



Bill Eich

January 7, 1950 - October 2, 2015

William ("Bill") Dean Eich died peacefully in his home in Spirit Lake, Iowa, on Friday, October 2, 2015. A memorial visitation will be held on Monday, October 5, 2015, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, with a Vigil service for the Deceased at 7:00 pm at St. Mary's Catholic Church. A funeral Mass will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Spirit Lake, IA, at 10:30 am on Tuesday, October 6, 2015. The Schuchert-Lentz Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Bill was born on January 7, 1950, in Sheldon, IA, the son of Adam and Lucille (Penning) Eich. His family moved to California in 1956, where they lived near Los Angeles until returning to Iowa in 1965, making their home in Spirit Lake.

Bill attended Spirit Lake High School where he played football and baseball, wrestled, and ran track. Bill broke several SLHS track records (100, 220, 440, 880, 440 relay, 880 relay, mile relay, the sprint medley relay, and the distance medley relay). In 1968, Bill and his SLHS teammates won the IHSAA Class A state track meet under the coaching of Bob Wells, Bill's mentor and lifelong friend. At the meet, Bill won the 220 yard dash and the 880 relay and took 4th in the mile relay.

Bill earned a bachelor's degree in Construction Engineering at Iowa State where he ran track his freshman year and met the love of his life, Mary Jean

("Jeani") Ronnebaum. Bill and Jeani were married in Independence, IA, on June 3, 1972. They lived in Omaha, Nebraska, and Memphis, Tennessee, before settling in Spirit Lake in 1974, and becoming members of St. Mary's Catholic Church.

After working as a contractor at Eich and Son with his father, Adam, Bill founded Bill Eich Construction Company in 1974, through which Bill designed, built, and remodeled hundreds of homes and business in and around the Iowa Great Lakes over 40 years. His designs won prestigious awards including the NAHB Energy Value Housing Award, Remodeler Magazine's Big 50, and Popular Science's "Best of What's New." Bill was one of the first builders in the U.S. to design and promote the use of frost-protected shallow foundations for residential construction. Bill previously served as President of the Homebuilders Association of Northwest Iowa and as President of The Energy Efficient Builders Association. He also volunteered his homebuilding expertise at Habitat for Humanity.

Bill loved living and boating on West Lake Okoboji, and he entertained family and friends at the lakes over the years. Bill was actively involved in the University of Okoboji Winter Games since its inception and hosted "Spas on Ice" alongside the Polar Plunge for 11 years. Bill also enjoyed traveling the world with his wife, Jeani, and making new friends everywhere he went.

Bill spent his last weeks singing, sharing stories, and celebrating life with hundreds of friends and family members who demonstrated what "It's an Okoboji Thing" truly means.

Bill is survived by his wife, Jeani; his three daughters and sons-in-law, Kerri and Eric Reiners, Jill and Michael Margetts, and Lori Eich and Jeremy Lueck; five grandchildren, Tyler, Elijah, and Ashley Margetts and Boden and Ayden Reiners; and three sisters, Linda (Robert) Hinshaw, Yvonne (Harvey)

Veldman, and Kristi Larson.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the Okoboji Backpack Program, Attn. Teresa Goehring, 705 N Ave., Milford, IA 51351 or the Spirit Lake Backpack Program, Attn. Lori Thompson, 2701 Hill Ave., Spirit Lake, IA 51360.

Tribute Wall

OD

“ Dear Jeani and Family,

My condolences to you all. Bill was a good friend and mentor to me. Solid and willing in everything he undertook he always made things easier and more fun. He looked for simple solutions, fairly presented always respectful of the situation.

I had the opportunity to travel with him on our first trip in China and witness his wonder and enthusiasm as we learned about the country and people and got to watch him make friends across the language barrier. His innate appreciation of others and his good humour just won people over. He has left us much too soon. I miss him. Thanks Bill. Best to you all.

