



## "Charles" Bill W. Sullivan

August 14, 1952 - August 15, 2025

Bill Sullivan, beloved husband, father, papa, and friend to many, passed away on Aug. 15, 2025, in Vancouver, Washington, following complications from surgery. He was 73. In his zest for life, his sense of humor, and his big-hearted generosity, he taught us all to love and live more fully.

Bill was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 14, 1952, to Lee Clifton Sullivan and Katherina (Diener) Sullivan. His family moved to Great Falls, Montana, when Bill was an infant. In 1961, they moved to Alaska, where Lee started a water-well drilling business. Bill worked for his father at A&L Drilling from the time he was old enough to hold a wrench. By his teens, Bill was driving trucks and operating the drill rig. He eventually bought the business in 1979, renaming the company Sullivan Water Wells. Over his sixty-year career, Bill drilled countless wells across southcentral Alaska. Bill's son, Cole, went to work with his dad as a youngster and later worked alongside Bill as his partner. Cole took over Sullivan Water Wells in 2017, growing the business into a three-generation, statewide enterprise, a source of great pride for Bill.

Bill's daughter, Corina Sullivan Johnston, will never forget how he sang

“Sixteen Candles” over the loudspeaker at Chugiak High School for her birthday. Corina chose a career in another great love in Bill’s life: his children and grandchildren. In her work at Fire Lake Preschool, Corina taught all but one of Bill’s grandkids: Cadence Johnston, daughter of Ty and Corina Johnston; Brittyn Hollyn, Brayden, and (in the near future) Cannon Sullivan, children of Cole and Ashley (Holder) Sullivan. For years, Bill accompanied them on monthly field trips to the Eagle River Nature Center. He was also “Papa Bill” to Eva and Hawken, children of stepson Mark and Renee (Howard) Johnson of Palmer, and to Elias, River, and Aurora, children of stepson Erik and Ashlee (Sampson) Johnson of Peters Creek. He never failed to show up with fruit-roll-ups in his pockets and was famous for never saying “no” to the grandkids. He offered his grandchildren his gift to everyone: his undivided attention.

Bill was a true cowboy whose honor went beyond stale rules or old conventions. Bill came to horses in his forties, teaching himself the art of gentling and training his equine friends. On a whim in 2006, as he traveled through Eugene, Oregon, Bill entered the three-day Northwest Mountain Trail Championship with his horse, Jake. At the end of the first day’s competition, Bill was walking through a crowd of top-notch horses and professional riders when he overheard a group of cowboys saying, “Some son-of-a-gun from Alaska won the first round.” Being the only competitor from Alaska, Bill stopped, extended his hand, and said, “That would be me, Bill Sullivan.” He and Jake went on to sweep the competition, winning a trophy buckle that Bill wore with a grin for the rest of his life.

It was through horses that Bill met the love of his life, Kaylene Johnson-

Sullivan. They were married on horseback by their friend, Dick Griffith, at a remote cabin in the Chugach Range of Alaska. Together, they rode the mountains of Alaska, Montana, Washington, Oregon, British Columbia; the Badlands of North Dakota; and the desert hoodoos of Utah. They rafted the Grand Canyon (three times). When not adventuring, they created a home for family and friends to gather at Honey Rock Ranch in Palmer, Alaska. Whether on the porch swing or by the crackling wood stove, they loved long talks and holding hands. They gardened together, laughed together, and loved all those grandkids together.

The day before his passing, Bill and Kaylene walked the beach, talking about the future and training up Bill's colt back home. A week earlier, they were riding their horses. Bill was in love with life, his family, and the many people who called him friend.

As tributes pour in, we are learning just how far his light extended into the world. Bill's life was an anthem to boundless, unconditional love, the very love of Christ. When asked recently if he was a man of faith, he answered simply, "Yes."

Bill is preceded in death by his parents and his sons, Clifton Lee Sullivan and Charles William Sullivan, from his previous marriage to Diane Oberg. He is survived by their remaining children, Cole, Corina, & Clay. He is also survived by stepsons Mark & Erik; the spouses of his children/stepsons Ashley, Ty,

Ashlee, & Renee; his beloved grandchildren, including Wyatt Sullivan; and his wife, Kaylene, all of whom will forever celebrate the beauty of his presence in their lives. Adopted family includes Tom & Tina Victory, Gisela Cartmill, and Dick Griffith. He is also survived by Aunt Lydia, cousins, and countless friends whom he cherished.

Donations in Bill's memory can be made to the Alaska Community Foundation, Bill Sullivan Memorial Equestrian Fund. Please find the link in the attached Photos/videos Tab titled Alaska Community Foundation.

# Tribute Wall



“ Evergreen Memorial Gardens created a Tribute Video in memory of "Charles" Bill W. Sullivan

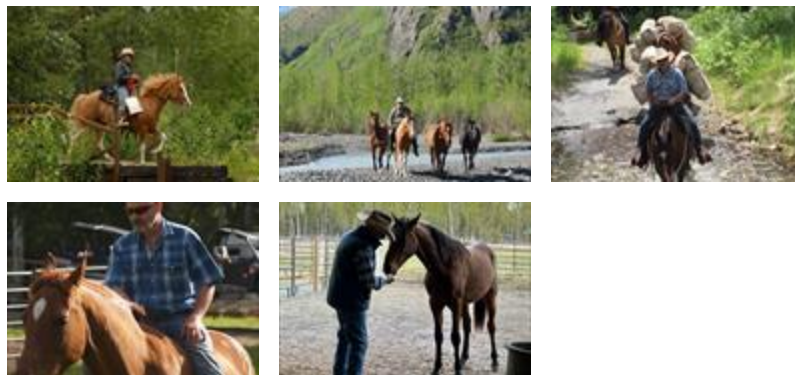
**ALASKA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**

---

Evergreen Memorial Gardens - September 20, 2025 at 07:12 PM

KJ

“ 12 files added to the album Memories of Bill



---

Kaylene Johnson-Sullivan - September 21, 2025 at 10:20 AM

GC

“ *My dear son-in-law Bill Sullivan passed away on Aug. 15th. We are still in shock, trying to wrap our heads around this. It is with sadness and thankfulness to have know him that we say good bye to a man who loved life, his family, his horses and adventures. Bill, you have made an indelible mark on all who knew you. We will always miss you. Ride on on a beautiful steed wherever you are now. May the most wondrous sunsets await you.*

---

**Gisela Cartmill** - August 31, 2025 at 02:21 PM

GC

“ *Gisela Cartmill lit a candle in memory of Charles Sullivan*



---

**Gisela Cartmill** - August 31, 2025 at 02:03 PM