



William M Hamilton

February 17, 1928 - January 29, 2014

William M. "Bill" Hamilton, 85, passed away on January 29th, 2014, after an extended illness.

Bill's full and active life included a career as an attorney and judge. He also gave of himself as a father, coach and teacher. He was a passionate and articulate lawyer who fought for his clients, often taking on the causes of the underprivileged.

He was born in 1928 to William M. Hamilton, Sr. and Amanda (Crace) Hamilton in Cougar Ranch on Badger Mountain. He was the youngest child in a large family of seven sisters and one brother. The Hamilton's were a pioneering family with Kentucky roots who settled in the Wenatchee Valley. Bill's early life was filled with hard work on cattle ranches, sawmills and farms. He attended elementary school and junior high school in East Wenatchee. He then attended high school at Wenatchee High, graduating in 1946. Bill was one of the students living on the east side of the Columbia River known as "Bridge Walkers" as they crossed over the Columbia River bridge every day to get to school.

During his time at Wenatchee High School, Bill received mentoring and encouragement from a beloved debate teacher. His debate experiences gave him confidence and led him to consider a legal career.

Bill decided to serve in the Army and defer his educational plans. Determined to enlist, and in order to meet the minimum body weight, he placed weights under his towel as he stepped up on the Army's scales. Lean and conditioned

from hard work on the ranches, he excelled in the military and qualified for Jump school. He became an Airborne paratrooper, eventually fighting against the Japanese occupation at the end of WWII. His military experience left a deep impression on him and he proudly identified himself as an Army paratrooper for the rest of his life.

After an honorable discharge from the Army, Bill enrolled in Wenatchee Valley College. He transferred to Washington State College in Pullman and became a member of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity, serving as house manager. He completed a Bachelor's degree and entered law school at the University of Washington. He earned his way through school with janitorial work and other odd jobs, frequently working all night and attending classes during the day. During his summers in college, Bill worked as a smoke-jumper, using the parachuting skills he gained in the Army to fight forest fires.

After passing the Bar Exam, he moved back to East Wenatchee and started his law practice. He married Carolyn Margery "Carrie" Ellis in December of 1956. They made their home in East Wenatchee where they raised four children; Jeffery, Bruce, Gavin and Heather. The family lived in a large house looking out over the Columbia River. Nearby relatives, horses, orchards, barns and pets made the Old Rock Island Road property an ideal place for the family. Always close to the land and his ranching upbringing, Bill maintained several small orchard operations and passed along his own work ethic to his children who worked the cherries and apples.

Bill partnered with two other lawyers and formed a law practice in Wenatchee, "Hamilton, Lynch & Kuntz." He also served as Municipal Court Judge in East Wenatchee for some 15 years.

Bill and Carrie decided to semi-retire in the late 1980's. A longtime friend, Chuck Ward, had started a business in Carson City, Nevada, and they moved there to work with the new company. Bill was never far from the outdoors and while in Nevada, he volunteered to help build water collectors for bighorn sheep and other wildlife. He also judged and coached youth debate teams. Bill and Carrie returned to Wenatchee in 2001 and lived there amongst family

until Bill's recent passing.

Bill was a member of the East Wenatchee Baptist Church, a Charter Member of East Wenatchee Rotary Club and received the Rotary's "Paul Harris Fellow" award. He was also a member of the American Trial Lawyers Association and the Heritage Society. He was a passionate reader of history and politics and surrounded himself with books. His final years were graced with grandchildren and the household never lacked for pampered pets.

Bill will be remembered as a quick and energetic man who worked hard, ignored the limitations imposed by fear, and as a lifelong student of history. He constantly taught that any goal could be reached by toughness and effort. He loved baseball, Abraham Lincoln, history books, big dogs, sports cars and cowboy boots. Family meant everything to him and he saw himself as appointed to protect and nurture his kin.

He is preceded by his parents, a brother Donald Hamilton; sisters Leatha Niccum, Grace Burke, Dorothy Goldsmith, Sedalia Ulin, Frances Ulin, Jean Lolos and Edith Carstensen. A son, Gavin Robb Hamilton passed one year prior on the same date of January 29.

He leaves behind his wife of 57 years, Carolyn Hamilton, East Wenatchee; children Jeffery Hamilton of Sierra Madre, California; Bruce Hamilton, East Wenatchee; Heather (Tim) Breen, Wenatchee; Angelique (Brad) Sahnaw, Portland, Oregon. Also remaining are 12 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

You are invited to view his online guest book at: www.HeritageMemorialChapel.com . Memorial donations would be appreciated in his name to the Wenatchee Humane Society or American Cancer Society. A Memorial Service is planned for Saturday, February 15, 2014, 11:00am at the Eastmont Baptist Church, East Wenatchee. Arrangements are in the care of Heritage Memorial Chapel, East Wenatchee.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Mr. Hamilton was a huge help to my mother in a very difficult time in her/our lives. He was the only person to help and we all greatly appreciate his compassion and helpfulness during that time. He will be missed.* ”

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