

Lewis R. Williams, Jr.

A private family service was held December 18 for Lewis R. Williams, Jr., who died December 16, 2012 in Albany, OR, due to an age-related illness. He was 87 years old. He was laid to rest at Sunset Cemetery in Coos Bay, OR.

He was born in Paw Paw, MI, to Lewis R. and Hazel (Giddings) Williams on April 26, 1925. As a child Lew was known as "Bill" to differentiate between his father and himself.

Lew grew up in Paw Paw and graduated from Paw Paw High School. He was called to duty by the U.S. Army his senior year in 1943. He served basic training and some of his college education before being deployed to Europe in October of 1944. He was in the 501st Field Artillery Battalion and the 14th Armored Division of the Army. His division was responsible for entering Germany from the Alsace Provence in Southern France crossing over Hitler's Siegfried Line. The 14th Armored Division was nicknamed "The Liberators" for their part in freeing prisoners of war.

Lew returned to the United States in January of 1946. He entered college at the University of Michigan. He met his wife of 41 years, Jeanette "Jenny" Sprung and they were married in 1950. He received his Juris Doctorate in 1951 and began his family. Jenny died of cancer in 1991.



Lew practiced law for a number of years in Michigan, and in 1969 moved his family to Oregon. He became a title examiner and worked in the title insurance business for the next 30 years until retiring in 1990. While living in Coos Bay, he worked for Transamerica Title Insurance until 1980, when Lew and Jenny moved to Albany and he worked for title insurance companies in Albany, OR, and Stevenson, WA.

Lew enjoyed music most of his life. As a child he began playing the violin, piano and singing in the church choir. In high school he was his band's drum major and attended the National Music Camp at Interlochen. At the University of Michigan he was a member of the University Choral Union. He directed the choir for the Coos Bay Presbyterian Church for several years and conducted a couple performances of Handel's "Messiah."

Lew had a yearly Christmas tradition that his family sit and listen to an old 78 record of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" on Christmas Eve. Lew took his family on numerous camping trips around Oregon. He especially enjoyed camping up the McKenzie River. Other favorites and traditions for him were his newspapers, Time magazine, his peanut butter and strawberry jam sandwiches for lunch, and his one martini at 5:30 p.m.

Lew is survived by his seven children: daughters Barb Wilson and partner Mary Vance of Corvallis, Pam Williams of Portland, OR, Sandy Reiber and husband Larry of Coos Bay, OR, sons Hal Williams and wife Della of Eugene, OR, Tim Williams and wife Joann of Bellevue, WA, Karl Williams and wife Gail of Allen, TX, and Marc Williams and wife Tracy of Portland, OR; his 13 grandchildren, and his eight great-grandchildren. He is also survived by one sister, Nancy Buskirk of Haines City, FL; and two nieces and one nephew.

Preceding him in death were his wife, his parents and his sister from his childhood, Elizabeth. Any contributions in his memory may be made to the music organization of your choice.

Note: Lew was also the Scoutmaster of my Boy Scout Troop 65 in Paw Paw, and led the Troop for several years in an outstanding manner through many camping trips and other Fruit Belt Council scouting activities.

-Dan Smith, PPWP