



## William John Weber

September 8, 1927 - August 7, 2024

After a brief illness, William John Weber, 96, of Leesburg, Florida, passed away on Wednesday, August 7. William leaves behind a tremendous legacy of family, generosity, learning, and adventure.

William (Bill to his friends) was born in Cleveland, Ohio, to Clarence and Edith Weber. Bill was the oldest of three brothers who grew up together on Triskett Road. The three brothers - Bill, Dave, and Paul - shared many adventures with the "Triskett Road Gang." Bill joined the Army Air Corps at the end of World War II, where he was a meteorologist. When he received an honorable discharge from the Army Air Corps he attended Ohio State University, where he earned his Veterinary Degree and a Master's Degree in Bacteriology.

It was while Bill was a student at Ohio State that he met the love of his life, Barbara Haigh. Barbara was a nursing student, and the two soon became engaged, and then married. When the young couple completed their studies, they moved to Ocala, Florida, where Bill practiced veterinary medicine. In 1954, they moved to Leesburg where they lived on Oak Drive with their sons William and John. Bill built his veterinary practice, Leesburg Veterinary Hospital, and helped many animals throughout his career.

A passion of Bill's that he passed along to his sons was his love of flying. Bill flew a variety of small planes, including Piper Cubs, Stinsons, and he was

part-owner of a Beechcraft Bonanza. With Bill at the controls, the Beechcraft took the family on trips, and Bill also used to it travel to meetings with the Florida Veterinary Association when he was their President. In 1995 Bill and son John built an experimental airplane together. Bill enjoyed the Rans-S12 they built as he used it to pursue his passion for photography.

In 1963, Bill and Barbara moved their family to a new home on Myrtle Lake. In addition to his veterinary practice, Bill extended his expertise to assisting the State of Florida in the rescuing and rehabbing of many young, and wounded, animals. In fact, he established their property on Myrtle Lake as a wildlife sanctuary. From raccoons nesting in Barbara's closet, to a quail sharing son John's breakfast, to the seagull rescued by son William while the family was on vacation, or Whooper the owl flying down from a tree to untie the shoelaces of visitors, life was never boring at the Weber home. Caring for the animals was a family affair, and together they helped return dozens of animals to their natural habitat.

Sons William and John each have wonderful memories of the family vacations they would go on in the summers. Bill and Barbara provided their sons with unique opportunities to see the all the various and beautiful aspects of the United States: from the mountains to the forests, the beauty of Alaska, and the wonderful national park system we have in our country. Ultimately, the family visited every state, except Hawaii.

When Bill retired from veterinary medicine in the 1980's, he turned his hobby of photography into a second career. Bill's photos were published in nationally-known magazines, including Ranger Rick, Big Backyard, Audubon, National Wildlife, and many others. His photos were also used by Hallmark for greeting cards and calendars. Bill enjoyed writing, and had a wonderful writing style that made it seem he was simply talking to you as he wrote. He is the author of several books, including Wild Orphan Friends, Wild Orphan Babies,

and several others. Bill's photos continue to bring joy to others.

Another great adventure which involved the whole family was the purchase of a beautiful piece of land in the mountains of Marshall, North Carolina. Over the span of five summers, Bill, Barbara, John, and William when he was free from university, would stay in their motor home while they built their house. It was a wonderful experience for all of them. They developed many life-long friendships with local families who embraced their new neighbors. A few helped with the construction of the house, sharing their knowledge of the land and construction. In his early years, Bill had learned a great deal about raising crops from his father and uncle while he and his brothers were growing up on Triskett Road. Bill brought this vast knowledge to the farm in Marshall. Their land was home to apple trees, blueberry bushes, cherry trees, and the lovingly-tended vegetable garden produced asparagus, tomatoes, Silver Queen Corn, and other vegetables - many of which Barbara would can for future use. Over the span of 30 years, Bill and Barbara spent their summers in North Carolina and winters in Florida, all the while building enduring friendships with their neighbors in Marshall. .

When Bill was 62 years old it was time for another grand adventure. He invited his two sons and daughter-in-law Tobi to climb the Grand Teton in Wyoming. After the group completed both Beginning and Advanced climbing schools, they spent two days with a guide scaling the mountain. This great accomplishment was something none of them would ever forget.

As the years passed, it became time to sell their home in North Carolina. Bill and Barbara spent their later years in their home on Myrtle Lake. During those years, they saw their family prosper with the marriages of their grandchildren and the addition of six great-grandchildren.

Bill had one more climbing adventure before hanging up his climbing shoes. He read a story about “the oldest person to climb Devils Tower in Wyoming”. The person mentioned in the article was 87 when they climbed the Tower. After seeing it during one of the family’s summer vacations, Bill had always wanted to climb the Devils Tower. After making arrangements with local climbing guides, Bill and his two sons traveled to Devils Tower where they made the 867-foot climb. To the family’s knowledge, Bill (who turned 91 the day they climbed) is currently the oldest person to climb Devil’s Tower.

Bill and Barbara were married for 71 years before her passing in 2022. After losing his best friend, Bill sold their Myrtle Lake home and moved into Lake Port Independent living. He enjoyed his new home, and made many good friends during his time there.

Bill leaves behind his greatest legacy: his two sons, William (Tobi) of North Carolina, and John (Grace) of Leesburg, He also leaves behind two wonderful grandsons and granddaughters-in-law, John (Lauren) and James (Niki), plus six great-grandchildren, Angelica, Haven, Autumn, MacKenzie, Liam, and Everleigh. Bill is also survived by his brothers, Dave (Leesburg), and Paul (Oceanside, California), many beloved nieces and nephews, and good friends. He will be greatly missed by his family.

There will be no services. If desired, donations may be made in his name to the Fruitland Park Library, Leesburg Humane Society, or the Audubon Society.

Arrangements entrusted to Beyers Funeral Home of Leesburg, Florida.

# Tribute Wall

TA

“ A photo that your dad took of a pelican many years ago hangs on my wall. As I was just walking past it I thought of him and how lucky I was to have met him, and your mother. I then looked online and saw this wonderful tribute. I did not know that you also lost your mom. I'm so sorry for your loss. They were such warm, welcoming and wonderful people. I did think of them often over the years with fondness. I also think about that 'wild' home you had with critters everywhere-even the alligator. It always brings me a smile and a chuckle.

With sympathy and warm regards,  
Terri Alessio

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**Terri Alessio** - September 08, 2025 at 05:58 PM

LJ

“ Grateful to have met Bill. He was a beautiful man and an inspiration.

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**LISA JONES** - September 05, 2024 at 08:32 AM

CB

“ I am so so sorry for your loss. I only today "met" him, as I was cleaning out old files of my father, who was also a veterinarian. He had saved the April 1983 issue of the VM/SAC journal and the cover featured a photo by Dr. Weber. It was a beautiful shot of two farm workhorses pulling a mowing machine. It captured the steep terrain and made the advantages of horse farming so obvious. I thought, "I have to find out who shot this photo" and now sadly learn he has passed away. I am so thankful the oral history he recorded (which I also just found) will preserve his knowledge, perspective and insights for generations to come. Connie Bailey Kitts, daughter of Lucian P. Bailey, DVM of Bluefield, VA

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**Connie Bailey** - August 20, 2024 at 12:32 PM

RD

“ *Dr. & Mrs. Weber were always good, kind-hearted people. My Sister married into their family and I could always see how much they obviously cared for her.*

*I always appreciated their hospitality and graciousness.*

*World was a better place with them in it.*

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**Robert Davis** - August 13, 2024 at 08:50 AM