



Mr. William Ray Phillips

September 1, 1943 - December 29, 2013

William Ray “Bill” Phillips

Born 9/1/43, Denton, TX, and passed away at home December 30, 2013. The family thanks the staff of Presbyterian Hospital and Ann’s Haven VNA for their compassionate care of Bill.

Bill was preceded in death by parents Clarence and Marjorie Phillips, and sister Margaret Phillips.

He was a smart, thoughtful and courteous man whose favorite phrase was “There’s always a way.” When he talked, you listened. He loved his immediate and extended families, and will be dearly remembered by his wife of 39 years, Susan McGowan Phillips; sister-in-law Vicki Malley; brother-in-law Andy McGowan and wife Marlene Mendel; nephew Tony Malley, wife Michelline and great-nephew Aaron; niece Lara Malley Shankle, husband Steve and great-niece Madison; and cousins Robert and wife Elaine Edwards, Donald and wife Patricia Edwards, Elizabeth and husband Roger McSween, William and wife Andrea Edwards and their families. He is missed by his precious pets Ralph, Blossom and Jammers.

Bill grew up in Denton, graduating from Denton High School in 1961. He was hired by the Plano Public School system as assistant band director to Emmitt

Clem after graduating from North Texas State University. At Plano's Williams High School the stage band Bill created to play during basketball games soon became part of the curriculum. He transferred to the new Plano Senior High in 1975, and later designed music history classes and a music theory program for the school. Bill and his music theory students were successful in AP ARTS, the O'Donnell Foundation Advanced Placement Incentive Program. He worked with the PSHS Theater Department on music for "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" and on set design and construction for "Little Shop of Horrors". Teaching awards include the 1997-98 Award of Excellence from UCSD's Outstanding Teacher Recognition Program, and the 2004 Mirabeau B. Lamar Award of Excellence from Plano Lodge No 768. Bill was proud of and thoroughly enjoyed his 38 years in Plano. He relished helping students understand and enjoy music, enabling them to create their own music and encouraging them to empower themselves by learning new skills, whether in music, creative thinking, power tools, working as a team or leading one.

Bill was a most interesting man who found adventures in everyday events. His interests ranged from woodworking to beekeeping to working in his garage and beyond. He was a professional musician who sang and played keyboards and clarinet. Bill was a lifelong hunter and enjoyed the camaraderie of two great groups of hunting buddies for 20+ years. Bill and Susan enjoyed treasure hunting and he twice served as president of the Golden Triangle Explorers Society. They enjoyed camping on their own land and in Texas state parks and took their vintage Airstream on prospecting trips to Gold Prospectors Association of America claims.

Memorial visitation will be Friday, January 31, 5-8 pm at Denton Funeral, Denton Tx. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Ann's Haven VNA, the American Cancer Society or a charity of your choice. A private, family graveside service will be at Denton's Roselawn Cemetery.

Tribute Wall

GM

“ *Mr. Phillips was my music theory teacher at PSHS from 1989-1991. I remember walking into his Theory II class the first day of my junior year, and he asked why I would think that I could skip Theory I. He then proceeded to play some intervals and asked me to identify them (which I did). He took me into the class immediately, and although I was quite nervous being in such a large school, he warmly welcomed me, and helped me quite a bit. We spoke via email once or twice about 14 years ago, and I am truly saddened at finding out that he has passed away. He was one of my all time favorite teachers, and I know that each and every one of his students loved him.*

Greg Murray, PSHS class of 1991

Greg Murray - September 26, 2018 at 03:27 PM

MF

“ *My Jr. High band director, Stage band director '73-'74, and all-around good guy! We both played clarinet.*

Mark Freeman - July 28, 2017 at 07:30 PM

SH

“ I was just looking online to see if I could find any information about my old teacher Bill Phillips. I was sad to find that he passed about a year ago. Bill was my teacher in the 80's. We all thought he was one of the few "cool" teachers. He made music theory my favorite class. He was passionate, thoughtful, and hilarious. I remember him always quoting Yogi Berra, or sitting down at the piano and playing an Elton John or Billy Joel song like it was nothing. Bill was satirist too. I remember him saying things like, "sorry I was late to class, the Plano Police pulled me over for not driving a BMW. I told them I just work here and I'll be out of their town by 5." Bill was a real character and a unique spirit. He didn't just teach music, he taught us all how to be ourselves.

Steve Halasz - January 05, 2015 at 04:50 AM

CH

“ Susan, I will never forget Bill. My deepest sympathies and condolences. God bless.

Chuck Howell - January 30, 2014 at 08:53 PM

AP

With deepest sympathy for your loss.

