



William Vernon Bearden Sr.

November 25, 1933 - November 29, 2020

William Vernon Bearden, Sr., (Bill) of Morris passed away due to natural causes on Sunday, November 29, 2020 at the age of 87 in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He had been fighting a knee infection after two knee surgeries. Bill was born on November 25, 1933 in Binger, Oklahoma to Arthur Bearden and Ora Elliot Bearden. He graduated from Binger High School and earned a Bachelors Degree from Oklahoma State University in Vocational Education. Bill had aspirations of playing college and professional baseball, however, a foul ball to his right hand (dominant) index finger put an end to that. He didn't let that derail his love for baseball, as he helped in the recruitment of Johnny Bench, also from Binger, who went on to become a Hall of Fame catcher for the Cincinnati Reds. Bill also served as a talent scout for the Baltimore Orioles. Practically every summer the Bearden family would drive to St. Louis to watch a three or four game series between Bill's beloved Reds and the St. Louis Cardinals, with courtesy tickets from Bench, of course.

Bill lived a very busy and full life. He was always 'on the go'. He possessed an energizing smile and hilarious laugh that would put a smile on everyone's face. He taught vocational education (Vo-Ag / FFA) at Morris High School and Okmulgee High School for over 35 years. At Morris, he coached several years as the girls and boy's basketball coach, winning a State Championship with the girls. He loved working with his students (who called him Mr. B) and helping them raise their show animals, including pigs, sheep, and cattle. Bill always made arrangements for his students to attend the various live stock

shows, including the Morris Livestock Show, the Okmulgee County Fair in Okmulgee, the Okmulgee County Spring show in Beggs, the Muskogee State Fair, the Tulsa State Fair, and the Kansas City Royal in Kansas City. His students were always active in selling Blue and Gold Sausage and Christmas fruit (oranges, apples, and grapefruit). Bill also had a clear, pristine voice which he displayed on KOKL radio for Okmulgee Bulldog sports and as the public address announcer for the Okmulgee Bulldogs, Morris Eagles, and at the county basketball tournaments. During the summer months when school was out of session, starting in the very early 1970's, he owned and operated a retail and wholesale fireworks business which was still in operation when he passed away. He was a member of the Okmulgee Masonic Lodge #199 AF & AM for 61 years. He was also a member of Town and Country Christian Church in Okmulgee.

Bill married his lifelong sweetheart, Lila Rogers on June 5, 1954. Four children were born from their happy, 62 year marriage. Bill Bearden Jr. of Morris, Carol King and husband Todd of Bixby, Gracie Bearden of Tulsa, Stan Bearden and wife Sharon of Broken Arrow. He is survived by all four children. Other survivors include ten grandchildren, Lori and Raymond Moore, Jennifer and Jeremy Avery, Johnathan and Loubna, Michelle Giddens, Afton and Patrick McManus, Clint and Lisa Tolbert and Keith Tolbert, Nicholas and Nathan Bearden, Emily Cervini and Lisa Tolbert, and twelve great grandchildren including Mia and Max Moore, Jaxen Cole, Lillie and Sutton Giddens, Jake and Jessa Avery, Luke and Hendrix Tolbert, Emma and Allie Morris, Maddox Tolbert, Cruz Tolbert and Maryem Morris.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents Arthur and Ora Bearden, wife Lila Bearden and sister Mary Drake.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them. 23 centuries ago, so Plutarch tells us an old Spartan King observed ~ It is not the places that grace men, but men grace places. In a world awash with change, something's stand firm. Somethings are as Plato

said, "Good~True~ and Beautiful~ If you have ever known such greatness, it is hard to be content with their silence, for we miss them. The empty chair on a holiday, empty everyday, the photograph that goes wherever you do. The picture fades, but the person in it does not. Their spirit lives on and no words ease your pain. People do grace places, but people also grace people. We are blessed by our time with those now asleep. The mighty and the gentle, so sleep sweet precious father in honored rest, for the loving are the daring.