Oliver Drerup - October 24, 2015 at 10:03 PM

DM

“ Bill Eich

Denise Martinez - October 19, 2015 at 12:04 AM

LT

“ Jeani and family, when the class of 68 was informed of Bill's battle with cancer It was such a privilege to pray for him during this most difficult time. In our correspondence he kept such a positive outlook as he understood the gravity of the journey he was on. He knew where he was and where he was going which gave him the courage to savor every moment of every day. As I read John 14:1-3, I can't help but think about Bill as he was ushered into "his Father's house." Having built so many beautiful homes he could see for himself the gift of creativity the Lord had had given him. My deepest sympathy to all the family and close friends who will be forever touched by the life that Bill lived.

LaDonna Thomas - October 08, 2015 at 07:31 AM

WE

“ *Bill Eich*

Wendie eich - October 08, 2015 at 07:00 AM

CR

“ *My Uncle Bill had a life full of accomplishments. None larger than being the loving father of a beautiful family that will carry on the values he instilled in us all.*

Chad Ronnebaum - October 07, 2015 at 12:09 PM

TR

“ *So sorry for your loss. Our prayers are with you. Although he has left his body the presence of his soul will always be felt by those he loved.*

The Reiners Family Minneapolis

Tim Reiners - October 06, 2015 at 10:39 AM

DB

“ *Bill Eich*

Deb Bierstedt - October 06, 2015 at 08:33 AM

MM

“ *So very sorry to read of Bill's passing away. Know you and your family are in our prayers. So sorry for your deep loss.
Sincerely,
Mel and Margaret Molitor, Spencer, IA*

Margaret Molitor - October 06, 2015 at 06:53 AM

SH

“ *Bill Eich*

Shelly Holman - October 05, 2015 at 09:01 PM

BD

“ *Bill Eich*

Brea Delcoure - October 05, 2015 at 06:29 PM

TH

“ *Bill Eich*

Tom & Debbie Hedges - October 05, 2015 at 05:37 PM

AD

“ *Bill Eich*

Adelee and Wade Dixon - October 05, 2015 at 05:19 PM

CE

“ I'm sorry I just could not make it to Bill's funeral. I have been keeping all of you in my prayers since I heard he was sick. We know we are on earth only temporary, but it is the most difficult time when God calls them home. We cannot prepare ourselves, no matter how hard we try, for the day God takes them from us. I will keep all of you in my prayers, but especially Jeannie, for I went through this about 2 years ago. God Bless.

Connie (Eich) Egle - October 05, 2015 at 05:09 PM

SF

“ *Jeni and Family.*
I am thinking and praying for all of you. Bill was a good man, and he was devoted to all of you. He was great to work with. Honest and always fair.

Sue Fischer - October 05, 2015 at 11:14 AM

MM

“ *Jeani - Hugs and Prayers - He was a good man.*

Molly Mulqueen - October 05, 2015 at 08:28 AM

HH

“ *Bill Eich*

Hank & Sheryl Hall - October 05, 2015 at 08:28 AM

MM

“ *So sorry to learn Bill lost his courageous battle. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this sad time. Sincerely, Fred and Margaret McKim.*

Margaret McKim - October 04, 2015 at 05:29 PM

MM

“ *Bill Eich*

Margaret McKim - October 04, 2015 at 05:23 PM

MM

“ *Bill Eich*

Margaret McKim - October 04, 2015 at 05:23 PM



“ *Bill Eich*

October 04, 2015 at 04:29 PM

CO

“ *Bill Eich*

Connie - October 04, 2015 at 04:28 PM

CO

“ *Bill Eich*

Connie - October 04, 2015 at 04:28 PM

SW

“ *I am so sorry for your lost the Eich family. My prayers are with u and the Eichs family. Bill you will be missed. Rest in peace Bill!!!*

Staci and Darrel William Wedeking - October 04, 2015 at 01:38 PM

KN

“ *Sending caring thoughts Jeannie and family.*

Karla Noble - October 04, 2015 at 01:22 PM

LB

“ Jeannie, our prayers are with you.

