

# WILLIAM J. JONES

January 29, 1926-January 24, 2025



William J. "Bill" Jones, husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, went into the arms of the Lord in his sleep, five days before his 99th birthday. He is survived by his loving wife of 77 years, Betty Rose (Zillweger) Jones; daughter, Susan Lynn (Daniel) Boeh, Calabash, North Carolina; son, Thomas William (Donna) Jones, Spring, Texas; son, William Alphonse (Tammy) Jones, Gibsonia, PA; eleven grandchildren; and

sixteen great-grandchildren.

Bill was born to William I. and Marcie R. Jones in Lawrenceville, PA, as the youngest of five children and the only boy. He attended seven schools during his early years, as the family moved households in the Pittsburgh area. Bill graduated from Etna High School in 1944. World War II intervened, and Bill enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp, although he almost didn't qualify. He was told by the Army recruiter to "go eat five pounds of bananas" to help him make the weight requirement minimum. His diminutive size and weight, however, gave him an "advantage" to be a tail gunner on a B-17 aircraft. Bill remembered nighttime parachute training, from which he developed a new level of courage. He had trained at various U.S. bases when the war ended. Bill never saw action, but he was proud of his service to his country. After the war, Bill extended his education in the Stenotype Business College.

Music was a part of Bill's soul. He started playing a bugle before first grade. He remembered it as a "shiny, silver Christmas present that brought tears to my eyes." Bill played trumpet in school concerts, the Jimmy Kennedy Swing Band, and even in the Army Air Corp as part of the Field Marching Band. He co-wrote and published several pop songs in the 1950s, and sang in the church choir. Bill projected his love of music to his children, who adopted their own musical instruments and tastes.

Music also introduced him to the love of his life, Betty Rose Zillweger, who was "the pretty girl" he met at a local dance. Dancing to music was the start of a courtship and marriage that has lasted an extraordinary 77 plus years! Betty Rose, at the age of 96, continues as the matriarch of the U.S. Zillweger family, that stretches from Pennsylvania to Arizona. There is an extended Zillweger family in the home country of Switzerland.

Throughout his career, Bill was a salesman of various products with the William T. Leggett Company, and executive with C.C. Dodd Bank Building Company and Pittsburgh Safe and Lock Company. In "retirement," Bill established William Jones and Associates, selling safes, and worked at Manor House Kitchens. Bill volunteered for years at Passavant Hospital.

The family thanks the staff at St. Barnabas for their care and commitment during our Father's retirement, both independent and assisted, as well as their continued care and commitment to our mother during her independent retirement. We thank Pastor Kari Smail of Saint John's Lutheran Church of Highland for her ministry, and continued support of our parents. Our mother and father have been members of St. John's since the late 1950s. Finally, we thank the Veterans Administration, Butler, PA, for their active participation and care in support of our father's social and medical needs.

We will miss Bill, dad, pap, and pal, for his love, hard work, wit, and cheery disposition. His impact on the family will be felt for years to come. We feel lucky that we had him around for nearly 99 years.

Visitation will be held at **SIMONS FUNERAL HOME**, 7720 Perry Highway, Pittsburgh 15237, on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, from 1:00-3:00 PM and 6:00-8:00 PM. A service will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church of Highland, 311 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh 15237 on Thursday, January 30, 2025, from 11:00 AM-12:00 PM, with a social gathering and luncheon after the service. Donations can be made to Saint John's Lutheran Church of Highland, Easter Seals of Western and Central Pennsylvania, or one of many Veterans organizations in the memory of Bill.

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