an incredibly curious mind and a vast interest in many different areas. He took up his father's enthusiasm for Ham Radio, becoming a licensed Amateur Radio Operator from his father; he also learned the joy of helping others. He could fix anything and loved doing repairs, setting up electronics and investigating all modern technology. Gary loved to cook and it was not unusual for him to prepare a gourmet meal in the wilds of Idaho or at his home in Quincy, for his family and friends. He was a noted bread baker and a wine enthusiast. In his spare time, Gary loved to spend his time on the water. He was an advanced open water diver as well as an accomplished open water sailor. In addition, he was also a licensed private pilot.

He loved nature, beginning with childhood camping trips. He also enjoyed hiking, geocaching, and most recently, fly fishing with his wife, Coletta. He and Coletta have a backyard full of bird feeders, houses and bird baths. One of Gary's greatest passions was sailing, from cruising the Caribbean to racing the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River in St. Louis. He participated in 23 races to Mackinac Island and

owned a boat called Novocain that won many regattas on Lake Michigan. Gary Bunger lived more in 55 years than most people could in a 100.

He is survived by his wife Coletta; his father Charlie; and brother Randy and sister-in-law Anna. ary was loved by everyone who met him. He was a devoted husband and was the love of Coletta's life. Funeral services will be held on Saturday, July 10, 2010 at 9:30 am at the Duker & Haugh Funeral Home and at 10:00 am in St. Francis Solanus Catholic Church. Visitation will take place at the Duker & Haugh Funeral home on Friday evening from 5:00 to 7:00 om. A private interment will occur at a later date. Memorials in Dr. Bunger's name can be made to the Arthritis Foundation, the American Heart Association, or the American Cancer Society. www.dukerandhaugh.com. Condolences may be sent to his wife: Dr. Coletta Miller, 730 Long Drive, Quincy, IL 62305-6191.