



William Cecil Thurston

March 3, 1945 - May 30, 2026

William Cecil Thurston, born on March 3, 1945, in Lexington, Kentucky, passed away peacefully in Florida on May 30, 2026, at the age of 81.

A proud Vietnam veteran, William served his country with distinction during the Vietnam conflict. He served with the 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron and the 86th Military Airlift Squadron at Travis Air Force Base. The latter part of his military career was spent with the Naval Reserve VTU 3008 Unit, stationed at the 7th Fleet Repair Facility in Yokosuka, Japan.


William dedicated his life to service, aviation, and family.

In his civilian career, he was a highly respected Flight Engineer. He received his doctorate in Engineering Science from the University of Oxford in England, specialising in “Aeronautics”. Throughout his distinguished aviation career, he worked for Saudia Arabian Airlines, Japan Air System (JAS), and Polar Air Cargo, where he supported Operation Iraqi Freedom through the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF). Prior to his retirement, he served as an Airworthiness Liaison for FedEx. Aviation was not only his profession—it was his lifelong passion.

He was also a Master Mason who attained the 33rd degree in the Scottish Rite. He was a member of Albert Pike Lodge No. 303 in Wichita, Kansas.

William had a charming wit and a magnetic personality. He was an exceptional chef, the family's unofficial life coach, and the person everyone turned to for advice, knowledge, and support. He enjoyed a fine Scotch, he took his whisky neat and his coffee black, and his conversations lively. He was an avid golfer, a sailor, a devoted dog lover, and a passionate traveler who journeyed far and wide until he found his Turkish princess, Seher, to accompany him on life's greatest adventure.

Above all, William was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He is survived by his beloved wife, Seher Thurston, and his cherished daughters, Tammy, Wendy, and Öykü. He was a proud grandfather to 7 grandkids and 10 great-grandkids. He leaves behind a family who loved him deeply and who will carry his memory forward with pride.

William will be remembered for his wit, strength, loyalty, kindness, sense of adventure, and unwavering love for his family. He will be deeply missed and forever remembered... 

Military Honors Service will be held on Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 11:30am at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida, where he will be laid to rest.

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JUN 4. 11:30 AM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery
6502 SW 102nd Ave
Bushnell, FL 33513-8914
(352) 793-7740

Military Honors

JUN 4. 11:30 AM (ET)

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6502 SW 102nd Ave
Bushnell, FL 33513-8914
(352) 793-7740

Tribute Wall

CT

“ I am so sorry to hear of your loss. The family will be in my thoughts and prayers. My father and his father were brothers, and unfortunately we had lost touch. Again you will be in my prayers!
Connie Thurston
Lexington, KY

Connie Thurston - June 12 at 09:44 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William Cecil Thurston.



June 03 at 11:02 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of William Cecil Thurston.

June 03 at 11:02 AM

DM

“ Sending you love and prayers as you mourn. May the love of those around you bring comfort during this difficult time of sorrow. Know you all are in our prayers.

We are so incredibly sorry for your loss. Bill was like a brother to me and an uncle to our daughters, Melinda and Ezgi. He will be sorely missed by all of us. We will be here for you whenever you need us. We will forever cherish the countless memories, laughs, and special moments we shared together. I will also always remember the great recipes Bill shared with me.

David, Naime, Melinda and Ezgi Morgan

David Morgan - June 03 at 10:53 AM

TH

“ Bill exemplified exceptional interpersonal skills. From our initial encounter, we established a lasting friendship. Seher and Bill represented the epitome of marital harmony. We are profoundly grieved by his passing, and his enduring legacy will continue to inspire those who knew him.

Tulay Hathorn - June 02 at 11:23 PM

DK

“ David Koren purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of William Cecil Thurston.



David Koren - June 02 at 10:19 PM

DK

“ David Koren planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William Cecil Thurston.

David Koren - June 02 at 10:19 PM

DH

“ Doug (Thurston) Howland and Dan Howland purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of William Cecil Thurston.



Doug (Thurston) Howland and Dan Howland - June 02 at 01:45 PM

DH

“ Doug (Thurston) Howland and Dan Howland planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William Cecil Thurston.

Doug (Thurston) Howland and Dan Howland - June 02 at 01:45 PM