



William Lee Eckel

October 24, 1955 - November 26, 2023

William "Bill" Lee Eckel passed away peacefully at his home in Norman on Sunday, November 26th, 2023. The third of four siblings, he was born on October 24th, 1955, in Shelby, OH to Otis and Dolores Eckel. Raised in Wichita Falls, TX, in 1980 he married the love of his life, Dana Catlege.

As Bill would put it, his "real" job was as an Air Traffic Controller/Flight Service Station Specialist, a trade he learned serving in the United States Navy's 7th Fleet, and mastered in his career with the Federal Aviation Administration, where he retired in 2005.

However, Bill's first love was the arts. Writing of all kinds was his passion and his ambition. In an interview with Online Book Club, he said, "When I was a kid, my dad had books everywhere. I devoured them. When I exhausted all the books in the children's section of the library, I had nothing left to read. At that point, I decided to write my own stories." When he moved to Oklahoma, Bill performed all over the state as a singer/songwriter and bass guitarist, releasing his comedy music album "One Swell Foop" in 2000.

In 2014, he began a career as a fantasy/science fiction novelist, studying under New York Times best-selling authors Deborah Chester and David Farland and winning numerous awards as an up-and-coming independent writer. He published four novels, "Cadet Adam," the award-winning "Hard Kill,"

"Shem's Quest," and "First Created," as well as various short stories, both fiction and non-fiction.

He never hesitated to jump in to anything that caught his attention, from community activism and gardening to stand-up comedy and acting. Whether on the stage or on the page, and especially in everyday life, he had a gift for spreading laughter and joy. He will be dearly missed.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his sisters Theresa, Cindy, and Bobbi Jo.

Bill is survived by his wife Dana and their son Daymon Eckel, and his in-laws, Norma and Daymon Catlege.

The family will gather at a later time to celebrate Bill's life.

Tribute Wall

CK

“ I could write a few pages about my Brother Bill. I have know Billy since I was 12 years old. We truly grew up together, in Wichita Falls. So many adventures. I went on the Navy a year before Billy and when he went in he asked to be stationed with me. I was stationed on the USS Kittyhawk so the best the Navy could do was to send Bill to the Phillipines. It was pretty awesome because my ship would pull in and Bill would be waiting on me. We also shared our careers as Air Traffic Controllers. We have never been very far apart. His mom Deloris treated me as a son and his sisters just adopted me as a brother. So many years, so many memories. Until we meet again. I loved Bill with all my heart, God loved him more.

Clinton Kidwell - December 10, 2023 at 12:00 AM

NC

“ Bill was the best son-in-law to me over the past 40 years, he just got better and better as he aged. We both enjoyed cooking and shared in the planning and preparations of our family and holiday meals. Bill was a master chef with the BBQ and his fancy smoker and absolutely made the best charbroiled steaks!! We all preferred them to the finest steak houses, they were that good. I am so grateful that we got to spend a wonderful and fun Thanksgiving together where he not only made 3 tasty meat entrees for our dinner, but 2 Sweet Potato Pies from the sweet potatoes that he grew in his garden. We all agreed they were delicious with his special flavoring and spices that he conjured up. It will be a sad Christmas without Bill, but we all agree he would want us to be happy and remember all the many Christmases that we have shared over the years. Bill will be sorely missed but, will always be in our hearts with the very best memories.

Norma Catlege - December 03, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JR

“ I know your heart is broken, you're in my thoughts and prayers.



Janey Beth Ratliff - November 30, 2023 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ Bill, you were a true treasure to everyone you met, and I will always hold your uniqueness and passion to follow your heart close to mine. You are amazing and inspiring. Rest easy friend.

Bryce Walker - November 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

AM

“ I didn't really know Bill but he was always kind and brought the biggest smile to Dana's face every time he came into our office. I was told he had the biggest heart and I have no doubt he did. Rest in peace Bill.



Alex Mitchell - November 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

KC

“ It was our great pleasure to know Bill "dollar Bill Eckel" he was always so jovial and had so many great stories!
His album or cd is hilarious, I'm so thankful he gave us one we listen all the time. Jim will forever miss saying Hey Bill it's Jim 🤔 I could go on and on about Bill he was just the best and so so much talent and creativity!! Gone too soon! 😞



Kim Castor - November 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CH

“ Though I did not know Bill personally I had the pleasure of working with his wife and learning that he served this country in the military and that he was an author and for that I am grateful. You never see the ripple of how impactful someone's character can be on others... Dana is one of the sweetest people I've ever met so that says a lot to me about anybody that she would spend her life with. Thank you for all that you've done for your community and country.

Chase - November 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ Dana I know what it's like to lose someone very very close to you and that there's nothing anyone can say to help or heal the pain. But we're absolutely here for you whether or not you need us. I think that's the most important thing. We love and appreciate you.



Michael Cunningham - November 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

BR

“ You are in our hearts and prayers.



Beth Ratliff - November 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

KC

“ It was our great pleasure to know Bill "dollar Bill Eckel" he was always so jovial and had so many great stories!

His album or cd is hilarious, I'm so thankful he gave us one we listen all the time. Jim will forever miss saying Hey Bill it's Jim😂 I could go on and on about Bill he was just the best and so so much talent and creativity!! Gone too soon!😭



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