

Farewell to Bill Hebert



Liz Deilke has written a touching memoir of the life our dear late friend Bill Hebert. She requested a portion could be used in our January Newsletter, instead I have reproduced it in its entirety.



When I started to write what I was feeling about Bill Hebert's passing, I found my words were insufficient. You use adjectives like generous, kind, selfless, smart.... but these are just words. It's the acts behind those words that are Bill's legacy. While Bill was never homeless, he was displaced some time ago due to a fire at his home. It was during this time that he was befriended by Stan Smith and the Zampini family. Stan invited Bill to stay with him while the house was being rebuilt - pretty much from the ground-up. Stan was a noted musician who had played with Tony Bennett, and as Bill loved music, too, this led to a lifelong friendship. In fact, when Stan became ill, it was Bill who became his companion. Stan's daughter, Debbie Zampini told me that after her father had passed, Bill became the de facto patriarch of the family and that they would often come to him for "Dad" advice. It may have been during this time that Bill realized the immense good the work of Father Joe's Villages has on the Homeless. Something definitely made an impact on him, as Bill left his entire estate to this organization. When it came time for Debbie's daughter to get married, Bill insisted on buying her wedding gown. He wanted her to know just how beautiful and special she was. I can tell you that I saw those pictures of the bride in that dress, and she was incredibly beautiful. I can only imagine how proud he must have been to have played a part in such a way on her special day. I fondly recall the times he would come to our dance, frequently with fruit-in-hand, picked from his garden, because he wanted to share his pears, pomegranates, apples, avocados, and more. Bill joined the Navy right here in San Diego as a young man. He spent 37 years in the Navy and the Reserves, attaining the rank of Captain. He was just recently celebrated with a service at his home, commemorating his accomplishments. He was so grateful for the recognition and was happily surprised and very moved by all the people who filled his house for the occasion. After leaving military service, he spent time working in the semi-conductor field, holding a Master's degree from SDSU in electrical engineering. I know he was a dancer for a long time, because somewhere along the line Bill managed to compete in Dance - The Hustle, to be exact. Evidence: a photo from a performance during competition with none other than Carmen Kiehm as his partner! The hairdo for both of them screams 70's! Unfortunately, Bill was estranged from his siblings, so the Zampini's and the San Diego Swing Dance community became his family. In fact, in recent months he would forego any pain medication so that he would be lucid enough to join us at the dance. In his words: the atmosphere was energetic and positive, and he needed to be there to re-charge his batteries and make it through the next week. We made him feel so much better for a little while, and he was always looking forward to the next opportunity to dance.

You might not have known these things about Bill. He really preferred asking questions about you, rather than to talk about himself. His favorite question was "would you like to dance"? And he would lead you out to the dance floor, the music would be playing, and he'd be looking at you with those piercing blue eyes of his, and it was like a movie montage with the rest of the world just spinning around you two for the next few minutes. Because he was there in that moment enjoying life and the dance and focusing all his attention on you while the song was playing.



If I can leave you with just one thought about Bill - because there are so many - it would be this: Be present, in the moment, with your family, friends, co-workers. Be generous, kind, loving, selfless. Be a Bill.



NCA - Cemetery Burial Schedule Search results on all cemeteries for decedent Hebert

MIRAMAR NATIONAL CEMETERY

5795 NOBEL DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92122
(658) 658-7360

All scheduled times listed under Time of Service are Pacific Time Zone

KD

Tuesday, December 20 2022

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Information is current as of: 7:01 am EST 12/19/2022

Filter Records By Name: HEBERT, WILLIAM ALEXANDER

Burial Schedule

Time of Service	Decedent Name	Funeral Home
10:00 AM	HEBERT, WILLIAM ALEXANDER	