



## William A. Richards

October 30, 1922 - October 11, 2023

William A. Richards, age 100, of Tequesta, FL and Bourbonnais, passed away peacefully on October 11, 2023 at Ascension Heritage Village in Kankakee. He was born October 30, 1922 in Aurora, Illinois, the son of William W. & Ethel Reynolds Richards. Bill obtained his schooling there and then entered Northwestern University prior to being called to active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps after the National Emergency was declared. He served in the Marine Corps during World War II for five and one-half years, twenty-nine months of which service was in the South Pacific Theater. He was honorably discharged as a Sergeant Major in October of 1945.

After the war he worked in a family owned bank in LaSalle County, Illinois for ten years during which time he attended the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin where he graduated in 1952. He joined the First Trust & Savings Bank, Kankakee in 1955 as Auditor and proceeded to ascend to the Presidency in 1977.

During those years he served with the Chamber of Commerce as Treasurer and as Chairman of the Tax Committee of the Industrial Development Commission; as President and Director of the Kankakee County Community Chest as it was known in those days, which service included the heading up of an annual fund drive in 1964; as Vice Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the Kankakee County Bicentennial Commission; as Treasurer of the Kankakee County Community Services Council, a Community Chest function at that time; a member of the Advisory Panel for the Young Women's

Christian Association; a member of the official board and as Treasurer of First Methodist Church now known as Asbury United Methodist Church; Vice Chairman of Kankakee County 1968 Crusade of the American Cancer Society; the City of Kankakee Parking Commission; participated in the establishment of a Visiting Nurses Chapter; as Director and Treasurer of the Frederic C. Hamilton Foundation for Blind Children; President of the James J. Mullen Foundation; and with the American Legion for over 70 years. He was instrumental in establishing and served as Chairman of Electronic Funds Illinois, a forerunner to the sharing of ATM transactions between Illinois banks which eventually led to the use of bank cards electronically for many other purposes.

He resigned from First Trust & Savings as President and Director in 1983 to join the Corporate Headquarters of Midwest Financial Group located in Peoria, Illinois as Vice President. Midwest Financial Group was established by First Trust & Savings as well as twelve other Illinois banks which originally comprised the holding company. While with the holding company he was given the responsibility for forming Midwest Financial Data Services Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of MFG, where he served as President until his retirement in 1986. The company was established to perform full computer services for the participating banks in the holding company as well as computer processing for more than 100 correspondent banks then being serviced by various member banks.

Bill also served as chairman of Riverside Medical Center's Oakside Corporation, the board of Westwood Oaks Senior Living Center and the Investment Review Committee for Oakside and Westwood Oaks. From 1979-1981 he was chairman of the Cultivation Subcommittee for Riverside Foundation. He also served on the Pro-Am Golf Committee at its inception in 1978 and served three years as Chairman.

After Bill's retirement he and Rita enjoyed life in Florida and all it had to offer. He'd always been an avid golfer and they played at Turtle Creek Club in Tequesta Florida, where he was elected treasurer and also in Kankakee at the

Kankakee Country Club where he served as President in 1976. They traveled extensively and made many happy memories.

Bill is survived by his loving wife of 39 years, Rita Ennen Richards of Tequesta, FL and Bourbonnais; his two children, Patricia Richards (Bill Nichols) of Salt Lake City, UT and Barbara (Steve) Moore of Asheville, NC, and one niece, Mary Jane Wilgus.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents; Bernice Whitney Richards, his wife and the mother of his two daughters who passed away on November 29, 1979; and one brother, Robert Richards.

Per Bill's wishes, there will be no public visitation. Private family services will be held and private entombment with military honors will be held at Mound Grove Mausoleum.

Memorials may be made in Bill's name to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Mayo Clinic Research, or Riverside Medical Center of Kankakee.

Bill was a wonderful example of the "Greatest Generation", living a life of accomplishment, service, love and friendship. We love and honor his life and will miss him greatly.

Arrangements by Schreffler Funeral Homes.

# Cemetery Details

## **Mound Grove Gardens of Memory**

1000 N Greenwood  
Kankakee, IL 60901

# Tribute Wall

JP

“ Rita, George and I are very sorry to hear of Bill's death, and pray he is resting in peace. Pat and Barbara, we mourn for you the loss of your dad. Pat, this old French teacher would love to hear from you, so hope the email herein provided will help that happen!

