

William Albert “Bill” Geater

William Albert “Bill” Geater, aged 73, of Parkview Towers in Little Rock, Arkansas, passed away unexpectedly on October 10, 2013 of a ruptured aortic aneurysm.

Bill was born in Little Rock on November 9, 1939, son of the late Terry Thomas Geater and Velma Lois Blackstock Geater, both of Little Rock.

After graduating from Central High School in 1957, Bill enlisted in the navy, serving as an aerographer’s mate on the USS Ticonderoga CVA-14 aircraft carrier, before transferring to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas to serve as Airman First Class.

His years of armed forces service introduced Bill to the delights of travel, and following his honorable discharge, Bill went on to investigate the world, furthering his education in the process. Bill accrued college credits from Prairie View A&M in Texas; the Instituto de Cultura Hispanica in Madrid; the Universidad del Estado de Mexico in Toluca; the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Central Arkansas, Conway, with a major in Spanish and a minor in History/Political Science. For a time, he also enjoyed living and working in Germany, where he became proficient in that language, as well.

Bill worked for twenty years in Texas for Metro Monitoring Services, Inc. as a Meteorological Supervisor and Certification Instructor, first at Houston Intercontinental Airport, then at Angelina County Airport in Lufkin and then at Del Rio International Airport.

In addition, for over twenty years, Bill either taught Spanish in high schools in both Arkansas and Texas, or tutored Spanish to both high school students and adults. During his four-year residency in Del Rio (on the Texas/Mexico border), Bill tutored many border patrol agents who were required to master Spanish in order to remain at their jobs. He was not paid for his efforts and did it purely for his love of teaching.

Following his retirement from teaching Spanish at Westbury High School in Houston, Bill returned to his home town and moved into Parkview Towers, which is a high-rise dedicated to offering housing to retired school teachers. Hired as part-time, on-site maintenance personnel, Bill was dedicated to protecting the building and serving its occupants and was therefore well-known and trusted by the Tower residents.

Bill is preceded in death by two siblings: a sister, Terry Lou Geater Osment, of Forrest City; and a brother, Thomas Allen Geater of Perry. He is survived by a sister, Virginia Geater Lowry, of Little Rock; a sister-in-law, Betty Bennett Geater, of Perry; a niece, Terry "Honey" Boudreaux and her husband (and honorary nephew of Bill), David Tolley of Galveston, TX; four "blood" nephews: Michael Boudreaux, of Lynchburg, VA; Thomas Geater and Tracy Geater of Perry; and Tony Geater, of Dover.

Bill is also survived by his "second mother" and former high-school Spanish teacher, Ms. LaVon Payne Yepez (age 100), of Little Rock, and her two children, with whom Bill has been friends since adolescence: Beverly Agee (husband, Sam) of Cabot; and Don Payne (wife, Sherry) of Wichita Falls, TX.

The Geater family has many branches on its tree, and Bill enjoyed growing up with countless cousins. Two of these cousins were on hand to celebrate a family reunion with Bill when he fell ill, and therefore were blessedly at his side when he died: Judy Taylor Parson of Little Rock; and Gloria Danet of New York.

He also took pleasure in numerous close friendships with men and women the world over: many long-term, others recently formed, still others rekindled; those who were lucky enough to share in his wit, youthful spirit, and his knowledge will be poorer for their lack in future.

As Bill loved almost nothing more than the written word, anyone wishing to honor Bill's passing is invited to donate new or used books to his or her local library, or appropriate charity of choice.