



William E Crown III

January 4, 1942 - January 12, 2022

Bill Crown, longtime Clearwater resident, died peacefully at home on January 12th knowing the love of his family surrounded him.

In December Bill was surprised to learn his stomach pain was due to stage 4 pancreatic cancer. From the minute he got his diagnosis he said he wanted his death to be a testament of his faith, "I understand this is terminal, there is no need to fight. I am at peace with the Lord and want to spend the rest of my days as joyfully as possible." He made the most of his last days with friends and family, even celebrating his 80th birthday on January 4th.

Bill was the oldest of three brothers who were his best friends in life. Bill, Ron and Bob, the sons of William E. Crown Jr and Nancy Hazel Flowers, were considered the local experts when it came to fishing and were often seen heading out before and after school to fish for tarpon, snook or whatever was biting that day. Bill also enjoyed waterskiing, especially impressing friends with his barefoot skiing abilities.

Following Clearwater High School he went to the University of Florida where he enjoyed his time in Sigma Nu fraternity, eventually leading his chapter as president, all while earning a degree in Advanced Accounting. Bill eventually joined his father Bill Jr at the company he founded in 1946 known as Crown & Company. Later Bill's younger brother Bob also joined the firm, and now Bill's daughter Lindsey is the third generation to carry on the business.

The list is long of the numerous ways Bill has dedicated his time to better his community and to further preservation efforts in Florida. In 1985 Bill was awarded the prestigious David Bilgore Memorial Award for outstanding humanitarian service for his leadership with Suncoast Active Volunteers for Ecology (SAVE), Morton F. Plant Hospital, YWCA, Pinellas County Education Development Foundation, Kiwanis Club, Florida Gulf Coast Arts Center and the Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce, among other things. He also served on the boards of St Paul's School, Berkeley Preparatory School and Clearwater High School along with chairing Raise Excellence at Clearwater High (REACH) in the 1980s, a fundraising group to raise much needed money for things like computers and laboratory equipment at the school.

Bill's experience and efforts in conservation led to him becoming the president of the

Clearwater Marine Science Center, which is now the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. But he had an even bigger dream to create an aquarium that showed the progression of Florida's water from its underground source to the open sea and to educate and advocate for the protection of Florida's natural environment. This dream inspired him to gather the financial backing and find a welcoming city for The Florida Aquarium which he proudly founded in 1995.

More recently Bill and his wife Bette were honored with the rest of the Crown family by the Salvation Army as recipients of the Dr. William Hale Commitment to Community Award, and Bill and Bette were made honorary chairs of the Community Dental Clinic.

Bill believed in working hard and playing hard and for fun he continued fishing with a passion, enjoyed membership in Privateers, served as President of Casada, and was Commodore at Carlouel Yacht Club. He has recently discovered a love of golf and has enjoyed playing in his backyard at the Belleair Country

Club. But what brought him true joy was running Cousins Camp with Bette for their 15 grandchildren who called him Big Daddy.

Family and faith were most important to Bill. More than 30 years ago he attended a Cursillo church retreat at the urging of Bette and to his surprise, and hers, his life was enriched and forever changed. From that weekend he dedicated his time, energies, prayers and treasure to sharing the Good News in many different ways including Prison Fellowship, Isaiah's Inn, Bible Study, and fellowship and service at the Church of the Ascension.

Bill is survived by his wife of 48 years, Bette; his sons Will (Jennifer) and Brian (Shannon) Crown; daughters Dawn Morrison (Dugald); Shannon Parker (Brad); Ali Martin (Stacy) and Lindsey Hardee (Bill), along with his much-loved grandchildren Will and Josh Crown; Meggie, Katie, Josie and Ellie Morrison;

Lucien, Jude and Anders Parker; Lilly and Anna Martin; Samantha and Chris Crown; and Mari and Baker Hardee. He is also survived by his sisters-in-law Karen and DeLene Crown and their families.

The service will be held at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension (701 Orange Avenue) on Friday, Jan 21 at 4pm.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation in his name to the Church of the Ascension, Florida Wildlife Corridor, the Community Dental Clinic or the Salvation Army.

Events

JAN **Memorial Service** 04:00PM
21

Church of the Ascension
701 Orange Avenue, Clearwater, FL, US, 33756

Comments



“ Some people never dream big. Some people dream big but never achieve their dreams. Very few people dream big and achieve their dreams. Bill Crown was one of those people. And a great guy to boot!

Tim Johnson - January 19 at 10:00 AM



“ My prayers are with the entire family. What a wonderful man Bill was.

melody figurski - January 16 at 10:55 PM



“ Bill Crown was the definition of a life fully and well lived.

William S. Jonassen, Esq. - January 16 at 05:26 PM



“ Sincere sympathy to the Crown family for your loss. Bill Crown was a wonderful and encouraging boss. I remember commenting on his balloon tie when he came in one day, and with that smile of his he said, "It's my funeral tie". (Gladys Venura-Rankin)

Gladys Ventura-Rankin - January 16 at 12:27 PM



“ I had the pleasure of working with Bill for over 40 years on tax matters for our mutual clients. He was a consummate professional and a absolute pleasure to work with. But my fondest memories of Bill was meeting him before daybreak at a fishing ramp with our fly rods to fish for tarpon. He was one of the best salt water fishermen on the West Coast of Florida. He was a very special person that will be missed by everyone that knew him.

Al Ward

Alton C. Ward - January 16 at 09:29 AM



“ I worked with Bill for over 43 years. I could not have dreamed of having a better boss. He was kind and mentoring, witty. There are so many more adjectives that can be added.

He was an amazing person and I'm so glad to have known him. The Crown family as a whole have given so much to our community. and his contributions will last for many, many years. He has joined Bob, Ron, Mr. C and Mrs. C. and can now fish and golf to his heart's content. Thank goodness memories can't be taken away and I sure do have many.

Linda Belcher

Linda Belcher - January 15 at 10:56 AM



“ Bill was a fabulous father, husband and fisherman!



Sally & Ted Nitka - January 15 at 07:47 AM



“ I was so lucky to work with Bill in the early days of The Florida Aquarium. He was a wonderful, thoughtful man. My sincere condolences to his family. — Ben Lee

Ben Lee - January 14 at 06:11 PM



“ Moss Feaster Funeral Home lit a candle in memory of William E Crown III



Moss Feaster Funeral Home - January 14 at 04:12 PM