



Bill Wilkins

April 28, 1924 - January 10, 2015

William “Bill” Wilkins, well-known local sports figure and personality, died on Saturday, January 10, 2015 in Hillview Health Center, after an extended illness. His jovial personality and his hearty laughter will be missed by everyone who knew him.

He came to Elizabethton as a professional baseball player with the Chicago Cubs in the late 1940’s and remained here the rest of his life. Bill grew up in Momence, Illinois outside Chicago, where he excelled in all high school sports. He then spent three years in the U.S. Army, 745th Tank Battalion, serving in France, Germany, Normandy, and Omaha Beach. But, baseball being his passion, he went for try outs at Wrigley Field and was given a contract with the Cubs. He was sent to Elizabethton and was a catcher in the Appalachian League, made the All Star Team and moved up to their Class A Club.

Deciding to pursue further education, Bill then attended ETSU and upon graduation, he began teaching and coaching, first at Virginia High, then three years at Science Hill. His career also included a supervisory position at Beaunit, ten years at Herman Robinson Vocational-Technical School, and later retiring from the Carter County School System.

As a hobby, “Big Bill”, enjoyed broadcasting football and basketball for many years for WBEJ. Coach Wilkins was inducted into the EHS Hall of Fame and was honored with awards from Science Hill as well as TSSAA for his service. Bill was an avid golfer and took pride in acquiring two holes in one. “Coach” was still visited by a group of special friends he previously coached at Science Hill.

In earlier years, Mr. Wilkins served on the County Court and was active in civic affairs, including the Park and Rec, the United Way, Mental Health and Cancer Society. Bill was a family man and adored his wife and children and especially his grandchildren, who were the light of his life. He also loved his church and church family, both at West Side Christian Church and East River Park Christian Church. He served as deacon at both churches, but it was his desire to return to his home church at West Side, among family and close friends.

Mr. Wilkins is survived by his devoted wife of 46 years, Kay Wilkins; two sons, Dan “Leroy” Wilkins, and Chuck Wilkins and wife Rebecca; a daughter, Jennifer Wilkins Murphy and husband Kenneth “Butch” Murphy, all of Elizabethton; and five grandchildren, Rachael Wilkins, Nashville, Casey and Matthew Wilkins, and Eli and Lucas Murphy, all of Elizabethton; and other survivors, including his sisters-in-law, Rosalie Wilkins and Frankie Wilkins, Valparaiso, Indiana; Glenda and Dick Oatman, and Betty and Eddie Hoover, Elizabethton.

Mr. Wilkins was preceded in death by his parents, Coy and Wilma Fisher Wilkins; three brothers, James, Robert and Charles Wilkins; a sister, Judy Henry; and his first wife, Betty A. Wilkins; and a special brother-in-law, Doug “Charlie” Stair.

A celebration of the life of Bill Wilkins will be conducted at 7:00 PM on Monday, January 12, 2015 at West Side Christian Church with Mr. Greg Key, minister, officiating. The family will receive friends from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM in the church, prior to the service on Monday; or at the residence at other times.

The graveside service will be conducted at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, January 13, 2015 at Happy Valley Memorial Park. Military honors will be accorded by the Carter County Honor Guard. Active pallbearers will be Tom Little, T. J. Little, Jr., Dennis Wilkins, Jimmy Hamilton, Jim Barnes, Bryce McKinney, Carl Burrough, Mark Swink, Allen Grindstaff, Wes Pearson, Marcus Julian, and Mr. Wilkin’s grandsons will accompany the pallbearers. Honorary pallbearers will be faithful family members, Ferrell Bowman, Graham Spurrier, Gary Scheurman, Rockne Stump, Bill Bays, Charlie Morris, Trey Williams, Junior and Brenda Stanley, Luther and Beverly McKeehan, Curtis Campbell, Ken Arnold, Anthony Townsend, Bill Peterson, Larry and Norma Proffitt, Tyler Hyder, Frank and Mary Shepherd, Mary Roberts, Lori Street, Tommy Horton, Earl and Dora Williams, employees of Burgie Drug and Tetrick Funeral Home, congregation of West Side Christian Church, East River Park Christian Church, VA Medical Center, staff of Hillview Health Center, where he enjoyed the loving care and camaraderie of the staff, especially the CNA’s and Caris Health, with special thanks to Katie, Shannon and Linda.

For those that desire, memorials may be given to West Side Christian Church, 1307 West G. Street, Elizabethton, TN 37643.

Events

JAN 12	Visitation	05:00PM - 07:00PM
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	West Side Christian Church	
	1307 West G Street, Elizabethton, TN, US, 37643	
JAN 12	Celebration of Life Service	07:00PM
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	West Side Christian Church	
	1307 West G Street, Elizabethton, TN, US, 37643	
JAN 13	Graveside Service and Interment	11:00AM
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	Happy Valley Memorial Park	
	2708 Elizabethton Highway, Johnson City, TN, US, 37643	

Comments



“ Kim Leach lit a candle in memory of Bill Wilkins



Kim Leach - January 18 at 10:56 AM



“ A tribute video has been added.



