

William "Bill" Ervin Mathis

August 2, 1931 ~ March 8, 2023

Dr. Mathis was one of my favorite people at Wichita State when I was a student over 40 years ago. He was always warm and friendly...but what was most respected was his great sense of decency. I respected him immensely.from the first time he interviewed me when I was seeking a graduate teaching assistant position in 1981. I returned to WSU to teach 8 years ago largely because of wonderful people like Dr. Mathis. He contacted me in the last year or so saying he didn't have all that long to live...but that he was very proud of what became of my career. I am so grateful for his mentorship and outstanding example. Rest In Peace, Dr. Mathis. With great sympathy and thanks, Alan Held Opera Singer Professor of Music and Director of Opera Wichita State University

- Alan Held

Such an amazing teacher and mentor. So thankful for what I learned from this brilliant and gracious man.

- Elaine Bernstorf

What a great and good man we have lost. Bill’s kindness and gentle sense of humor were a comfort and blessing to me personally and I will always remember his smile—and his music. At one point I had occasion to spend the night at Bill and Ann’s and when I awoke on Sunday morning the whole family was practicing for a musical number. I lay and listened, and I remember thinking, “Heaven cannot be lovelier than this.” Prayers for Ann, Bill Jr. and Marcy and your families. You are all greatly loved. Good-bye my friend, until we meet again.

- Sandra Petree

Bill and Ann were good friends to my part member parents in Wichita Kansas. Bill baptized me in our church when I was 8 years old. I had loving and caring parents, but he and Ann were role models to me of an LDS family, and marriage in the temple. Their son Bill spent time with me right after he returned from his mission, when I was hospitalized for several weeks, and Marci was my idol! She taught me how to be a cool preteen (like that’s even possible). I wrote Bill a letter a few years ago expressing my love and respect for him and my continued appreciation for baptizing me. He wrote back and said many kind things to me that I will treasure in my heart

forever.

- Lisa Johnson (Petree) Smiley

So grateful to have so many memorable memories of Uncle Bill! Prayers go out to his great Family. Love You guys

- Ed Johnson

Dr. William/Bill Mathis was a great friend and colleague at Wichita State University. Prior to becoming Dean of the College of Fine Arts, he served as my leader and Chair of Winds and Percussion. Later,Bill served magnificently as my Associate Dean of Fine Arts. He and his family are one of my/our favorite memories of life in Wichita. We shall miss Bill. With friendship and love to the family, Walter and Kaye Myers Dean Emeritus Wichita State University

- Dr. Walter Myers

On behalf of the Vern and Ione Clifford family - We are sending love and prayers at this time of loss.

- Denee' Clifford

Ann and Bill moved into my neighborhood over 20 years ago and became dear friends immediately. I never was in Bill's presence that he wasn't cheerful and sweet. I sang in our church choir when he was the director and he encouraged us to do our best and we loved him for it. He loved to quietly putter about the house and yard and put in a beautiful stone patio when in his 80s. I felt very sad when he lost his hearing because he no longer could enjoy the music he loved so much. I will always remember him as a very kind and thoughtful man who loved to do good.

- Sherry Zealley

Bill and Ann were our “Parents away from home” for the 5 years we lived in Wichita. How we loved them and appreciated their kindness and generosity. We still have the gingham picnic tablecloth that Ann made just for us. And Bill taught us how to have a proper Carbon County Picnic with a rusty old knife. Thank you for your love. Dave and Chris Heiner

- Dave and Christine Heiner

I highly respected and admired Bill, he was an amazing man. He devoted his life to his family and his love of music. I learned a great deal from him over the years and I enjoyed our conversations immensely. I remember clearly today when Bill showed me how to play my saxophone properly. It’s the little things we cherish and carry forward in our lives due to the love and generosity of others who truly cared. Bill truly cared personally about everyone. I loved Bill and I regarded him as a true friend, my best friend…more like a brother. I was just heartbroken when hearing of his passing. I’m grateful and comforted to have known him in his lifetime. I will miss him dearly every day. I lit a candle in his memory and asked our Lord to take him home and comfort him. My sincerest condolences to his wife, Ann and his beloved family. May perpetual light shine upon him.

- Mario and Shirley Lopez

I have such good memories of Bill and your wonderful family. Even when we know it's time, it is always sad to lose a loved one. Please know I am thinking of you, cherishing memories, and sending love.

