



William Edward Jones

August 19, 1936 - November 4, 2020

William E. Jones, Jr. (USAF Ret.), 84, passed away at his home in The Village of Chatham on November 4, 2020.

Born in Poughkeepsie, NY on August 19, 1936 to the late William E. and Verna E. (Lextrom) Jones, Bill grew up in Dutchess County, enjoying the quintessential childhood of a small-town boy. He and his brother spent long days outdoors, exploring nature, trout fishing, and bagging small game with their .22 rifles.

At Arlington High School, Bill played football, was named "Best Dancer" in his class of 1954, and began cultivating his keen intellect. A love of books and knowledge would accompany him throughout his life.

In 1957, fresh out of a two-year army enlistment, Bill discovered his avocation when a friend invited him along on a private flying lesson. He was immediately hooked. Having excelled in lessons as a civilian, he was selected for the Air Force's rigorous Aviation Cadet Program in 1959, graduating at the top of Pilot Training Class 61-D. A distinguished career followed, first as a military pilot, including tours in Vietnam, then flying corporate jets. Bill was proud to have flown many different aircraft. The thousands of air hours he logged all over the world provided his family and friends with endless memorable stories, some interesting, some funny, and some terrifying. In retirement, Bill graduated

summa cum laude from Marist College with a degree in computer math.

While piloting an Air Force evacuation mission in 1963, Bill was taken with a lovely flight nurse on board. He married Mary Ann (Harvell) and they spent the next 43 years together. They raised four children, all of whom survive him: his son Kevin (Zoila) of Clermont, daughter Sandra (Eric) Lucentini of Shelburne Falls, MA, and twin daughters Stephanie (William) Jones of San Antonio, TX and Laura (Jeremy) McGeorge of Shelburne Falls, MA.

Bill and Mary Ann made their home in Hopewell Junction then Millbrook, NY from 1980 until 2003, when they moved to The Villages. Bill made many dear friends here and was blessed with absolutely wonderful neighbors.

After Mary Ann passed away in February 2008, Bill met the former Joan Ann (Majo) Fraser. They were happily married from March 2011 until Joanie died suddenly in July.

Golf, a youthful pastime, became the defining passion of Bill's later years. A three handicapper, in 2004 he shot his career low score of 67, besting his own age by a year. He played in the National Senior Games five times, receiving a fourth place ribbon, a Bronze, two Silver, and - finally! - Gold Medal in 2019. He appears twice on the NSGA's "National Games Top 10 Performances and Records for Golf, Scratch Play."

Bill stayed fit, exercising daily and watching his diet (while wrestling with a sweet tooth and digging in with gusto if he liked a dish). His cancer diagnosis in April came as a shock. Nevertheless, he was determined to beat the odds and get back out on the golf course. Even in his lowest moments, you might catch him squeezing his hand grip exerciser or doing leg lifts in bed.

There was so little to be thankful for this year, but Bill often told his children

how happy he was to have them with him as they took turns caring for him at home. To his very last day he never lost his quick wit. With a twinkle in his eye and a smile cracking across his face, he'd come out with some perfectly apropos, utterly hilarious expression. His family will miss him dearly.

In addition to his children, Bill is survived by eight grandchildren: Kysha, Marianna and Cora Jones; Thaddeus Lucentini; Davis and Lilian Jones; and Livia and Hollis McGeorge. He also leaves his sister Karin (Myron) Pacula of Brandon, his sister-in-law, Kathleen Jones of Pleasant Valley, NY, and several nieces and nephews. His brother Richard E. Jones predeceased him in 2015.

A service for Bill will take place at a future date in Poughkeepsie, where he will be interred next to his wife Mary Ann.

Arrangements entrusted to Beyers Funeral Home and Crematory, Lady Lake, FL. Online condolences may be left at www.BeyersFuneralHome.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Beyers Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of William Edward Jones* ”



May 11, 2022 at 07:14 PM

VS

“ I first met Bill sometime in 2004 when I moved to The Villages and I was invited to join a neighborhood golf group for weekly outings. We had many friendly, but fiercely competitive rounds of golf together where money changed hands in both directions. I then had a stroke of genius moment, when I asked Bill to be partners in The Villages Two-Man competitions. That partnership began in the Two-Man Match Play event at Glenview, in 2005. We continued our partnership together thru all the Two-man events we could enter, up until 2019. We were also teammates as well as opponents in many Village Cup and Resident Cup competitions.

