



Ret. CMSgt William "Bill" W. Bickel Sr.

September 28, 1940 - May 9, 2021

Retired Chief Master Sergeant, William W. "Bill" Bickel Sr., 80, of Elizabethtown, passed away on Sunday, May 9, 2021 at Lancaster General Hospital. Born in Reading, PA, he was the son of the late Vernon W. and Ruth (Moyer) Bickel. Bill was the husband of Linda S. (Barnes) Bickel with whom he celebrated 60 years of marriage this past September 3rd. Bill proudly served and retired from the United States Air Force after 41 years of service and over 11,000 flight hours. He served in the 193rd Special Operations Wing. Early in his service he served as a flight engineer on EC-121 Constellation (Connie) planes and in 1977 the 193rd switched to EC-130 Hercules planes where he became a loadmaster. He received numerous accolades during his service to the country. His service included the Vietnam War, Grenada, Panama, Persian Gulf War, Haiti, and Bosnia, among other military actions.

Bill was a graduate of Wilson High School class of 1958. He enjoyed RV'ing, cars, motorcycles, and hunting. He and his wife, Linda, belonged to the "GI Gypsies" a camping group they helped start 50+ years ago. The group consisted mostly of members of the 193rd SOW. He was also an avid motorcyclist and rode his Harley Davidson beyond his 80th birthday and served as Chaplain for the Mt Joy Legion Riders. His most cherished pastime was his family. Everything he did in life was for, or because of, his love and devotion for his parents, wife, sons and their wives, and grandchildren. If there ever was a need, he was there to meet it. He was a believer in Christ as his savior and was a 50 year member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Elizabethtown and the American Legion Post 329 in Elizabethtown, American Legion Post 185 in Mount Joy, Life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The National Sojourners Inc Harrisburg chapter, and the Abraham C Treichler Masonic Lodge 682 in Elizabethtown.

Surviving in addition to his wife, Linda, are three sons, Gregory A. Bickel, husband of Diana of East Berlin, Garry P. Bickel, husband of Melissa of Manheim, and William W. Bickel Jr., husband of Cynthia of Pequea; five grandchildren, Beau Bickel, husband of Jenna of York Haven, Nathaniel Bickel, fiancé of Kaylin Julias of Dover, Wyatt Bickel of Lancaster, Marleigh Bickel of Pittsburgh, Ethan Bickel of Manheim; a great grandson, Dean Bickel of York Haven.

He was preceded in death by four brothers, Vernon, Sharon, and Edward Bickel and

Donald Shaeffer.

Services will be private and limited to family members. There will be a Life Celebration in the near future for all to attend. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Pennsylvania Wounded Warriors (PAWW) 1117 Country Club Rd Camp Hill, PA 17011.

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Ronald Kaylor - June 13 at 06:31 PM



“ Bill was always an integral part of the 'Ops' family during my service with the 193rd...He helped to keep things on the lighter side when needed, but was always a 'professional' in his duties as loadmaster and crew member! He usually behaved himself in our life support survival training sessions...My sympathy to Linda and the Family.
Les Fazekas,

Les Fazekas - May 17 at 11:35 AM



“ Bill was a great American and friend. He took the young loadmaster under his wing and made me feel at home when traveling from AFSOC to 193rd to give check. Bill always told me I did not need to ask him questions during his check ride. I ask him why and he said because he knew everything. Of course he was correct. Bill will certainly be missed. My most sincere condolences go out to Linda and entire Bickle family. Cabin secure Bill!!! Mike Reynolds

mike reynolds - May 16 at 06:11 PM



“ A Member of Ace Construction Co. Of E. Willow St. Elizabethtown, Bill was a Great neighbor and Friend for many years. Many Happy memories shared and know He is at peace waiting for Family and Friends to spend Eternity Forever with HIM!

Patti Wenrich - May 15 at 09:25 AM



“ Proud to have been a crewmember with Bill taking the 193rd's last Connie to "the Boneyard". Rest in peace, Brother Bill, your smile will last forever.

Larry Rutt

Larry Rutt - May 15 at 09:21 AM



“ It was an honor to know and service with Bill.
Fly high Bill.

Kandy sowards - May 14 at 10:42 PM



“ Bill was a good friend many flights with him less Then a year ago we went to a funeral in Philadelphia all we talked about was our wives and children Great guy will miss him

Senior Master Sargent Ronald Estock - May 12 at 07:18 PM



“ Although we didn't get to be a part of the GI Gypsies until the past 10 years or so, we enjoyed Bill and his friendship. Mike often repeats jokes Bill told, even though there was a number system. Our heart goes out to you Linda and the boys. So sorry for your loss.

Mike and Connie - May 12 at 03:52 PM



“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



Melissa Bickel - May 12 at 07:37 AM