



William "Bill" Mark Pribyl

June 18, 1922 - January 13, 2016

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William Mark Pribyl, the nicest guy you could ever have met, passed from this life on January 13, 2016. He was 93.

Bill was born to Laura and Joseph Pribyl, June 18, 1922 in Jackson Minnesota. He was the youngest of seven children and the only boy. His father kept hoping for a hunting partner and finally got Bill.

From the time Bill could remember, he and his dad hunted pheasant and waterfowl every morning before school. This experience started him on a lifetime love of hunting and fishing.

After high school he moved to Minneapolis to live with his sister and attend machinist school. Then World War II broke out and he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp, where he became a pilot in the 57th Fighter Group. He flew P40's early in the war and later P47's. He was stationed in Africa, Corsica and Italy and earned several awards including a Distinguished Flying Cross with Oak Leaf cluster and seven Air Medals. He flew 150 missions and ended his service with the rank of Captain.

He married his first wife, Joyce Pearson, December 6, 1944 during a leave. They had 55 loving years together. They had two children, Catherine and Steven.

Joyce preceded him in death in the year 2000.

He took advantage of the GI Bill and earned a bachelors degree from the University of Minnesota in Chemical Engineering. Brief jobs in Bozeman, Montana and Eugene, Oregon led him and his family to St. Helens, Oregon, where Bill managed a wood treating facility for Pope and Talbot. After that plant closed he and two others started Northwest Piling, a company that supplied processed poles and piling to the wood treating industry.

The company was sold to Crown Zellerbach and Bill managed several plants for Crown until his retirement. After retirement he was asked by Weyerhaeuser to work as a consultant and designed several pole and piling operations around the northwest. Bill was highly respected in the woods products industry and developed many life long friendships with business associates.

Faith was important to Bill and he was a member of the First Lutheran Church in St. Helens for over 60 years, serving the church in countless capacities. He was a self-taught musician, blessed with a beautiful tenor voice and he sang at many weddings, funerals, and concerts well into his 70's. He was choir director at First Lutheran for many years. He also started a children's choir, which was good enough to be invited to sing on the local radio station.

One day when Bill was cleaning out a box he came across some old Christmas cards that were sent to him and Joyce. One fell out on the floor and when he looked at it, it was from a lady who had worked for him. She and Joyce had always written on their cards "Let's have lunch". So he called Patricia Wilson and asked her to lunch. They met in St. Helens and eventually after a year of courting, they married in 2002. They shared many active and rewarding years together, travelling extensively in the United States and enjoying her large loving family.

Bill was an enthusiastic outdoorsman. His real love was waterfowl hunting and he loved to hunt ducks over his hand carved wooden decoys. His love of waterfowl extended to making his own duck and goose calls and hand carving beautiful artistic wood birds and waterfowl pieces. He won many ribbons including best of show on his artwork at the local fair. After his second marriage his hunting and fishing partners were his brothers-in law. They always had a great time and he often said they were the brothers he never had.

He loved gardening and had a large garden and later in life developed a talent for creating bonsai. Bill was a very generous man. Often when someone would pass by and admire one, he would give it to them.

Patty coaxed him into writing his memoirs of his war experiences. He had many tales to tell, but he was a very humble man all of his life. He enjoyed writing and even wrote several short novels (unpublished), which were enjoyed by his many friends.

Needless to say, he will be missed by many. His survivors include his wife Patty, daughter Catherine Swann (Jim Humberg), son Steven (Jacky), his 95 year old sister Alice Marie Miller, his four step children, Tony Wilson (Tamara) Angela Allen, Kyle Wilson, and Kari

Swearingen, 13 grand children, 7 great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephew.

The Celebration of Life will be held on Thursday, January 21st at 12:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, 360 N. Wyeth St. St. Helens, Oregon.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that you donate to First Lutheran Church for a Memorial or Legacy Hospice, or the charity of your choice.

Cemetery

Bethany Memorial Cemetery

34721 Church Road

Warren, OR, 97053

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Columbia Funeral Home - January 21, 2016 at 03:00 PM



“ When I was little I had an accident and I had a bandage covering one side of my forehead. My Mom took me to "Dr. Bill", she must have told me he was a doctor. he worked on getting the bandage off but I wouldn't let him and I started to run away. He reached out and grabbed the corner of the bandage and it ripped off as I ran off. He was always "Dr. Bill" to me and one of the nicest guys I have ever known. It was 60 years ago. My condolences to his family.
Gerry MacAuley

Gerry MacAuley - March 14, 2016 at 09:23 PM



“ 6 files added to the album LifeTributes



Columbia Funeral Home - January 25, 2016 at 12:34 PM



“ I knew Bill as a member of First Lutheran Church. He was someone I looked up to as a "hero" of mine even before I knew of his WW II record.

One of my first memories of Bill is as a Sunday school teacher for my son Jeff who was about 10. Jeff came home and talked about what he learned. Bill said "It is important to be humble", and if you "talk" you better be able to back it up.

Bill was the church "volunteer" for many years. He painted, cleaned the church, organized yard clean up, set up and cooked pancakes for the youth Easter breakfast, served on church council, participated and led the choir. If there was something going on at the church, Bill was involved. The maintenance budget for the church was always lower than the actual cost of maintaining the church. Bill consistently hid the real cost by paying for things out of his own pocket.

I am sure that Bill had his faults, but to me he was a man's man. A true hero and someone I will always feel grateful that I was his friend.

Mike McCoy - January 20, 2016 at 08:40 PM



“ Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Yellow and White was purchased for the family of William "Bill" Mark Pribyl.



January 19, 2016 at 09:33 PM



“ Kathy Cooper Ashley lit a candle in memory of William "Bill" Mark Pribyl



Kathy Cooper Ashley - January 19, 2016 at 12:32 AM