Larry Buessing - October 04, 2015 at 06:07 AM

SV

“ Bill Eich

Shelly Vandevord - October 03, 2015 at 10:23 PM



“ Bill Eich

October 03, 2015 at 10:23 PM

PR

“ My prayers are with you, girls, as you go through this journey. Your husband/dad was a special man. Remember the memories.

Peg Rick - October 03, 2015 at 08:41 PM

DH

“ Thinking of you all at this time of your loss of Bill. Dave's shared many memories. In our thoughts and prayers.

Dave and Linda Hagedorn - October 03, 2015 at 07:05 PM

CS

“ Bill Eich

Christina Syharath - October 03, 2015 at 06:21 PM

EG

“ Bill Eich

Evie Gray - October 03, 2015 at 06:00 PM

EG

“ *Bill Eich*

Evie Gray - October 03, 2015 at 05:58 PM

MC

“ *Jeani and family-
Our hearts are breaking along with yours. But hoping your found
memories of better days will carry you through these dark times.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you-*

Mary & Scott Chambers - October 03, 2015 at 04:48 PM

CS

“ *Bill Eich*

Cathy Simpson - October 03, 2015 at 03:27 PM

AW

“ *My heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to Jeani and the entire
Eich Family. Bill was an Okoboji Icon and his wonderful sense of
adventure and humor will be greatly missed. I knew him from the old
Athletic Club days and Winter Games and enjoyed his positive
attitude and great smile!*

Annie Woods - October 03, 2015 at 11:12 AM



“ *Bill is my cousin, and our families were very close growing up as children. Every weekend 3 families of Aunts and Uncles spent together, whether at the beach, BBQ and swimming in their pool and even attended the Rose Bowl Parade together escorted by his father Adam. He rounded all the cousins up early one morning and off we went! The memories continued as we all moved back to Ia. Bill was as full of life then as he was as a Man! He lived life to the fullest and his door was always open for family and friends , of which he had many. I will miss him greatly! He was a good man of faith and of his family! He is singing with the Angels now, but ever present in our hearts! Sandee Walker*

October 03, 2015 at 11:03 AM



“ *Bill Eich*

Sandee Walker - October 03, 2015 at 10:49 AM



“ *Bill Eich*

Diane Raemisch - October 03, 2015 at 09:45 AM



“ *Jean Bill will be greatly missed ! Sorry we can't be there. You and your family will be in our thoughts and prayers .*

David and Lori Lorenz - October 03, 2015 at 09:21 AM



“ *Bill Eich*

Beth Rudock - October 03, 2015 at 09:08 AM

BE

“ *Bill Eich*

Beth - October 03, 2015 at 09:07 AM

BE

“ *Bill Eich*

Beth - October 03, 2015 at 09:06 AM

CW

“ *Our sympathy to the Eich family. I know Bill will be greatly missed by all.*

Connie and Bill Wymer - October 03, 2015 at 08:41 AM

SR

“ *Your family is in my thoughts, prayers, and heart. Bill's huge heart and immense strength and spirit is reflected in all of you, and his kindness and thoughtfulness touched everyone whose life he touched. Heaven has a new tradition now wherein ice cream is served before the main course. Bless you all.*

Sonja Martin Reiners - October 03, 2015 at 12:28 AM

TN

“ *Bill Eich*

The Newman's - October 02, 2015 at 10:49 PM

LP

“ *Bill Eich*

Linda Peschon - October 02, 2015 at 10:06 PM

TK

“ I have many good memories working for bill as well as some great fishing trips! I will always appreciate the opportunity to have been a part of Bills life. He will be missed but never forgotten!

Todd kuhlman - October 02, 2015 at 09:38 PM

JW

“ We just want to offer our condolences to Bill's family, friends, & lake community!! You all are in our thoughts & prayers!!

Jerry & Kathy Welter - October 02, 2015 at 07:24 PM

JG

“ My sincere condolences to the Eich family. I remember Bill well as well as his parents Lucy & Adam. May God give you comfort at this time. RIP Bill!

Jan Gilbert - October 02, 2015 at 06:04 PM