



## Charles Thomas Williams

September 1, 1923 - October 1, 2019

Charles Thomas Williams, a longtime resident of Leesburg, died October 1, 2019, after a life well lived. He was 96 years old. Born in Ashland, Kentucky, he was the first of eight children born to Robert and Lucy Mae Scott Williams. Charles developed a serious heart ailment at the age of 17 which caused him a three month hospital stay and a year of bedrest. At that point, when his doctors allowed him to return to school, he and his parents were told that he would need to live very carefully if he wanted to see the age of 40. He was cautioned to "never run to catch a bus," but he went on to join the Army Air Corps and serve as a radar technician in England during World War II. He sailed home at the end of the war on the Queen Mary and thanks to the G.I. Bill, graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in English. Although he was a great student of classical literature and a gifted writer and poet, the grim reality is that these gifts seldom pay the bills.

As he was rather aimlessly job hunting, Charles wound up back in Kentucky visiting a favorite female cousin. By Appalachian standards, this cousin (at age 24) was considered an old maid and so was her single friend, Thelma (Telt) McKenzie. Charles' matchmaker cousin arranged an outing at a nearby public swimming pool and the rest is history. Telt, a shy non-swimmer, didn't know what to make of the dark and dashing Charles when he attempted to teach her the breaststroke. His famous line, "May I put my hand on your stomach?" became a long-standing family joke. They were married on

February 25, 1950.

Eventually, his work in wholesale petroleum sales with Tenneco Oil Company brought Charles and Telt and their children to central Florida and they settled in Leesburg in 1958. He was a past president of the Leesburg noon Rotary Club and a member of First Presbyterian Church of Leesburg, where he sang in the choir for over 30 years. Father to two, grandfather to six, and great grandfather to 17, Charles was a true Renaissance man. A consummate wordsmith and philosopher, he instilled his love of language and learning to each of his descendants. He was baptized a Christian at the age of 60 and enjoyed family, music, water aerobics, cooking, reading, sailing, the Internet, and conversation.

Charles was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 63 years, Telt; his parents; sisters Gloria Broward, Patricia Smentek, Roberta Smith, and Mary Hazard; and brother Robert Cecil Williams. He is survived by his children Lynne (David) Frazier and Bob (Julie) Williams; grandchildren James (Candace) Williams, William (Donna) Frazier, Christen (Brent) Lamons, Ellen (Brian) Miller, John (Liz) Frazier, and Anne (Brooks) Logan; great-grandchildren Camden, Siler, Neyland, and Rigsby Williams; Charlie, Owen, and Carolynne Frazier; Maggie, Jack, and Raney Lamons; Carson, Davis, and Anna Miller; Griffin Frazier; and Ava, Cole, and Eli Logan; and brothers Roger Williams and Lynn Williams. He is also survived by his companion of the past year, Phyllis Rzeminski, and two special friends and helpers, Ida Canal and Mary Lou Speegle.

A celebration of Charles' life will be held at First Presbyterian Church, Leesburg, on Saturday, October 19th, at 2:00 p.m. with Rev. R. J. Leek officiating. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations in his honor to the First Presbyterian Church Memorial Fund, 200 Lone Oak Drive, Leesburg, FL 34748.



# Tribute Wall



“ *I think this is the best obituary I have ever read! Love you, Heather S.*

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**Heather Be Thyname** - October 03, 2019 at 11:02 PM