Tetrick Funeral Home - January 12 at 12:25 PM



“ Kim Leach lit a candle in memory of Bill Wilkins



Kim Leach - January 18 at 10:56 AM



“ I am praying for his family to have strength in the days ahead. I remember Bill and his smile. What a great man. Love, Curtsy Curtis Kenny

Curtsy Kenny - January 14 at 11:01 AM



“ My heart goes out to you Kay, Danny, Chuck, Jennifer and grandchildren. I am so sorry for your loss (That bigger than life itself loss). Bill was a special person in my life and I am sure in everyone's life he ever met. I am sorry I have not and cannot be with you physically (due to illness), but you have been in my thoughts and prayers and will continue to be. If I can be of any help, please do not hesitate to let me know. I love you Kay and always have and I have missed you guys so much and especially Christmas time at the Press on Broad Street! May God Bless and hold you close.
Pat Graham Lowe

Pat Graham Lowe - January 13 at 11:51 AM



“ Pat Graham Lowe lit a candle in memory of Bill Wilkins



Pat Graham Lowe - January 13 at 11:41 AM



“ Dear Kay and family,
Linda and I pray that God gives you comfort and peace. I have so many wonderful memories of Bill. He brought joy and laughter into my life on many days. I was always glad to be around him.
Your friend,
Joe Ledford

Joe Ledford - January 12 at 07:40 PM



“ Sarah (wilkins) Senart lit a candle in memory of Bill Wilkins



sarah (wilkins) senart - January 12 at 05:52 PM



“ Danny, Thinking of you all and sending prayers for your family,

Gaye McCullough - January 12 at 03:55 PM



“ Kay and Family,

We are thinking of you. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Sue and John Campbell and Forbes Family

Jan Horn - January 12 at 11:59 AM



“ To My Wilkins Family - I'm so sorry for your loss. Uncle Bill was so special to all of us here in Indiana. As a kid, we always looked forward to your visits. Uncle Bill kept us giggling. When I lived with Grandma and Grandpa, his Saturday morning phone calls were always a highlight to the weekend. I would try to beat everyone to the phone just so I could hear him say, "well hello there, sweetheart!" Then we'd put him on speakerphone so we could all listen to him talk. My Grandpa gave me a picture that he kept in his wallet of Uncle Bill in his Cubs uniform. I had it enlarged and it hangs in my son's bedroom. My kids were never fortunate enough to meet him but they definitely know all about him. We have plenty of stories to share that's for sure! Please know that we're keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers. I've said several times over the weekend that the reunion in heaven between Uncle Bill, my grandpa, Uncle Chuck, and Aunt Judy is one I wish I could see with my own eyes. I'm sure it's a joyous one and I look forward to the day that we can all be together again. Love to you all!

Kari (Wilkins) Corbin

Kari Wilkins-Corbin - January 12 at 10:22 AM



“ Dan and family, So very sorry for,your loss. You are in my thoughts and prayers

Carol Lacy DuBose
EHS Class of 1973

carol Lacy DuBose - January 11 at 08:48 PM



“ Kay, we are so sorry for your loss, and will be praying for you and your family. Bill was a wonderful man and we have many fond memories of him. May you be comforted in the knowledge that you will see him again one day.

Johnie and Dianne Jones

John and Dianne Jones - January 11 at 07:25 PM



“ Kay you and your family are in our prayers. Arlene and Jim Cathelyn

James Cathelyn - January 11 at 08:39 AM



“ We are sorry for your loss and are praying .
for you. Please let us know if we can
serve you in any way.
Calvary Baptist Church
Elizabethton, TN. 37643
225 Holly Lane

423 542 5033 or office @calvaryonline.net

Now may the Lord of peace himself give
you peace at all times and in every way.
The Lord be with all of you.
2 Thessalonians 3:16

James Cathelyn - January 11 at 08:37 AM



“ Keely Isaacs Batchelder lit a candle in memory of Bill Wilkins



Keely Isaacs Batchelder - January 11 at 08:01 AM



“BILL HAS BEEN MY WONDERFUL UNCLE SINCE I WAS A BABY. HE ALWAYS MADE ME LAUGH AND I LOVED GOING ACROSS THE STREET TO SEE HIM.LAST TIME I SAW HIM WAS THE SUMMER 1996' AS I LIVED IN CALIFORNIA AND THEN NEVADA.I DID CALL HIM SEVERAL TIMES A YEAR AND LOVED LISTENING TO HIS STORIES. HE WILL BE TRULY MISSED AND ALWAYS WILL REMAIN A BIG PART OF MY LIFE. TO HIS FAMILY AM SO SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS. BUT WANT YOU TO KNOW I HAVE WONDERFUL MEMORIES OF HIM AND ALWAYS WILL. REST IN PEACE BILL..YOU WILL BE MISSED SO MUCH.... LOVE YOU BEVERLEY AUSTIN TUCK YOUR NIECE...



BEVERLEY TUCK - January 11 at 06:55 AM



“Clyde/Nell Jenkins lit a candle in memory of Bill Wilkins



Clyde/Nell Jenkins - January 10 at 09:50 PM



“Leroy and family, I love you all. Praying for you. Will certainly miss your dad. God's comfort in Jesus Christ be ever present. Know of my prayers.

Ed Bowman - January 10 at 08:42 PM