



## William "Bill" Andrew Sanford

October 28, 1944 - March 27, 2015

William (Bill) Andrew Sanford, 70, of Charles City, VA, formerly of Petersburg, passed away Friday, March 27, 2015.

He attended Petersburg High School and graduated in 1963.

His father, James Sanford, was also a plumber. He loved and adored his mother Louise.

Billy owned Sanford Mechanical which provided services to ICI (now DuPont) for more than 20 years where his friend of 40 years, Danny Wiggins, worked by his side. While at ICI, Billy developed a close friendship with Frank and his wife Odelia. This 40 year friendship included annual fellowship over Thanksgiving dinners and enjoying Frank's famous Brunswick stew.

Billy was a thinker who loved to design and fabricate the part(s) needed to repair or improve any situation. He was a perfectionist who took pride in his completed work. He loved gadgets and even after retirement, Billy helped his brother Cliff and nephew Jimmy with some of their projects in their mechanical business. The three of them had a strong bond of being there for each other as often as they could. Bill cared deeply for his brother and had great respect and admiration for his nephew. Karen has often said that Bill felt like Jimmy was more like a son to him than a nephew.

Billy probably completed more on his bucket list than most of us ever will. He enjoyed a 2-week trip with his brother who piloted a small plane. They visited several small Bahamian islands. He's had numerous boats of all shapes, sizes and power. He spent much of his life on the ocean or on the James River.

Upon his return, if he didn't have fish, he had a story. Many of the fishing stories included JJ. We'll just say they had many boating "adventures." One of Billy's fishing dreams came true when he traveled to Costa Rica with a long-time friend, Donnie Burton. Billy, JJ, Cliff, Donnie, and nephew Jimmy enjoyed fishing adventures in the Keys and Bahamas as well.

Billy loved riding his motorcycle and rode as far as Miami to Maine where his sister Bettie lives. Billy enjoyed local riding with his pastor but only if he could ride in front of him due to Randy's Harley being so loud that it would drown out Billy's music. He also shared a very special relationship with his nephew, Gary, that included many motorcycle rides together and his niece, Elizabeth, who was very active in his life.

Racing was Billy's second passion after fishing. He was a racing fan and enjoyed the thrill of watching his nephew, "Little Dave" race a dragster. Billy frequently rode his motorcycle to the races at Southside Speedway and Langley. He befriended Michael (a police officer), Michael's girlfriend and father; they enjoyed sitting together at weekly races.

However, what Billy loved more than anything is Karen, his wife of 31 years. His last conversation with Karen this past week included "I may not have done everything right, but I always tried to do my best." Billy and Karen started every morning with a cup of coffee sitting side by side discussing the needs of the day or just silently being together. They supported each other throughout all of their responsibilities and shared the joys of the fruits of their labor. They spent many years enjoying their cottage at Boiling Springs Lake that Billy and JJ built. They looked forward to little things like snorkeling or sitting on the beach sharing fresh conch salad prepared by a Bahamian they befriended 20 years ago. Billy knew in his heart that Karen is committed to caring for her elderly mother, Judy. Billy devoted much of his time willingly and lovingly helping Karen with errands such as doctor and hair appointments for Judy. Billy had the true spirit of a loving husband doing all he could to make Karen's life secure and happy. They mutually shared their devotion for Blossom Mae their 13 year old puppy, often calling each other when apart and "speaking" to

Blossom over the phone.

Karen and Bill had 31 years of annual holiday celebrations with family and friends. For years they had an annual Halloween party for his grandson and 5 nieces and nephews. They loved sharing in the joys of birthday parties, attending the circus and other events with their 4 nieces and continuing the tradition with their 4 young grandnieces, nephew and granddaughter.

Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners will have a missing place setting, but there will be fun memories of Bill's love of food that include roasted oysters, JJ's barbeque, seafood, wings and again, Frank's famous stew.

Although Karen and Billy never had children of their own, they shared their love for Billy's daughter Stephanie and granddaughter Lulu. He was proud of Stephanie's work as a physical therapist assistant. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree and Billy and Stephanie had a father/daughter bond of love, care and humor. Stephanie's eyes light up as she shares some stories of her dad's mischievous and teasing ways. He was so proud to participate in his later years with Lulu's spiritual growth and interest in the church and church camp. Billy had a strong faith in the Lord and built a stronger faith over the last ten years as a member of Christ Community Church. Billy loved attending church and the fellowship socials. What he enjoyed most was the annual Iron Sharpens Iron men's fellowship retreat. Billy helped many people by contributing his plumbing, carpentry, and mechanic skills on mission trips with the church.