- Rae Lee Bunnell

I was only 8 years old at the time, but I remember good ol' Uncle Louis kidding Ann when she announced her engagement. "You're gonna marry that piccolo player?" What a wonderful marriage it was. We all loved Bill, and we're gonna miss him.

- Bert Bunnell

Our family will be forever grateful for the influence Bill and Ann have had on our lives! We are particularly blessed that as next door neighbors on Nicklaus Road, our children inherited an extra set of grandparents. The Mathis' love and generosity with our children has been a blessing we will all cherish. We are thankful for the memories made and the stories we continue to share about "Brother Mathis and the Other Brother Mathis." We will have a special toast to Bill with nothing other than "Bill's concoction." We love you and are grateful for our knowledge of the plan of salvation!

- Travis Anderson

Uncle Bill had many wonderful titles to the family, church, friends and co-workers but to me he was one of the best uncles anyone could have had. I do not ever remember seeing uncle Bill without a beautiful-peaceful smile. Scofield is a magical place for our family and the memories of Bill's campfire storytelling will stay with me forever. My favorite story is when he got the name BUCKET HEAD and how proud he was when he received that nickname from the Bunnell brothers. Uncle Bill showed us how important and how easy it was to tend and love your family. Even in his later years he showed us that you keep moving forward. The most impressive example I can think of is when he was in his 80's he installed (by himself) a beautiful rock patio. It took him a while but he kept on plugging along until it was completed. I am sorry that I cannot be there to provide my support and love to the Mathis family. This will be my first family service that I will miss. He lived a great long life and I am proud to be a part of it. Uncle Bill will stay in our hearts forever. My prayers go out to my Aunt Ann, Cousin Marcy & Bill along with their spouses, kids and grandkids

- Cecilia Bunnell

I always loved crossing paths with Ann and Bill. No matter how long the interval, it was always as if we had seen each other yesterday. Bill was such an amiable man, he'll surely be missed by everyone who loved him.

- Jim Bunnell

One memory of my cousin, Bill, goes back some 80 years to a day on the Price River that ran through the bottom of the farm outside of Price. He, John, his brother and I were skinny dipping. A large, what to me as a city kid seemed about the size of a tennis ball, horse fly started buzzing around us. We ran for protection in the river and jumped in to escape. I landed on a sharp rock and cut my foot. As an eight year old kid I was sure I was going to bleed to death. Cousin Bill put me piggyback style on his back and carried me from the river to the house, muttering all time, "How am I going to face Uncle Ivan (my dad)." Bill wasn't worried about my "fatal" wound as much as he was about facing Uncle Ivan. Needless to say, I survived my "fatal" injury and Bill survived the wrath of Uncle Ivan.

- I John Mathis Jr.

So sorry to hear about Uncle Bills passing. I have so many fond memories of him. Some of my earliest memories were a trip we took to Witchita Kansas as a young boy. There were all the Scofield trips. Uncle Bill was always so kind and pleasant to be around he will be greatly missed.

- John Powell

Travis, Abbie, Jessie, Ellie, Josh, and I (and I'm pretty sure our Jake too!) send our sincere love and gratitude to Bill and Ann Mathis. They were the BEST next door neighbors anyone could ask for. They were serving a mission for our church at the time we moved in and I remember writing them a letter to introduce ourselves. Then when they returned home, we all just bonded immediately. They took in our family as an extension of their own. The basketball hoop in their driveway was often utilized by our kids and we'd enjoy dinners together. They'd even tend our children from time to time to give Trav and myself a night out and care for our kids with games and pizza and "Grandpa's concoction"! We all loved everything about them. I also loved singing in the ward choir when he was directing us. They were there for us when our Jake died and exemplified faith and trust in God's plans for our lives. Bill would always show special interest in each of us whenever we got to visit. He would take time to ask question and hear about our lives collectively and individually. His goodness, gentleness, and example will always inspire me. We love you Bill!

- Tricia Anderson

I had the privilege of serving as a piano professor and keyboard coordinator under Bill at Wichita State University between 1975-1980. His leadership of Performance was at all times highly supportive, helpful and fair. Bev and I were also most fortunate to live right next door to Bill and Ann, where two of our children (Greg and Bryn) were good school friends with Bill Jr. and Marcy. Bill was one of the finest leaders I have had in my lengthy university career, and as neighbors, we have a long stack of very special memories. Our sincere thanks and sympathies to Ann, Bill Jr. and Marcy, as well as to every member of his extended family.

- Prof. Robert Hamilton