



## William Jay Stewart

May 16, 1941 - October 10, 2015

WILLIAM JAY STEWART May 16, 1941 ~ October 10, 2015 "Bill was a lifelong journalist and newsman." William Jay Stewart of Vancouver, Washington, 74, passed away on Oct. 10, 2015 at the Ray Hickey Hospice House. He was born in Miami, Florida on May 16, 1941 to Amy Alice Morgan and William Franklin Stewart. Bill graduated from Ft. Smith High School, Ft. Smith, Arkansas, in 1959. His life began in the Deep South and ended in the Pacific Northwest, an improbable and amazing journey. Bill attended U.S. Coast Guard Academy after winning an appointment by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. He served in the U.S. Army with the rank of Sergeant. Bill married Mary Susan Heath in 1967 and his love and devotion to her was apparent throughout their 48-year marriage. He expressed a profound sense of pride in their two children, Marc and Jill. Bill's eyes twinkled when he talked about his grandsons, Aidan, Chase, and Joshua. His legacy will live on. Bill's spirituality and faith in God were a focal point in his life. He helped establish EastWoods Presbyterian Church. Upon his passing on Oct. 10, Susan posted this Irish poem on his Facebook page, "Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free. I follow the plan God laid for me. I saw His Face. I heard His Call. I took His hand and left it all." Bill was a member of the Oregon Maritime Museum, Portland, Oregon; member and a founder of EastWoods Presbyterian Church in Vancouver; and vice president of the Westmont Home Owners Association. A self-educated man, Bill was a lifelong newsman. Bill said, "This 57-year newspapering life has been a good run - with memorable friendships at the

Everett Herald, The Oregonian and Oregon Journal and The Columbian. I also treasured my time at the Fort Smith Times Record, The Oklahoma Journal in Oklahoma City and the Lawton Morning Press and the Ft. Sill (Cannoneer)." His professional highlights have included being the lead reporter for the coverage of the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the care of the deactivated Battleship Missouri before it moved to Hawaii, spending time with Margaret Thatcher's cabinet as part of a journalism fellowship to Oxford University and touring Russia shortly before the Iron Curtain fell. Bill enjoyed bird watching and bird banding, target shooting, sailing, fishing, coaching and refereeing youth soccer, growing test roses, gardening, model railroading, history, travel and architecture. His passion for birds, ships, trains and understanding how things worked was fueled by a "raging curiosity," which made him an encyclopedia of knowledge. Before there was Google, Bill had the answer. Bill was a quiet man of deep emotions. He also had a silly side. He loved to laugh when nobody was looking. Bill is survived by his wife, Susan; son, Marc Stewart (his wife Monique) of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; and daughter, Jill Stewart (her partner Nickolas Currie) of Vancouver, Washington; grandsons, Aidan Stewart and Joshua Stewart of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and Chase Currie of Vancouver, Washington; and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his brother, Maj. Clyde Franklin Stewart; and his parents. A memorial service to honor Bill will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2015 at 11 a.m., EastWoods Presbyterian Church, Vancouver, Washington. In lieu of flowers, memorials may go to EastWoods Presbyterian Church in Vancouver, Washington, and Oregon Maritime Museum, Portland. Special thanks to members of EastWoods Presbyterian Church and to the PeaceHealth Hospice Team. Please sign his guest book at: [www.columbian.com/obits](http://www.columbian.com/obits).

# Tribute Wall

JS

“ *Jill S lit a candle in memory of William Jay Stewart*



Jill S - May 11 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Dad you always said I could do it and never let anyone say I couldn't. Just remember I miss you and think of you a lot. Wish you could see the 3 grandkids and how each of them will be. Marc and I love you every moment. But happy we learned from you how special is love Jill*



Jill S - May 10 at 11:57 PM

JS

*Family 1st*

Jill S - May 10 at 11:58 PM



“ *0 file added to the tribute wall*

Evergreen Memorial Gardens - July 03, 2025 at 08:28 PM

RB

“ *Bill was a dedicated journalist, a fun colleague and an all-around good guy. I will miss him. My heartfelt condolences to his family.*

Rick Bella - August 09, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BD

“ Bill, I lost contact with you a long time ago, but I never lost the memories that I have of the good times with you, Harley and Bob. My condolences to your family and my thanks to you for your friendship.

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**Bob Dickson** - August 09, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ Bill, with regard to East Woods Church ... when Jesus said, "Ask, seek, knock, and your Heavenly Father will give you good things," He was speaking through the ages directly to you. Grace and blessings and thanks for the memories.

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**Roberta Schlechter** - August 09, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ I first met or spoke with Bill in 1999 when he covered the maritime beat and I was the senior Coast Guard officer in the region. Bill and I spoke of many things maritime over the next three years as he covered stories ranging from various port operations to post 9/11 security at port facilities. He was a true professional, spot on accurate with the facts, and a gentleman. And I served on the Oregon Maritime Museum Board with Bill when he courageously stepped up to fill the suddenly vacant position of President until health issues became more onerous. In the years since my wife Susan and Bill periodically enjoyed discussing museum business or the challenges of being Clerk of Session of their respective churches. My heartfelt condolences to all family and friends. Jim Spitzer, Captain, USCG (retired)

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**James Spitzer** - August 09, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ We are sorry to hear of Bill's passing, and thank him for his leadership at Oregon Maritime Museum. Best to Susan and family.

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**Susan Spitzer** - August 09, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RH

“ I miss him so much, he was a great man.

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**Rodger Heath** - August 08, 2016 at 12:00 AM