



Bill Emry

February 21, 2020

Bill Emry, of McAllen, Texas, died Friday, February 21, 2020, after a lengthy illness at Rio Grande Regional Hospital.

Born Arthur William Emry on October 19, 1936 in Sioux City, Iowa, Bill grew up with his parents and brother in Fairfield Iowa. He graduated from Fairfield High School in 1954 and went on to Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in music in 1958. There he met his wife, Verles Elaine Hauge, who he married in May of 1958 in Lake Mills Iowa. Later, he achieved his Master's Degree in Music Education from the University of Northern Iowa. He was a life member of Phi Mu Alpha Symphonia and the NEA.

Bill was well known for his many years as a Band Director for Schleswig Iowa (2 years), Lake Mills Iowa (3 years), Grinnell Iowa (13 years) and Donna Texas. His high school bands won many awards and trophies over the years. His attentive skill at marching band routines were the envy of many band directors across the state. He was so proud of the accomplishments of his former students and was still in correspondence with many of them. In 1976, he moved with his wife and two daughters to Edinburg Texas, where they owned the Amigo Motel on Highway 281. In 1979, they sold the motel, moved to McAllen and eventually set up business at the Don-Wes Flea Market where he sold music for many decades until they retired in 2016. Bill was known for his connections in the conjunto music circles and for being one of the few who sold a wide range of Tejano music selections.

Bill was a member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in McAllen and an associate member of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) also in McAllen. His faith was strong and he loved attending church and singing.

Bill is survived by his wife, Verles; two daughters, Vonda (Steve) Fowler of Colorado Springs CO and Brenda Rushforth of Fullerton CA. He is also survived by 7 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by both of his parents (Bill & Rose Emry), parents in law (Ray & Gyda Hauge), brother (Bob Emry), and son in law (Gary Rushforth).

Services and visitation pending at Mittlestadt Funeral Home in Lake Mills Iowa. Interment

will be in Salem Memorial Cemetery in Lake Mills Iowa.

Comments



“ Bill Emry was a great teacher, who put his students above all else, and valued them deeply long after they graduated from high school. I ought to know because 10 years ago, I picked up my trumpet again and started playing, after a decades-long hiatus. Re-establishing contact with Bill in McAllen, Texas to inform him of this event, he greeted me with great enthusiasm and encouragement for what I was doing.

As I look back on my experiences in high school band, it is the April 29, 1966 concert in Darby Gym with Doc Severinsen, as guest soloist, that stands out. That concert represented a stunning achievement for Mr. Emry, our band, and the community. Doc played flawlessly, including his signature piece, "La Virgen De La Macarena." Years later, I came to appreciate his interpretation of "A Trumpeter's Lullaby," when I had to play it myself.

Bill's spirit lives on in the musical lives of those he taught.

Jim Sanders
Burke, Virginia
March 9, 2020

Jim - March 09 at 09:30 AM



“ My deepest sympathy to you Verles and family in Bill's passing. I'm a former student of many years ago, Cindy Boliver-Graham, having lived in the Grinnell-Newburg area and graduated from Grinnell High School (1972). I will always remember your husband as Mr. Emry, my favorite teacher and my favorite subject (Band). Many amazing memories...Marching band, Concert, Jazz (Stage Band) and Pep Bands. UNI fieldtrips and Virginia Beach. I so enjoyed it all. Thanks to your husband, music has been a part of my entire life. Taught 5th and 6th grade instrumental music for 27 years and play in our church worship teams. Don't know if you remember or not but you gave me private alto saxophone lessons at your house. :)
Thank you for how your family touched my life and may God wrap you in His eternal love and presence as you walk forward.

Cindy Boliver Graham - February 27 at 03:57 PM