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**Jane H. Potter** - January 05, 2024 at 07:59 PM

JP

“ It's late in the "day" for this, but I want to assure Patricia and Barbara that I am sorry for their loss in their dad's passing. May he rest in peace....

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**Jane Potter** - December 16, 2023 at 10:48 AM

ST

“ Love you, Bill. I will cherish fond memories of the good times you, Rita, David and I had together. Love the thought of your agreeing to dress in some silly costume for special golf tournaments at the club. (They don't do that anymore.) Or when you and Rita came to visit us at the island in the St. Lawrence -- the the joy of watching you race the four-wheeler on the airstrip, wet jet-ski rides, and just being a great sport. We will all miss you, but I know you are continuing to bless and be blessed!

With love,  
Shirley

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**Shirley Taylor** - October 30, 2023 at 11:38 AM

DT

“ I knew Bill for approximately 30 years, being a member of Turtle Creek Club from. 1994 to the present. Bill and Rita became instant friends and we shared stories about our Marine Corps careers, although mine was several wars later. We went on several vacations together and played a lot of golf. One thing I can say about Bill is that he was the consummate gentleman and one from whom much could be learned. What a tremendous role model for anyone who ever met him. Although older than I by about a generation, I looked to him almost like an older cousin. He was the epitome of "Speak softly and carry a big stick" But you never saw the stick. His knowledge, kindness and experience in life were all he needed. GodSpeed to you Fellow Marine. Semper Fidelis.

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**David Taylor** - October 24, 2023 at 01:50 PM

FC

“ Rita, I'm so sorry for your loss. I was so surprised to read about all of Bill's accomplishments. You really kept it a secret.

*Fr. Don Wehnert, CSV*

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**Fr. Don Wehnert CSV** - October 21, 2023 at 09:02 PM

MP

“ Pat, My sincere sympathy to you and your family. I often heard of the wonderful support your father gave to First Methodist (Asbury United Methodist) and, particularly, the Music Department. You and I shared many hours as teenagers rehearsing and singing with the Girls' Sextet. I'm very thankful for all the help your father provided to that important part of the church! Many, many people benefited from it within the church as well as the community.

*Melody Buser Paolinetti*

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**Melody L Paolinetti** - October 20, 2023 at 06:46 PM

PR

*Thank you, Melody. Until I read the obituary, which he mostly wrote several years ago, I had no idea of all he did! He was very quiet about it. I do remember the Girls Sextet and often think of that experience and how it prepared me for years of enjoyment of classical and sacred music. I hope all is well with you and your loved ones.*

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**pat Richards** - October 23, 2023 at 10:10 AM

KR

“ *Rita, we are so sorry for your loss. We thought Bill was a very nice man and am so happy you had so many years together. Kenny was always so impressed with Bill's military service. He says Bill was the highest ranking officer that he knew personally. Our prayers and thoughts are with you at this time. God bless you.*

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**Kenny & Martha Redeker** - October 19, 2023 at 10:02 AM

LG

“ *My brother AJ, I and other Westwood kids were too young to know him well, but he was always kind to us. We spend hours in his buckeye tree, pulling them off the branches and slamming them onto the driveway to break them open to collect the nuts inside. We must have made quite a mess but he would just wave and smile when he arrived home to see us up in that tree. It's wonderful to read about his service and accomplishments - thanks for sharing that with everyone. I'm happy to see he lived a very long and happy life.*

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**Linda Graveline** - October 18, 2023 at 01:15 PM

KB

“ *Mr. Richards was always so incredibly nice to me and everyone at the Kankakee Country Club golf staff. My father, Wayne, had very high regard and great respect for him as well. Wishing the family peace and the hopes of great memories while recalling the wonderful times shared with him.*

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**Kevin Boudreau** - October 18, 2023 at 10:10 AM

JP

“ *Rita and Pat and Barbara - George and I are so very sorry for your loss, and pray for your peace as Bill enjoys eternal peace.... Pat, I would LOVE to hear from you if you care to "connect." We now live in Richland, WA and you can reach me at my email below. God bless you all. Rest in Peace, Bill!*

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**Jane H. Potter** - October 17, 2023 at 09:26 PM

PR

*Jane (and George), thank you so much for your kind thoughts. Dad lived a long and happy life and was In amazing good health until just a couple of years ago. Pretty amazing actually. I would love to catch up— your email doesn't show on the post. Mine is prichar3@gmail.com. My husband is from Seattle so we are somewhat familiar with your current home.*

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**pat Richards** - October 23, 2023 at 10:18 AM