Friends may visit the funeral home for a Time of Remembrance on Thursday, December 10, 2020 from 10:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M. A private committal service for immediate family will be held.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the McClendon-Winters Funeral Home of Okmulgee. Memories, condolences, photos and videos may be shared with the family on Bill's Tribute Page of our website at www.mcclendon-winters.com

Cemetery Details

Morris Cemetery

Morris, OK

Previous Events

Time of Remembrance

DEC 10. 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM (CT)

McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - Okmulgee

303 E. 7th Street

Okmulgee, OK 74447

(918) 756-1677

info@mcclendon-winters.com

<https://www.mcclendon-winters.com>

Tribute Wall



“ McClendon-Winters Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - December 10, 2020 at 10:55 AM

DW

Your mom and dad were always so nice to my family and made us feel special only like they could. The first time I saw this new sports network (ESPN) your dad invited me to watch a game the best game I ever watched your dad running commentary 😂😂. I always digged your dad saying he was the second best Salesman I knew behind me.. but he was by far the hardest funniest and most inspiring person I knew an no one could hold a candle to him... They were special ppl who shared their love for the ppl they knew we'll miss them both

don an chris wilhite - December 10, 2020 at 08:28 PM

TS

man, im gonna miss that man soooooo much!!!!

ted sullins - December 11, 2020 at 03:08 PM

TS

lotta happy angels tho,,i know exactly where mr B went!!!!

ted sullins - December 11, 2020 at 03:12 PM



“ William Vernon Bearden Sr.

December 20, 2022 at 11:29 AM



“ *Linda Haddock Gray lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Linda Haddock Gray - December 23, 2020 at 04:18 AM



“ *Oh, Bill, I am so shocked to learn of your passing. You were so kind to me, I enjoyed getting to know you and spending time with you. RIP William "Bill" Bearden. I know you will be missed by all who knew you.*

Linda Haddock Gray - December 23, 2020 at 04:05 AM

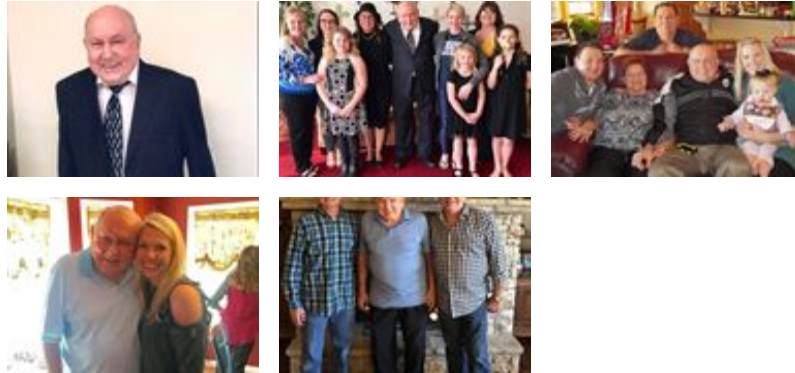


“ *So sorry for your loss. Ni will always remember Mr. Bearden's smile and his way supportive attitude. He was a great example of what a educator should be. He put his students first. I know he will be missed.*

Marilyn Jackson - December 14, 2020 at 10:53 AM



“ 58 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - December 10, 2020 at 10:58 AM

SS

“ *Steve Shoemake lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Steve Shoemake - December 10, 2020 at 09:05 AM

SS

Bill truly embodied the phrase "never met a stranger". He is one of the kindest, most friendly people I have had the privilege of knowing.

Steve Shoemake - December 10, 2020 at 09:04 AM



I am shocked to learn of your passing. You were so kind to me. I enjoyed the time we shared together. You will be missed by all who knew you. I will never forget you. RIP Bill.

Linda Haddock Gray - December 23, 2020 at 04:17 AM

SD

“ Sue Deason lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Sue Deason - December 08, 2020 at 07:37 PM

SD

Uncle Bill was a very special person. He has touched so many lives. He always had a smile on his face and gave the biggest hugs I have ever seen. He will be missed so much by each and every one of us.

Sue Deason - December 08, 2020 at 08:12 PM

RP

“ Spent many a night at the Bearden house and “B” and Mrs. “B” and Stan and the family treated me like I was family. He was always upbeat and made everyone laugh. He was awesome.

Rusty Packwood - December 07, 2020 at 11:01 AM

JC

“ Young and old - Everyone liked Bill because he was the friendliest guy in the area. Good teacher and friend. Sincere sympathy to his family!



