



William R. 'Bill' Jester

October 18, 1948 - June 2, 2010

William R. Jester of Springfield, passed away Wednesday, June 2nd, 2010.

He was born October 18th, 1948, in Bolivar to Oby and Nina Jester and quickly began weaving the fabric of his colorful life. Bills childhood experiences managing a paper route, painting houses, and helping at the family store, Jesters Gifts, shaped him early in life. After graduating from Bolivar High School in 1966, he attended Southwest Baptist University, earning a Bachelors Degree in Speech and Debate. He also completed graduate hours from Central Missouri State University and the University of Oklahoma. A natural for writing, speech, and performance, he won many awards for debate, oral interpretation, and humor. Bill was known to spontaneously recite his favorite works from Shakespeare, Frost, and Twain.

Though he earned his degree from SBU, Bill always felt his best education came from working for the Roberts Family of Bill Roberts Chevrolet, particularly Agnes Roberts. Bill was a volunteer firefighter for 10 years with the Bolivar Fire Department. He served in the Missouri Army National Guard and combined this position with his firefighting experience during the 1975 Kansas City Firefighters Union strike. This was an exciting time in Bills life from which he gained many skills he would use far into the future.

Making no little plans, he was the Vice President for Admissions and Financial

Assistance of SBU from 1971 to 1979, which began his interest in fundraising. In 1979, Bill founded Resource Development, Inc., a financial consulting firm, that raised and developed more than \$1.5 billion in capital and endowment projects for non-profit organizations, both nationally and internationally. Some of his clients included Drury University, Baptist Bible College, The Moody Bible Institute, Star of Hope, College of St. Mary, David Rockefeller organizations, Norman Vincent Peales Center for Christian Living, American Bible Society, Prison Fellowship Ministries, Missouri Baptist Childrens Home, The Gospel Union Rescue Mission in Los Angeles, Florida Orchestra, and the St. Louis Symphony, among many others.

In 1989, Bill expanded RDI into the real estate market, changing the face of Springfield. His vision became a reality and the goal of constructing and renovating buildings that would stand long into the future was gratifyingly successful. These buildings and subdivisions included The Edgewood, Georgetown Square I & II, Governors Row, Richmond on Primrose, Eagles Gate, Town Center Plaza, Town and Country, Tuscany Court, The Secret Garden and Key Largo, French Quarter Plaza, Battlefield Towers, Charleston Crescent, Savannah Square, and more. Additionally, he opened Chardonnay restaurant in 2001, which earned awards for outdoor dining and ambiance.

By taking the road less traveled, Bill was honored with many awards throughout his life. SBU honored him with a Life Service Award in 1990 and Bolivar High School honored Bill with the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1998. He was responsible for the completion of the Jester Learning and Performance Center at SBU in 2002. Most recently, he was nominated for the Innovator of the Year award in 2008 by the Springfield Business Journal.

Above all, Bill loved his family and friends. He had a unique knack for sharing stories and jokes, which were always humorous, exciting, or moving. His

diversity was reflected in his hobbies: cooking and barbeque, motorcycles and boats, bulldozers and tractors, reading and art, music and travel, time in nature, planting trees, building rock walls, travel around the world, and kites. Bills huge heart, positive thinking, and love of people made him a mentor and inspiration to many.

He married Nancy (Hebbert) Jester in 1975, with whom he shared 29 years of partnership both personally and professionally. They brought two daughters, Jennifer and Cristen, into the world and he continually encouraged his girls to follow their hearts and be true to themselves. Bill always did his best to gift his daughters with opportunities and experiences that continue to touch their lives. He was later united in marriage with Brooke (Bennett) Jester in 2008 and enjoyed celebrating holidays and events with her family.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife, Brooke; children Jennifer Jester of Baltimore, MD, and Cristen Jester of Asheville, NC; brother Robert Jester and wife, Emilie, of Kansas City, and AFS Exchange brother Neville Muir and wife, Lill, of Melbourne, Australia. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and family, who savored his laughter, compassion, and cooking. They will continue telling his jokes and stories with fervor and passion.

Visitation is Friday, June 4th, 2010 from 5 pm to 7 pm, in Butler Funeral Home Chapel, 407 E. Broadway, Bolivar, Mo 65613. Services are at 10 am on Saturday, June 5th, 2010 in Butler Funeral Home Chapel in Bolivar. Burial is at Greenwood Cemetery in Bolivar with full military honors conducted by the V.F.W. Post #5525 Honor Guard at Stockton, MO.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Neville Muirs organization, Deaf Ministries International, (www.deafmin.org) which serves the deaf community

in Asia, Africa, and South America in care of Butler Funeral Home 407 E.
Broadway, Bolivar, Mo. 65613.

Friends may sign the guest book or send private condolences at www.butlerfuneralhome.com

One Man In His Time Plays Many Parts
- Shakespeare

PDF Printable Version

Tribute Wall



“ *William R. 'Bill' Jester*

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ *William R. 'Bill' Jester*

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ *Bill was a wonderful man and meant the world to us. He was a friend, a mentor and just an all around great guy. Bill was very compassionate about everything he did and would never allow anyone to tell him it could not be done. He cared a great deal for all humanity and would do anything for anyone, no matter what. We feel extremely fortunate to have known him, how lucky we are! He loved his girls dearly and was so proud of all you both have accomplished. He gave us a lot of advice and direction when we were newly married and we have carried that with us the past 15 years. Rest in peace Bill. You will be missed by so many that loved you.*

Tiara and Todd Slack - June 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ It is with great sadness that I heard of the passing of Bill Jester. I was the president of a small medical software company in Springfield when I met Bill. I was looking for a good location that could help my business grow. We didn't have the money we should have had to make such a move, but Bill saw something in me & the organization, took a chance, and gave us the opportunity to occupy one of his fine buildings. His kindness and faith in us had a profound effect on our business, and as a result, on the many employees we had, their families, and the businesses we supported. And while I haven't spoken with Bill in years, I'm often reminded of his faith in me and try to pass it on to others whenever I can. My condolences to his family for their loss, and I am glad that I had the privilege to know him.

