



## Lowell Roland Chocola

September 8, 1935 - February 6, 2014

As Written by: Lowell

Born and raised in Chicago, IL where I attended catholic school from kindergarten through the first year of high school. From the age of 11, my sister and I were raised by our father, and his girlfriend. I was raised Roman Catholic, so whenever I felt alone, abandoned or lonely I would go into the chapel, to the grotto which had a waterfall, to talk and pray to the Virgin Mary. I identified with the Virgin Mary because she and I have the same birthday, September 8th. During this time I remember being an altar boy. At age 15 I lied about my age so that I could get a job (alongside my dad) to help support the family at a company that packaged C-rations for the Army in Millington, IL. At age 16 we moved back to Chicago and once again I lied about my age so that I could be hired at a warehouse filling UPS orders. I rented a small room at the YMCA so that I could work during the day. At night I attend a private high school, graduated from high school in 1954. On my 19th birthday I went to the draft board and volunteered; there was some talk about the G.I. Bill being discontinued and I wanted very much to go to college. After being sent to Camp Chafee, Arkansas for basic training as a clerk typist I was sent to Camp Kilmer, Puerto Rico. After 2 years in Puerto Rico (1956) I was sent back to Chicago working as a clerk processing soldiers for discharge, but was released shortly upon return so that I could attend the University of Illinois. In 1958 I enrolled at the University of Idaho so that I could get my degree in

Geology, I graduated in 1961. After graduation I hitchhiked my way back to Chicago, it was here I was first employed as a chemist for Desoto, Inc., which made paint for Sears. Since I didn't have a chemist degree I was paid a much smaller wage as a lab technician. It was during this time that I met Florence. We were married in 1963 and had three children together, our first son died at only 15 days old; Lynda was born in 1965 and Wayne followed in 1966. In order to get my Chemistry degree I enrolled in night school at Northwestern and worked during the day. I graduated in 1976 and went to work for Ceramco, of which I was a partner and stockholder, my job was to invent coatings for the Foundry Industry along with running the plant, manufacturing the products, shipping, receiving and purchasing. Eventually I focused on sales and development of new products; within two years my sales were two million dollars and I developed a brand new, almost revolutionary technology which surpassed and leapfrogged the old technology which resulted in a technical breakthrough, changing the entire foundry industry. In 1988 I left Ceramco and joined Acme Resin. Here I was put in charge of the Research Dept working on and developing new and better coatings. In 1984 I was transferred to the plant in Madison Ohio. In 1987 Acme was purchased by the Borden Co and the plant in Madison was closed therefore they transferred me to the plant in Toledo. In 1989 I left to work for the Dolphin Co who manufactured sealants and paints for buses and trucks. In 1991 I and some of the employees purchased the company from the retiring owners. It's during this time that I invented a very unique undercoating which was a new technology and outperformed all other products on the market, including Zebart. When I retired in 1999 sales were over 3 million dollars a year. I was also celebrating that an investment that I had made along with my friend, Bill DeWood, in 1990 to start a new company, Refcotech, which specialized in foundry coatings, had sales of 26 million dollars.

I'm a history buff, particularly the Civil War and Roman History. I've enjoyed traveling to the battle grounds and watching the re-enactments. My favorite TV show is Jeopardy; I prefer classical or easy listening music, attending

plays, concerts and a good movie, although very few exist anymore. I loved that my home in Ohio had a large in ground, heated swimming pool which I swam in one to two hours daily and a large kitchen that I enjoyed making up new recipes. I had a Lhasa Apso named Tabitha, which was my dearest friend for 15 years, I cried the day I had to put her to sleep. When my children were 12 and 13 we took a seven day rafting trip through the Grand Canyon riding the rapids; this was the best vacation that I ever had. I have been to London, twice, Rome, Athens Greece, Israel, Amsterdam, Switzerland, Cancun, Hawaii and all the states except Alaska, Maine and Rhode Island. I have a book titled '1000 Places To See Before You Die', I still have 970 places to see before I go to the 'Big Foundry' in the sky.