Adele Petty

Adele Petty - February 01, 2014 at 06:27 AM

JA

“ Susan, I am so sorry for your loss. Some of the best times I had in Plano were playing drums with you & Bill. Not only was Bill a great musician, he was also a fantastic person. He was great with students and the people he worked with. He possessed a special talent of how to teach young adults where they felt empowered.

John & Cheryl Anthony

John Anthony - January 20, 2014 at 01:12 PM

MP

“ Susan, you know how much we both loved to be with you and Bill. You will miss him terribly. But the memories will always be there. Take care of your self. We love you.
Mary and Bill

Mary Penson - January 18, 2014 at 11:20 PM

AS

“ Mr. Phillips, or "Uncle Phil" as a few of us called him, was my Music Theory teacher at Plano. He was one of two teachers I had in high school who impacted my life so much that I chose music education as my profession! I hope that I can love my high school students as much as he loved us, and I hope that I can touch the hearts of students like he touched ours. My prayers for your family.

Amber Satterwhite - January 15, 2014 at 05:04 PM

SP

What a wonderful message, Amber, and thank you so much for your prayers. He loved teaching at Plano and his students were very special to him. After he retired he was always running in to ex-students in Denton. More likely than not they'd ask if he remembered them...and more likely than not he'd be able to tell them the year, the class and sometimes the seat they were in in his classroom.

Susan Phillips - March 12, 2014 at 09:01 PM

CE

“ *Mr. Phillips was the band director at Bowman Jr. High in the early 70s. I loved learning from him and took private lessons from him for two years. He was always so patient and encouraging. I also learned to love the history of music that he would throw in with every new piece of music we would learn. He was a great man and a great teacher who inspired me to be a teacher, also.*

Cindy J Sanford Escamilla - January 15, 2014 at 03:37 PM

SP

Among the items we had at the visitation were recordings of some of his early Cox and Bowman band performances. He was so proud of his students' accomplishments. Cindy, thank you for your comments and for sharing your good memory of Bill.

Susan Phillips - March 12, 2014 at 09:03 PM

JC

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Jack Chapman - January 14, 2014 at 12:37 PM

JC

Bill bow hunted with our group for many years in the hill country of Texas...Our hunting group included Ed Stanley, Danny Hodge, David Dooley, Donnie Chapman, Jack Chapman, Clay Chapman and Charlie Cleveland

Jack Chapman - January 14, 2014 at 12:42 PM

SU

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Susan - January 13, 2014 at 07:37 PM

SS

Spring of 1980. Loved his classes!

Steven S. Smith - January 16, 2014 at 12:29 PM



“ *Secret Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. William Ray Phillips.*



January 06, 2014 at 02:52 PM

MS

“ *Susan and family,*

We are so sorry for your loss. We will miss Bill but we know your loss is far greater than ours. Be comforted by your memories and the knowledge you will see him again someday.

Mike & Connie Shaw - January 05, 2014 at 06:47 PM

BE

“With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say: “Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his people. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”

And the One seated on the throne said: “Look! I am making all things new.” Also he says: “Write, for these words are faithful* and true.

Revelation 21:3-5

Bell - January 02, 2014 at 12:11 PM

DG

“Bill was a good friend from the time I met him in 1960 at DHS. I changed schools often, being a military brat, and he made me feel welcome. He was a super quiet guy, and a fine musician. At NTSU, I enjoyed his Dixieland combo, where he played clarinet. With his black horn-rim glasses, he sometimes looked like Buddy Holly to me.

Rest in peace, Bill,

dale gleason

dale gleason - December 31, 2013 at 11:30 AM

SP

“I remember Billy as a sweet, talented member of the Bronco Band and a friendly student. He was respected by all of us in the 1961 graduation class. We will miss him and give thanks for his life. I pray for comfort for his family at this time.

Sue Pearce Ponder

sue pearce ponder - December 31, 2013 at 11:18 AM

DA

We (former Plano students) would like to know for sure if this is the Bill Phillips that taught us band, jazz band and music theory.? I 'd love to see some pictures, also.

david - January 09, 2014 at 09:04 PM

SP

David, this obituary is for Bill Phillips, Plano band, jazz band and music theory teacher. We'll have lots of pictures at the visitation, but I'll try to post some here as time permits.

Susan Phillips - January 11, 2014 at 09:39 PM

SM

Bill and I were friends and worked together for 50 years. He was very quite but once you got him talking you could just talk to him all day. We talked about everything in the world ,from the history of all kinds of music, to investing and fixing up houses. He could do almost everything with his hands and his mind .I really enjoyed working with him all those years but especially the years together at Plano Sr. High. God Bless You Bill Phillips !!! Sherman Millender

Sherman Millender - January 16, 2014 at 10:07 AM