Billy's love for God, family, friends, and community made Billy whole. I believe what Karen said is true when some of her last words to him were that she would be there when he took his last breath and at that same time he would be with God.

Pain, sickness, suffering are hard to understand and leave so many of us asking why. Faith, love, hope are fruits of the spirit and this is what Billy believed until his last breath.

Farewell William, Bill, Uncle Billy, Billy Sanford- The Plumber.

William is survived by his wife of 31 years Karen Sanford; a daughter Stephanie Thompson; a granddaughter Mallory Thompson; a brother Clifton Sanford; a sister Bettie Johnson and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held 7 p.m., Thursday, April 2nd at Vincent Funeral Home, 9923 Pocahontas Trail, Providence Forge, VA 23140. The family will receive friends 5 to 7 p.m. prior to the memorial service.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Christ Community Church, 9001 Richmond Road, Toano, VA 23168.

# Tribute Wall

WP

“ *Williamsburg Emergency Physicians purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of William "Bill" Andrew Sanford.*



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**Williamsburg Emergency Physicians** - April 02, 2015 at 11:07 AM

GR

“ *Gary R. purchased the Sweet Remembrance Spray for the family of William "Bill" Andrew Sanford.*



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**Gary R.** - April 01, 2015 at 05:43 PM

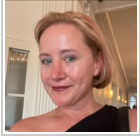


“ *Summer's Light Bouquet was purchased for the family of William "Bill" Andrew Sanford.*



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April 01, 2015 at 07:36 AM



“ I met Bill about 8 years ago, before I married his niece Elizabeth. He always had a unique view on the world, he's seen and done so much with his life experiences. He helped me re-build my Dad's Harley Davidson (really he did the work and I handed him tools). He took me for rides along the Colonial Parkway, and around Virginia. We took in some racing in Langley and at Southside. I think it's safe to say that the last years of his life have been some of the best of mine, and he's played no small part in that.

Gary Riley



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**Elizabeth Riley** - March 31, 2015 at 06:59 PM

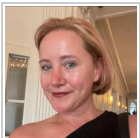


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**Elizabeth Riley** - March 31, 2015 at 06:49 PM



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**Elizabeth Riley** - March 31, 2015 at 06:48 PM

CM

“ Karen,  
*I am deeply sorry for your loss. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Cheryl Martin** - March 30, 2015 at 10:19 AM

SO

“ Karen....

*Our deepest sympathy to you and your family. Billy will be greatly missed.*

*Warren & Sandy Owens*

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**Sandy Owens** - March 30, 2015 at 10:11 AM

MG

“ *I am Morris Gordon. Billy and I were close friends as kids in the "Hood". I remember playing sandlot football in the field across from Billy's house. We was always doing something during the weekend. We graduated from Petersburg High School in 1963 and from there we took different paths as we grew up. I will miss him and know that he is with the Lord and not ill any more. He was a great friend.*

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**Morris Gordon** - March 29, 2015 at 09:11 PM

MW

“ *Billy was a member of the PHS class of 63. We have always been a class to try to keep up with each other. We will miss him.*



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**Millie Wright** - March 29, 2015 at 02:02 PM

BL

*Billy, along with his company staff, worked at the ICI site and became a trusted friend to many of us. He will be missed.*

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**Bruce Lanning** - March 29, 2015 at 06:25 PM

BW

*Karen and family,  
I am so sorry for the loss of your wonderful husband. I know from the stories shared of your travels that you and he shared a special kind of love and devotion for one another. I am sorry I never got to meet him.  
Brett*

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**Brett Willsie** - April 01, 2015 at 12:58 PM

JS

*Karen and family,  
I was very sorry to hear of Billy's passing. He was a unique personality who will missed by all who knew him.  
Billy and his guys completed many projects for me over his years at ICI and I very much enjoyed working with him. I considered him a personal friend that could be counted on whenever I needed help.*

*John Sandford*

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**john sandford** - April 02, 2015 at 11:23 PM