I'm preceded by my parents, siblings, Pat Olszewski and Gloria Agate I leave behind my children, Lynda Jackson, Leesburg, VA, Wayne Chocola, East Wenatchee; siblings, Sandy Schneider, Naples, FL, Claudette (Ken) Wilkenson, Alford FL, John (June) Verkonski, Yuba, CA, Gene (Sylvia) Verkonski, Mesa, AZ, Ginger (Fritz) Litp, Ontario, NY; seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Arrangements are in the care of Heritage Memorial Chapel, East Wenatchee. You are invited to view his online tribute at: [www.HeritageMemorialChapel.com](http://www.HeritageMemorialChapel.com)

# Tribute Wall

KH

“ Dearest family; Wayne,Linda,and of course,the children,

*I am so sorry for your loss. For us it is the same sadness, with great memories of laughter and seeing so many sights in Chicago and Washington with him. Yes, he was a kind, thoughtful, very bright and giving man. Harrison, now 14, and I send prayers to remember he is healed of all health and life issues, as he is in the light, love, and peace of God, through Jesus.*

*Love,  
Karen and Harrison*

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**Karen Baker-Zepf & Harrison** - March 01, 2014 at 01:13 PM

MD

“ I was very saddened to hear about the passing of Lowell. I have been around Lowell several times from childhood on up and have some memories of going to his house with my parents as a child. The last time I got to spend some time with Lowell was at the CastExpo in Atlanta in 2008. I had only been working for REFCOTEC for about two years and got the chance to go to the CastExpo. I remember meeting Lowell at the airport where he was waiting for me with some very nice people that had helped him with his luggage. We made our way to our hotel and headed out the next morning to the CastExpo where Lowell and I walked around and checked out what was going on in our industry. Lowell had so much information about everything I could barely take it all in. He was very eager to share his knowledge and help a young man starting out in an industry that he had spent most of his life in. It was very memorable for me and I remember being amazed at how smart this man was. I know he was very close and respected by my father and I enjoyed getting to know him and learn from him. I have a long career ahead of me in the foundry industry and will always remember the trip to Atlanta in 2008 because of Lowell. He will live on in REFCOTEC and always be part of our family.

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**Matt DeWood** - February 14, 2014 at 12:04 PM

GT

“ Dear Linda and Wayne,  
There are no words to express my deepest sympathy for the loss of your "dad" and "my dearest friend" Lowell. Nothing can replace the years we spent together and the love we shared. He was a dear, dear man, and we spent many great times together with my family, whom he loved very much, and I. We continued to speak to each other at least once or twice a week until he died. I will never forget him or our wonderful memories we shared.  
God Speed Lowell.....

Love,  
Gayle

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**Gayle Troknya** - February 12, 2014 at 09:29 PM

LJ

“ Lynda and Wayne - my condolences to both of you, your dad was a great man! I still have fond memories of going to spend weekends with you guys in Mundelein, and "Uncle Lowie" was always a hoot, I loved him a lot! Wether he was helping me ride a bike, or showing me how to "sail" on his boat, he was always so dear and kind to me! Rest in peace Uncle Lowie, and give Aunt Sis a big smooch for me!!

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**Liz Jaracz-Meyers** - February 11, 2014 at 04:19 PM

SS

“ My thoughts and prayers to Wayne, Lynda and their families.

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**Sandy Schneider** - February 11, 2014 at 02:45 PM

SA

“ *My brother hated being called "Lowie",he would always correct us and made us call him Lowell! I had many good times visiting him and his family years ago, when we lived closer to each other. Time and distance has a way of making family strangers to each other, we don't realize how short life really is and to stay in touch. I am very grateful that at least I had gotten to talk to him over the years and deeply regret I didn't try harder to visit him.*

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**Sandy** - February 11, 2014 at 02:42 PM

DC

“ *Lowie: Rest in peace.*

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**dorothy castillo** - February 11, 2014 at 02:24 PM

RE

“ *I am so sorry for your loss.*

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**Renee** - February 11, 2014 at 01:20 PM

CW

“ *I'm so sorry for your lost. Lowell was a good man. He used to be my neighbor and I'm going to miss him. RIP Lowell. My prays are with the Family*

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**carol Whitlock** - February 09, 2014 at 10:50 PM

BE

“ We are so saddened by the loss of our close friend Lowell and share our deepest condolences with Wayne, Linda and the family. Lowell was a brilliant research chemist and his developments and inventions will live on forever. His products will never die! Lowell brought new ideas and breakthroughs to the metal casting industry where we worked together for over thirty years and he left his mark in many ways. His encouragement, friendship and investment helped grow our small start up company into a leading producer of the foundry "washes" he spend a lifetime improving. May our love and prayers carry you to the place of your dreams. Rest in Peace "Mr Wash" !!! Until we meet again - Love Bill & Eileen

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**Bill & Eillen** - February 09, 2014 at 11:20 AM