



William "Bill" Tilley

October 8, 1943 - September 11, 2017

This is the story of William R. "Bill" Tilley. A wonderful man that was loved, is missed, and will always be cherished. He was an amazing son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, friend, and mentor. Bill's story starts in 1943, in St. Louis, MO. He was the oldest child of O.W. and Cora Tilley. When he was young, O.W. and Cora moved their family to IL, where Bill would spend his childhood, attend school, and graduate from Bradley University. He made many lifelong friends. Peoria, IL is where he would meet the love of his life, Linda. While there he began his employment with Caterpillar Tractor for 10 years. Also, Bill served in the Army and was stationed in the Netherlands. After their daughter Amy Lynn was born, Bill moved his family to Wilmington, DE where he retired from DuPont as a mechanical engineer after 34 years of dedicated service. Bill was an avid traveler, tennis player, golfer, and basketball player. He also greatly enjoyed his time as a crew member on the Kalmar Nyckel. But, Bill's grandson was his heart and joy. There's no denying that time spent with Ryan was very special to him. He was widely known for his peanut-brittle in which was made to perfection, as well as his head bob and afternoon naps. One of Bill's favorite places to visit was Hilton Head, SC with his dear friends, Jan and John. Throughout the tennis community they were known as Bill and John, "The Twin Towers". He had a kindhearted spirit and valued the friends and connections he made throughout his life.

He is survived by his true love of 53 years, Linda Tilley; daughter, Amy

Empson (Buddy); grandson, Ryan Empson; sister, Roye Sparks (Jim); brother, Gary Tilley. He was preceded in death by his parents O.W. and Cora Tilley.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Burial will be private. To send online condolences visit www.stranofeeley.com

And so the story goes on until we see you again. We love you and miss you.

Cemetery Details

Private

Tribute Wall

AE

“ *I miss you Dad*

Amy Empson - November 24, 2017 at 05:56 PM

RA

“ *Shocked to learn yesterday that Bill died while I was away on the 11th. Bill and I teamed together many years in USTA matches. Will always remember our Sat. morning coffee and tennis and vigorous financial and political discussions. Lately we would just hit on Saturday mornings through early this year when his strength was waning. One of our last discussions was about the 5 year life expectancy of his type of cancer. Not once did he complain because knowing Bill he had thoroughly researched his situation and appeared to have come to terms with his fate. Bill was more than a tennis friend as we would share our common experiences and disappointments. Grace and I send our heart felt condolences to Linda and her extended family. Bill, I will miss you, our tennis and your advice.*

Ralph

Ralph - October 17, 2017 at 12:12 PM

RR

“ *Dear Linda, Amy and Ryan:
We are at a loss for words to express our deep sorrow at Bill's passing. We will always remember Bill as our next door neighbor for over 20 years who was ever ready to extend a helping hand. He carried himself through life with a quiet dignity that earned the respect of all. Rest in peace, Bill. We will miss you!*

Ravi and Rashmi

Ravi Rangan - September 22, 2017 at 09:43 AM

AT

“ I was Bill's tennis doubles partner during the EDEAA league era. We had great success as a team on the court, but more importantly, Bill was a caring friend up to the present. He was positive, pleasant and had a great balance of intensity regarding competition, life and reality. I will miss him as a dear friend. Sue and I send our deepest sympathy to Linda and all his family. The "story" presentation in the News Journal was beautiful and depicted Bill exactly. Al Thompson

Al Thompson - September 20, 2017 at 01:58 PM

BM

“ I played tennis with Bill at the DuPont Country Club. A fine tennis player. More importantly a fine man. He always wore a smile to go along with his quiet/ reserved manner.. To me he was a "gentle giant". Not seeing his face around the DuPont tennis courts will be a real loss to all who knew him. My condolences to all his family members. Bill Meakem

Bill Meakem - September 20, 2017 at 08:29 AM

AR

“ Linda and Amy I send my deepest sympathy to all the family. I so enjoyed the story of his life and what wonderful memories you will have to last a lifetime.

Ann Raymond

Ann Raymond - September 19, 2017 at 11:22 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William "Bill" Tilley.



September 18, 2017 at 10:50 AM



“ Bill was a tennis player who I enjoyed playing with, for or against. He will be missed!
Don Hawkins.

Donald Hawkins - September 17, 2017 at 01:09 PM



“ Linda sending you and your family our prayers and love. God Bless
🌸💕💕💕 Love Sherry, Eddie and Bernie💕💕

Edde and Sherry Wall - September 15, 2017 at 10:08 PM



“ I have always loved and respected my older brother. He was smart, thoughtful and so caring. I was so proud of Bill during our Dad's final days. He was so gentle but strong, leading us in some very difficult decisions. His wisdom and insight was valued when needed most. I will dearly miss you, my big brother.
Your loving sister, Roye.

roye sparks - September 15, 2017 at 05:51 PM

JP

“ We're all going to miss Bill's wry smile, his kindness, and his no-nonsense way of expressing himself.

Bill often looked after Emily, our family kitty, when we were traveling, and they were pretty good buddies. Emily is like most cats...independent and not particularly concerned about what her people want her to do. One day last year Bill came over to talk with Jerry and I answered the front door. He saw Emily up at the top of the stairs and called up, "Hi, Em. Come on down." Yeah, right. Emily was told to come down and we had a snowball's chance of seeing that happen. Well, Bill persisted. Finally he said, "Em, you come on down here." Well, Em the Kitty just trotted on down like that was what she wanted most in the world to do. Bill wasn't at all surprised, and rewarded her with an ear scratch. I've subsequently tried several times to duplicate the little obedience drill and it has never worked.

Seven years ago husband Jerry had a sudden onset of excruciating pain, and Bill came over immediately when I called the house. Very gently and with enormous strength, he got Jerry down the stairs, into the van, and to the hospital. All with probably not more than a dozen words spoken.

The list could go on and on and still wouldn't include all of Bill's kindnesses to Jerry and me. And he made amazing peanut brittle.

The same sweet goodness Bill showed us will comfort dear Linda, Amy, and Ryan, the guys he leaves behind who have countless memories of a dear man.

Jerry and Peggy - September 15, 2017 at 11:22 AM

JG

“ One of my favorite pictures of the "Twin Towers". We have so many wonderful memories of trips we went on together and your frequent visits to HH. I'm so sad you can't share our next trip. You've gone off on an adventure on your own. You were loved greatly and you will be truly missed. Such a dear friend. There is an emptiness in our hearts. Rest easy til we meet again.



Jan Gantzhorn - September 14, 2017 at 11:20 PM

AE

“ 9 files added to the album New Album Name



Amy L. Empson - September 14, 2017 at 10:19 PM