

Bill Burgher(1925 - 2015)

Joseph William Burgher

January 1, 1925 - July 20, 2015

"Happy Hour" Large's playing days began in Wilder, Idaho on January 1, 1925. A New Year's Baby, Joseph William Burgher passed away in Coos Bay, Oregon, July 20, 2015.

Skipping school, shooting pheasants, and playing sports, especially baseball, were his forte. Bill went to Ontario High School, after his junior year he enlisted in the [Army](#) Air Corp and flew P-38's in [WWII](#). He served four years in the Pacific Theatre. Bill's favorite WWII story was the six month he was stationed in Tokyo, Japan. His MOS was Baseball Field Maintenance. His squad was assigned to keep the field pristine and they played five different Japanese teams during his stay in Tokyo-right up his alley.

While in the Philippines, he met his beautiful wife Martha Elaine Greib. They were married in Cheyenne, Wyoming on November 19, 1946. After serving his tour of duty, Bill and his bride moved to Eugene, OR where he enrolled in the University of Oregon (my Dad a Duck?). He lettered while playing baseball in 1947 and 1948. He followed his dreams to play professional baseball. An article in the Eugene Paper read, "Burgher Inks Unusual Contract" with the AA Salem Senators and the AAA Portland Beavers. He played for the Senators in 1948, then the Beavers in 1949. His next tour was with the AAA Oklahoma City in 1950, then on to Spring Training with the Cleveland Indians in the spring of 1951.

While in Eugene, Bill and Elaine added two little ones to their family, Mary Lou and Bill. In 1952 Bill moved his family to Bandon, Oregon to manage and play for the Moore Mill Semi-Pro Baseball Team. In the late 50's he played for the Semi-Pro Baseball Team, Coos Bay-North Bend Lumberjacks. After his playing days, he coached little league and American Legion baseball in Bandon. He loved to umpire baseball and officiate basketball games.

He worked for Moore Mill Lumber, FSP Lumber, Rogge Lumber and had a short stint with the City of Bandon. In the 60's, Don Goddard and Pete Goodbrod introduced him to Golf which became his passion as his friends will tell you. He loved watching golf on TV and passed away just after the playoff in this year's British Open.

In 1966 after seeing Mary Lou and Billy off to college, Elaine was fed up with the wind and she packed up Large and moved to Salem. They built a wonderful home in South Salem with a golf repair shop and a park in their backyard where grandkids played for years. In Salem he worked for Meeker Fertilizer and became a member of Salem Golf Club. He was a golf-a-holic, always sharing his endless knowledge of the golf swing with others who wanted to learn. He also loved to play handball, racquetball and he enjoyed swimming. He had many hobbies, a do-it-yourself master woodworker. He built furniture, dressers, cabinets and beds for his family. He later combined his passion for golf and his woodworking and became a certified Goldsmith Gold Club refinisher/fitter. He spent many happy hours in his shop re-gripping, refinishing and tinkering with golf clubs.

Bill enjoyed his annual golf outing with the "Dirty Dozen", a group of buddies that traveled to Central Oregon. This soon became the "Dirty Two Dozen" and then evolved into a different dozen known as "The Lost Cause" with close family and friends. Bill recaptured his love of bird hunting with his son and grandson in Vale, Oregon. Every Fall Bill went east to the FAT Ranch (Flaxel, Allen & Trent) to hunt upland birds with the Kincaid Boys. One of the owners, Jeff Allen, labeled him "Large" and his son, Bill, "Small" and the name stuck with him to this day.

Bill and Elaine enjoyed "Happy Hour" with family and friends. He was a pillar of support for his entire family, generously helping with projects and being involved with home and business ventures. He served his country, he believed in hard work, he played the sports he loved, he loved to dance and he was a gentleman. Bill will be laid to rest beside his wife Elaine at Willamette National Cemetery, Tuesday July 28, at 2:30 p.m.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents, Jack and Dorothy Burgher; wife, Elaine; daughter, Mary Lou Terhaar. Bill is survived by his son, Bill "Small" Burgher and wife, Corliss; Granddaughter, Jaime Ohr and husband, Tach; great-grandchildren, Ta and Harper. Grandson, Travis Burgher and wife, Lisa; and great-grandchildren Flora and Meara. Granddaughter, Kim Terhaar and great-granddaughter, Megan. Grandson, Scott Terhaar and wife, Brynn and great-grandson, Paullus.

Thank God for Large! You're our HERO! You will be remembered with endless love and happiness. We know you'll have countless "Happy Hours" and we're excited you'll be hitting Home Runs and Hole-in-Ones for eternity. We love you Large!

Contributions in memory of Bill and Elaine Burgher can be made to SWOCC Foundation Nursing Program, 1988 Newmark, Coos Bay OR 97420

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