

## Ex-HP chief Platt remembered for passion

By Therese Poletti - Mercury News

Lew Platt, the fourth chief executive of Hewlett-Packard, was remembered Tuesday as both an astute business leader and an exceptionally caring individual.

In a touching memorial service at Stanford Memorial Church, former business colleagues, friends and family paid tribute to Platt, who died Sept. 8 of an aneurysm in Sonoma County. He was 64 years old.

Memories and stories about Platt described him as a sharp, funny, passionate man who was genuinely interested in all the people around him. It was a trait that made him so beloved at HP, where he spent the bulk of his business career.

Dean Morton, who retired as HP's executive vice president and chief operating officer in 1992, said Platt's first job at HP was in the company's facilities maintenance department. After a year, Platt, who had an MBA from the Wharton School of Business, was supervising the janitorial staff and getting a bit impatient with his career trajectory.

"Seven years later, he was general manager of Waltham," Morton said, referring to HP's Waltham, Mass., operations. He then described Platt's rise to become CEO in 1992. "Somewhere along the way he stopped talking about being under-employed."

Morton shared from one of Platt's many handwritten notes, describing his sarcastic wit. Morton had bragged to Platt about a success his alma mater had had in football.

"Dean, glad to see Kansas stayed on top of something," Morton read. "You'll never see Penn or Cornell (Platt's two alma maters) on top in football. Education is our thing."



Joanne Ho-Young Lee / Mercury News

Friends and colleagues of Lew Platt walk to the Stanford Memorial Church for a memorial service to honor Lew Platt on the Stanford campus in Palo Alto on October 18, 2005.



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Dr. David Lawrence, a former Hewlett-Packard board member, is greeted by Rosemarie Thomas, who works as liaison with board members, outside Stanford Memorial Church on Tuesday before a memorial service for former HP CEO Lew Platt.

### Embodied 'HP Way'

Platt, who handed over the reins at HP to Carly Fiorina in 1999, is seen by many as the last chief executive to embody the so-called "HP Way," a company culture that among its many tenets professed respect for the individual.

A choir of Hewlett-Packard employees sang a "Tribute to Lew," accompanied by the church's organist, Robert Huw Morgan. The hymnlike tribute had as a chorus, "In all that you do and say, we know that you are the HP Way."

Numerous current and former Hewlett-Packard employees and executives attended the memorial, which was like a reunion for many.

Former Chief Executive John Young was in attendance, as was David Woodley Packard, the son of HP co-founder David Packard. Current executives included HP Chief Financial Officer Bob Wayman; the head of HP's printing and imaging business, Vyomesh

Joshi; and Ann Baskins, HP's general counsel. Other former executives in attendance included Duane Zitzner, Roy Verley, Dick Watts, Doug Chance, William Terry, and Ned Barnholt, the former chief executive of Agilent Technologies, spun off from HP in 1999.

“He had a tremendous influence on everyone in the valley,” Barnholt said. “He was a role model for everyone to live up to.”

Platt was HP's chief executive from 1992 to 1999. But his career did not end with retirement. He was CEO of the Kendall-Jackson winery in Healdsburg from 1999 to 2001. Platt and his wife, Joan, also had their own vineyard and ranch in Bodega Bay.

Most recently, Platt was the lead independent director at Boeing, where he also served as non-executive chairman from 2003 to 2005. He presided over Boeing's board when the aerospace giant ousted Chief Executive Harry Stonecipher.

### Boardroom zingers

James McNerney, the current CEO of Boeing, described Platt's zingers in the board room, which sometimes were meant to signal McNerney that he was perhaps getting a bit full of himself.

“You always knew he was in your corner,” McNerney said. “He was all Jimmy Stewart on the outside and John Wayne on the inside.”

One of his four daughters, Hillary Margolis, said that Platt probably felt ganged up on at home, in a house with five women, including his wife. He would happily welcome any males his daughters brought home to have company to discuss his loves: business, football and fishing.

Margolis described some of her travels around the world with her father after his retirement from HP. She compared his life to a spectacular sunrise that she shared with Platt from a hot-air balloon.

“It ended far too soon, but man, what a beautiful ride,” she said.



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(From left to right) Holding programs to distribute to guests, Tim Mitchell of Cupertino (a HP employee) and David Price of Sunnyvale (retired HP employee) work as ushers during a memorial service for Lew Platt at the Stanford Memorial Church on the Stanford Campus in Palo Alto on October 18, 2005.