James D. Benson - June 09, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I am very sorry that I could not attend the services and personally convey my condolences. Bill was a wonderful man who will long be remembered for his humor, kindness, generosity and entrepreneurial spirit.

Janis Cable - June 07, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ Bill Jester was a remarkably talented man whose friendship was truly a gift.

Dan Lambert - June 06, 2010 at 12:00 AM

GR

“ *My Sincere Sympathy to Bill's Family, Robert & Family, and to Neville & family.*

George

George Robertson - June 06, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JP

“ *Our sympathies go out to your family during this difficult time. We enjoyed our conversations with Bill when he would come in to our restaurant.*

John, Susan and Joe and staff @ WannaGetta Pizza - June 06, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CD

“ *Dear Jester Ladies, I know that Bill was a force in so many peoples lives and none more so than you. In this time of grieving, my heart goes out to you all and my prayer is that you are all cared for and comforted by the spirit.*

Om, Peace, Amen,

Chris

Christopher Dudley - June 05, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RC

“ *I'm so sorry for your family's loss.*

Rosemary Woolman Cantrell - June 05, 2010 at 12:00 AM

HS

“ *Our hearts go out to the family. We pray God's comfort and blessings on all who grieve his passing.*

Hugh and Twila Smith - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ Brooke, I offer my condolences. He was a special guy and he sure thought you were special .

Sandra Harrison
Gamble's Gift Gallery

Sandra Harrison - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ Jennifer, and Cristen, it is with extreme sadness that I read about your dad. We lost him at far too young an age. I always enjoyed listening to his highlights of his work and he loved telling me about your accomplishments. He was truly talented

Sandra Harrison
Former Counselor, Kickapoo High School.

Sandra Harrison - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ William R. 'Bill' Jester

Josh and Laura Compton - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DT

“ I was very saddened to hear the news, deepest sympathies for your loss.

Dana Tucker - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TH

“ Garges and I wish to extend our deepest sympathies to Billy's entire family. The stories and memories will go on forever and ever. We will miss you Billy!

Toni Henry - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JA

“*Regretfully, due to a travel obligation I am unable to pay my respects in person to Bill's family: I have fond memories of many good times shared together with our mutual friends and I shall miss him. Rest in Peace, Bill, and my deepest condolences to the family.*

John Appelquist - June 04, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JS

“*Please know of our thoughts and prayers for you at this time of loss. Bill was a good friend and a talented leader, a gifted fundraiser and inspiring team leader. May the Lord bring comfort and grace to all the friends and family.*

James Smith

President

Missouri Baptist Foundation

James R. Smith - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JP

“ Bill was a great friend first and foremost and he was also my mentor. Over the years Bill has provided my family with many opportunities and for that, we are forever thankful.

I had the pleasure of working for Bill both at Chardonnay and at RDI. I can honestly say that I have never met a man with such a loving and giving spirit. He inspired everyone around him to reach their fullest potential and sought to provide them with the means to do so. He taught me so many important life lessons and provided countless laughs and entertainment along the way.

Bill, you will be sorely missed and our thoughts and prayers go out to all those that are mourning your passing. Especially your daughters Jennifer and Cristen. Your legacy of love and compassion is in good hands. RIP Bill

Jeremy & Kathryn Parsons - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

RW

“ Jackie and I extend our deepest condolences to all of the Jester family. We enjoyed the time spent with Bill and are so very glad to have had the privilege of knowing him. We will always cherish his memory.

Rollo A. Watkins - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ My deepest sympathies go out to the Jester family, Bill was an amazing man with a big heart. I worked for Bill at Chardonnay for almost 3 years and was very touched by his generosity and compassion for others. He gave me my first professional opportunity in the "real" world and I cannot thank him enough for that. He will be greatly missed by many. God bless

Matt Bekebrede - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SP

“ We are grateful for the life of Bill Jester and his contribution to the faith and the work of The Baptist Home for the elderly. Our condolences and prayers are with his family and friends during a time of great loss.

Steven R. Jones, President - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SJ

“ It is with sincere sorrow that I learned of the death of my friend and PKD speech colleague of many years ago. A very charming and articulate man, I fondly recall the forensic trips we took in the late 1960's at SBU. He was an amazing after dinner speaker.

Sandy McDonald Jones - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ My son, Greg Hays, worked for Bill at Chardonnay. Greg has special needs, and Bill was a huge support to Greg. Bill was so good to Greg. Greg works at Price Cutter on S. National and is very successful. Bill had a huge impact both with work ethic and motivation for him. Greg thinks the world of Bill. I want the family to know that I (and my family) truly appreciate everything Bill did for Greg and all the people he worked with and worked for him. Greg will be deeply saddened. Our sympathy to the family. Have peace in knowing we all care.

Cathy Sifferman - June 03, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ *To the family of Bill Jester:*

In 1992 my first job was with RDI in Springfield MO where I continued my employment (4) years. During this time I had the opportunity to be involved with a vast majority of the national organizations and local construction projects. I had the most respect for him. Bill was a rare individual and employer. He loved his family, friends, and work and often talked about his beautiful daughters Jennifer and Cristen and was so proud. My husband and I stayed in contact with Bill for years long after my employment. He will be dearly missed.

Sherri Bollinger - June 02, 2010 at 12:00 AM