

Bill W. Bosgraaf

August 2, 1949 ~ December 2, 2023

Bill W. Bosgraaf (a.k.a. “Mr. Utah Soccer”) passed away on December 1, 2023, after a battle with prostate cancer. He was 74 years old.

Bill was born to Sjoerd Bosgraaf and Helene Veenstra Bosgraaf in Groningen, Netherlands, on August 2, 1949. He had a magical childhood growing up in Groningen, living above his Oma and Opa’s bar and sharing a room with his parents. The family moved to their own home when he was 6 years of age, and this is when he was introduced to the game of football (soccer). Bill loved riding his bike to his soccer club where he played and learned the game.

In 1964, his parents moved Bill and his sister, Janet, to the United States to live the American dream. They settled in Utah, where Bill attended South High School and excelled in math and German and also on the soccer field. He consistently received A’s and was selected to the Utah high school all-state team three years in a row.

While a senior in high school, he met Ginger Weeks and the two of them were married shortly thereafter. Together they had five children: Candice, Jennifer, Stephanie, Wendy, and his favorite, Jeff. They raised their family in Murray, Taylorsville, and Cottonwood Heights. They spent a lot of weekends at the soccer field, and every summer they went to southern California, where Bill enjoyed the rides and rollercoasters more than the kids did. His true character as a joyful, playful, and fun-loving father, grandpa, and uncle always shone through during these moments. Bill was known by his grandkids for his constant horsing around and notorious teasing. He loved having heartfelt conversations with them—sometimes lasting into the early hours—about all the great things they had going on in their lives.

During his life, Bill worked at Mayfair Grocery, 7-11, KFC (for one day), Longyear, Christensen Diamond, Pan World Minerals, and the Utah Soccer Association.

While managing his career and family, Bill also served in many volunteer capacities within the soccer community over the past 50 years. His largest and most visible contribution was serving as president of the Utah Soccer Association since 1986. Among Bill’s many contributions, he helped pave the way for soccer to become a sanctioned sport in Utah high schools and served as the commissioner for the Utah High School Soccer Association from 1970-1982. To bring in additional income for his family, Bill refereed on nights and weekends and earned his grade 5 referee badge. He was also heavily involved with the United States Adult Soccer Association and served in many capacities, including vice president, regional director, and select program chairman. He was proud of his million-miler status as he traveled around the world as head of delegation for various U.S. national teams. Bill loved the Delta Crown Room and flying first class, and he would call his kids to rub it in. He is a Life Member of the United States Soccer Federation as well as a Hall of Fame inductee of USASA, Utah Soccer, and WPSL.

Whether going to the beach or flying back home to the Netherlands, he was always looking forward to the next trip. He loved spending time with his relatives back in the “old country” and cherished his renewed connections with his cousins. He made many lifelong friends and loved planning trips that brought his soccer family together.

Bill fought his battle against prostate cancer for three long years. Despite spending much of that time at the Huntsman Cancer Institute and the University of Utah Hospital, he never lost his sense of humor. Throughout his entire journey, he consistently cracked jokes with his doctors, nurses, and hospital staff. He had a great ability to make others laugh with inappropriate jokes and constant razzing. We would like to thank the Huntsman Cancer Institute and University of Utah Hospital for their excellent care of our father and giving us far more time with him than expected. (If you are a male over 40, do yourself and your family a favor by having routine prostate exams. Our father could still be with us if he had done that.)

Our father was kind, patient, gentle, yet stubborn to the very end. To his credit he was realistic, logical, and fair-minded. He was a terrible gardener and hated yard work, but he always admired a perfectly manicured soccer pitch. His sarcasm and smartassery were unparalleled. His sense of humor and kindheartedness will absolutely be missed by all who knew him. We love you, Dad!

Bill is survived by his children, Candice (Tim), Jennifer (Paul), Stephanie (Damon), Jeff (Kristen), his niece Tristen (Dustin), and his ex-wife Ginger (Steven). He loved spending time with his 17 grandchildren: Madison, Hunter, Dakota, Hallie, Max, Sam, Mason, Katie, Ella, Andrew, MacKenzie, Megan, Jace, Lily, William, Edmund, and Cooper. He is preceded in death by his parents, Sjoerd Bosgraaf and Helene Veenstra, his sister, Janet Bosgraaf, and his sweet daughter, Wendy Suzanne Bosgraaf.

A viewing will be held Thursday, December 7, from 6-8 p.m. MST at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 E. 1300 S., Salt Lake City, Utah. We invite you to celebrate his life with us on Friday, December 8, at 2:30 p.m. MST at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 E. Dimple Dell Road (10600 S.), Sandy, Utah. Friends may visit prior to the service from 1:30 to 2:15 pm. Interment at Larkin Sunset Gardens will follow the service. To honor Bill’s love for the beautiful game, feel free to wear your favorite soccer jersey or attire.

If you would like to watch the services, please click on the blue "Watch Services" button above.