What I will remember most of Bill was his persistent and determined efforts to make his golf game better. He was constantly tinkering with his grip, his stance, his swing. I always told anyone who would listen that I believed Bill to be an Android, rather than human, because he could spend hours practicing at the Driving Range or practice greens, certainly many more hours than I could, being fifteen years younger. All of his golfing buddies have heard him announce: "I've found it!" Whatever it was he found would work for that round of golf, or not. Next time out, or next week it would be a different "I think I've got it!"

Reading his obituary, I feel like I've known Bill all my life, rather than just the past sixteen years. Riding in the same golf cart with him all these years, Bill has regaled me with stories of his childhood, his high school years, his Army and Air Force experience, his children and grandchildren as well as golfing adventures and misadventures. It has been a great honor and privilege to have been his friend and golf partner and I will miss him greatly. I hope there is golf in heaven, where he can tell his new buddies, "I've found it!"

Vince Sian - November 15, 2020 at 09:39 AM

SW

“ I began playing golf with Bill about 6 or 7 years ago in our Monday group here in The Villages. Bill was just hitting his stride playing and winning his Senior events in Florida. I always looked forward to being paired with Bill, to watch his golfing capabilities attack the golf course. And my customary greeting and congratulatory comment on his state-wide and National exploits was.... "Bill, you are my idol." And, his customary comeback was always, "You must have set bar pretty low." Bill didn't set the bar. He was THE BAR, in everything he did. You will be missed, my friend. RIP.

Steve Westerlund - November 12, 2020 at 09:52 AM

JP

“ I spent many days and nights with the Joneses, my second family. I always felt welcome in that house. I remember when Mr. Jones met my son, Karl, as baby. He lit up being with a baby, showing Karl his motorcycle and doting over him, and my son just adored him. It was apparent Mr. Jones was a softy around babies. I wish I could be with the Jones family again. I wish I could hug them and laugh with them while we share memories. So many memories. Many, many condolences, my friends.

Jen (Ryan) Peterson - November 11, 2020 at 04:38 PM

DS

“ As a close friend of Bill's son and daughters I spent a few hours with him the garage of his home 'talking shop' and giving a hand if needed.

I enjoyed the few times I spent with him and especially got a kick seeing him dress up 'bad to the bone' when he went for rides on his Harley.

He was hard man who's granchild Thaddeus could bring out the soft side of him.

He will be missed.

David A. Scalia - November 10, 2020 at 10:51 PM

GD

“ You will be missed . A true gentleman and fierce competitor.

Gary Durrett - November 10, 2020 at 07:43 PM

TC

“ May God bless you and keep you my friend.

Tony

Tony Cronin - November 09, 2020 at 04:20 PM

EJ

“ I read some other notes of condolence and it is not surprising that they all talk about their dear friend. Bill was everyone's dear friend. I knew him principally as a tremendous golfer with talent, love, dedication and good humor for the game. I will always miss Bill and his wonderful smile or laugh that made every day I spent with him an absolute joy. Rest In Peace my dear exceptional friend.

Ed Jasudowich - November 09, 2020 at 02:07 PM

DP

“ My good friend Bill Jones, may you RIP, I could write a book regarding our playing golf with & against each other! What a pleasure it was teeing the ball up with you, such a competitor & most of all Gentleman. You will be missed my friend but not forgotten, see you Billy, hit em straight & long !!!!!
Dave Peake

David Peake - November 09, 2020 at 11:40 AM

BR

“ Enjoyed many days playing golf with Bill. A good golfer, friend, and am sending prayers to his family. RIP Bill.

Bill Rentz - November 09, 2020 at 11:00 AM

RS

“ Kevin and family, Please accept our condolences and may our prayers help comfort you and hasten the journey of his soul to Heaven. May our Lord bless and comfort you and your family during this time of grief. ... May God give you the comfort and peace that you seek and may the soul of your loved one rest in peace.
Szanto's family

Rudy Szanto - November 09, 2020 at 10:33 AM

JT

“ Bill Jones, was my dear friend !! We spent many hours, as Joanie, watched with a grin, at their kitchen table, discussing the "right" shafts, the proper lengths, and how to hit over the trees at the Lopez range; which I witnessed many times. He loved his family although I never met you, I feel like I know you well. I do not have to tell you, your Dad was a special person. May Bill Rest In Peace and God Bless His Soul !!! Jim Tyler

Jim Tyler - November 08, 2020 at 11:33 AM