



## Neil McElderry

January 2, 1937 - January 13, 2016

Neil William "Bill" McElderry Jr., age 79 of Purcell, passed away Wednesday January 13, 2016, at the Purcell Municipal Hospital. Bill was born January 2, 1937 in Purcell to Neil Sr. and Frances (Davis) McElderry. He grew up in Purcell and attended Purcell Schools, graduating with the Class of 1955. He then attended the University of Oklahoma, later graduating with a B.A. in Government in 1959, and followed that with an M.A. in Public Administration in 1961. Bill married his best friend and first love, a Norman girl named Betty Jo Suchy. They made their home in Purcell where together they raised 2 sons, Neil III and Mike. Bill served his country proudly in the United States Army during the Nike Hercules Missile Defense and was honorably discharged as 1st Lt. Artillery in September of 1963. He continued to serve in the Army Reserve 1966. For most of his working life, Bill worked in Real Estate Investments & Insurance. Bill invested in property, both commercial and residential, all over McClain County. In 1985, he opened the National Insurance Company in Purcell and continued to maintain daily operations. Bill believed in community and served in many capacities, following is his father's footsteps who was a former Mayor of Purcell. He was proud of the Purcell Municipal Hospital and served several terms as a Hospital Board Member, and even as Chairman. He was proud to be a founding member in 1970. He served on the Purcell Economic Development Board for nearly 20 years, the Rural Water District # 7, Purcell Planning Commission and held various other City, County and State positions during his life. He was a lifetime member of

the McClain County Historical Society and Charter President, and a lifetime member of the American Legion-Miller Robinson Post #42. As a former Boys Stater, he served continually on the Boys State Committee from 1967, to current, and was a proud member of the Oklahoma Human Rights Commission. As a political activist, he was a page to the 1956 democratic National Convention and held many leadership positions in the McClain County Democratic party. Bill was always a proud supporter of his wife Betty in her work to elect Democratic candidates. In 2009, Bill was honored as the Heart of Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce, Citizen of the Year, for outstanding community leadership and his contributions to the enhancement of the Heart of Oklahoma. He was very humbled by this award! He was a longtime and faithful member of the Trinity United Methodist Church in Purcell. Bill served the Church in many ways including Chairman of the Board, the Board of Trustees, organist, and Lay Delegate to the Annual Conference. Since 1995, Bill has played the piano for the Lexington United Methodist Church. He was very instrumental with the Lexington United Methodist Food Bank. Bill was a patriot, and truly believed in service before self. A very polarizing man, Bill will be remembered for his generosity and a friend to many! He was preceded in death by: His parents, Neil and Frances McElderry and An infant sister, Jo Francis McElderry. Bill leaves behind: His wife, Betty of the home; Sons, Neil W. McElderry III and wife Melissa of Purcell and Michael McElderry of Purcell; 3 grandchildren, Taylor, Conner and Caleb McElderry and A host of other family and friends. Private Services are scheduled with Wilson-Little Funeral Home of Purcell with a Celebration of Life to follow later. Bill's family would like to thank Dr. Rick Schmidt and the Purcell Hospital Nurses and Staff for the special care and support during their time of need. Thank you to our Purcell family and the McClain County community for your thoughts and prayers. Send online condolences at [wilsonlittle.com](http://wilsonlittle.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ Terry and Sharyn Hobson has sent this *Expressions of Sympathy card*.

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**Terry and Sharyn Hobson** - January 26, 2016 at 12:00 AM