Jeneane Campbell - December 06, 2020 at 05:48 PM

JR

“ *Joan Reynolds lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Joan Reynolds - December 06, 2020 at 04:11 PM

EL

“ *Always brought a smile to your face was my first Ag. teacher will miss him.*



Ernest ledbetter - December 06, 2020 at 02:40 PM

ML

“ *Mark Ledbetter lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Mark ledbetter - December 06, 2020 at 10:41 AM

DS

“ *Donald T Sullins lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Donald t Sullins - December 05, 2020 at 10:29 AM

DS

“ THE GREATEST TEACHER OKMULGEE EVER HAD! REGINA SULLINS

Donald t Sullins - December 05, 2020 at 10:29 AM

DS

“ Donald T Sullins lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Donald t Sullins - December 05, 2020 at 10:15 AM

DS

“ I JUST WENT TO SEE HIM LAST MONTH, HE IS PART OF WHO I AM TODAY, AND WILL BE UNTIL IM GONE, I LOVED THAT MAN, AN HE LOVED ME BACK, END OF STORY, IM JUST HAPPY BECAUSE I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE HE WENT, AN THEY ARE BACK TOGETHER 4 ETERNITY NOW, LOVE U ALL VERY MUCH, I BET OL HAMPTONS HAPPT TO SEE HIM AGAIN TOO!!!! BE SAFE, TEDDY SULLINS

Donald t Sullins - December 05, 2020 at 10:15 AM

FW

“ Mr bill bearden was great teacher to all his students

Freddie Weston - December 04, 2020 at 11:07 AM

MH

“ Mike Hames lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Mike Hames - December 04, 2020 at 08:21 AM

GM

“ I was one of many students of Mr. “B” ... This is what he preferred us to call him. He was truly a teacher that loved and knew how to connect with his students. Rest In Peace “BIG MAN”

Galian Murphy

Galian Murphy - December 04, 2020 at 06:49 AM

Brenda Brewer

“ Brenda Brewer lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Brenda Brewer - December 03, 2020 at 05:35 PM

PB

“ Patricia M Behn lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Patricia M Behn - December 03, 2020 at 12:40 PM

PR

“ *Mr Bearden was my teacher my junior & senior year. My senior year I was in his class then I was his aid. My fondest memory out of so many was out trip to Kansas City Kansas he took us to watch the Kansas City chiefs play football Reba Was the half time show. I wasn't feeling to good but he wanted to take us to his favorite steak house so I sucked it up & went with them and I'm so glad I did because as usual he was right they had the best steaks ever. He never failed to make sure where ever we went we had a great time. He was my favorite teacher & will truly be missed. God has a wonderful angel with a heart of gold. 💔*

Patty Reed - December 03, 2020 at 08:42 AM

SW

“ *Shirley Whitaker lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Shirley Whitaker - December 03, 2020 at 05:43 AM

CM

“ *Although I never had Mr. Bearden as a teacher, my brother Rusty did and he would bring him up often throughout the years. He had a huge impact on his life. After Rusty got sick we kept planning on a short road trip back home, he had a list of special people he wanted to see....Mr Bearden was number one on the list as we would be going past his house first. Any time we would pass by he would say, "Sis, I have to take the time to stop soon"...."soon" didnt come soon enough. Just wanted his family to know, Mr Bearden was always at the top of Rustys list till the end. On behalf of my family, the McCarts, our prayers are with you all.*

Cheryl McCart - December 03, 2020 at 01:46 AM

CG

“ *MR. B. Was one of Okmulgee Finest and sweetest teachers. Sending Prayers for his family*



CGolighty - December 02, 2020 at 11:09 PM

JH

“ *Bill was a great example for all his students.*

joy Henderson-Brehm - December 02, 2020 at 10:53 AM



“ *Carla Ryals lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Carla Ryals - December 01, 2020 at 09:55 PM

RH

“ *Ron Hammock lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Ron Hammock - December 01, 2020 at 08:09 PM

JP

“ *Jim Pilkington lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Jim Pilkington - December 01, 2020 at 07:49 PM



“ *Kathy Rogers lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Kathy Rogers - December 01, 2020 at 05:39 PM

CS

“ *Carol A Smith lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



Carol A Smith - December 01, 2020 at 03:42 PM

DM

“ *David Miller lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.*



david miller - December 01, 2020 at 02:40 PM

JB

“ Jack & Bryn Boatman lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Jack & Bryn Boatman - December 01, 2020 at 02:18 PM



“ Mary Zinno lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Mary Zinno - December 01, 2020 at 01:45 PM

J-

“ Joy Henderson -brehm lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



joy henderson -brehm - December 01, 2020 at 10:50 AM

PS

“ Paula Sowder lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Paula Sowder - December 01, 2020 at 09:28 AM

TC

“ Prayers for your peace through this difficult time. I remember so well all of the fruit baskets at Christmas tim. The work he did for community youth. He will be missed.



Tim Craighton - December 01, 2020 at 08:08 AM



“ Steven Sanders lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Steven Sanders - December 01, 2020 at 06:45 AM

CR

“ Connie Reed lit a candle in memory of William Vernon Bearden Sr.



Connie Reed - November 30, 2020 at 09:29 PM