



William Metz Exner

May 2, 1929 - February 17, 2022

William Metz "Bill" Exner died February 17 at his home, after a short illness. He was 92 years old.

Bill was born May 2, 1929, in Chicago; his parents were William McKinley Exner and Elizabeth Ann Metz Exner. Bill was the oldest of their 5 children.

Bill attended a one-room schoolhouse as a young boy, and then he went to Downers Grove High School, where he was on the football and wrestling teams. After graduating from high school, Bill decided to enter the University of Georgia to study agriculture, which had always been an interest, instilled in him by his father. He joined Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity, and during his summers, he was employed by International Harvester, modeling for their advertising. Pictures of Bill sitting on tractors and in trucks were included in many periodicals during the 1950's and 1960's.

While at the University, he met a young lady at a dance, and they became engaged. After Bill received his degree, he and Fran got married on March 17, 1952. He took his bride back home to Illinois, where Bill began working at Argonne National Chemical Laboratories. Finding a love and a talent for teaching, he also began teaching science at Lemont High School. Four children: Michael, Eric, Jane, and Craig, were born to Bill and Fran in Illinois.

Bill's ambition to have a farm had not left him, and in 1963, he moved his family to Newnan. He began teaching science at Campbell High School in Fairburn, becoming the department chairman there. He received a Master's Degree in Science Education from West Georgia College. He also enjoyed his "gentleman's farm," gardening and raising cows and horses. The whole family enjoyed the country life! Bill knew the value of plants and trees, and he was a visionary; he and the children planted thousands of seedlings on their property over the years. Later on, he created a large pond, where the family enjoyed fishing, swimming, and camping. Bill's goal was to nurture his environment, and he and Fran created and walked miles of trails. Bill also planted fruit trees and blueberry bushes,

which the family has enjoyed for years.

In 1977, Bill and Fran bought the Newnan Florist, a successful business in the community for over 35 years. Bill retired from Fulton County Schools in 1987, after 30 years, and he and Fran managed the Florist together, aided by his brother Jerry, and other members of the family. Bill joined the Kiwanis Club of Newnan, and he also found time to travel, especially with the Elder Hostel; his favorite trips were to China, Costa Rica, Europe, and Russia. Bill loved to talk to people and learn from them; he made friends all over the world.

After closing the Florist, Bill retired-again-in 2012, and they settled down on the farm to enjoy his family. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren loved to visit "Papa," to listen to his stories and play with the various vintage toys he loved to accumulate.

Bill was a loving and generous man who cherished learning and teaching all of his life, influencing his 3 sons to become educators. No one left the Florist without a flower, and no one left his house without a book, an article, or a suggestion about a movie or television show to watch.

Bill served in the Army National Guard of Illinois, and he was proud to have two sons and a grandson who also served or are serving in the military.

In addition to his wife, Fran, Bill is survived by his children: Michael (Jill), Eric (Joan), Jane (Bob) Schnetzer, and Craig (Josie), all of Newnan. He also has eleven grandchildren: Ansley (Adam) Dennis, Erin (Ricky) Walker, Patrick Exner, Emily Exner, Ryan (Jessie), Schnetzer, Matthew Schnetzer, Jenna (Thomas) Darrah, Madison Exner, August Exner, Zane (Audrey) Exner, and Eliza Exner. He has eleven great-grandchildren, with another one due in March. Bill professed his faith in God and is in heaven with loved ones.

On March 17th, Bill and Fran would have celebrated 70 years of marriage.

A private family gathering is planned. In honor and in memory of Bill, plant a tree; build a bluebird box; give generously with no thought of return; hug a child; love life's adventures.

Condolences may be expressed online at www.mckoon.com

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory (770) 253-4580

Cemetery

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory

38 Jackson Street

Newnan, GA, 30263

Comments



“ When Dan’s daddy (Willie Joe Loftin) was the pastor at East Newnan Baptist Church, Mr. Bill and Ms. Fran always donated beautiful fresh flowers for the communion table. Dan and I would pick up the flowers on Saturday and so enjoyed talking with Mr Bill and Ms Fran. We never left without Mr Bill giving us A flower or something from the florist. One day Mr Bill gave us a cutting from his Cherokee rose. We still have that rose and I think of Mr Bill when it blooms.

Dan and Betty Loftin - March 14 at 02:51 PM



“ Dear Craig, Josey and family,
We are so sorry for your loss. Reading this beautiful obituary allowed us to see Mr. Exner's beautiful spirit in each of your children. From Zane's military service, August's beautiful welding and giving heart, to Eliza's excitement to travel and serve, you will see Bill every day of your lives. May God bring you comfort and peace in the following days.
Sending love to each of you,
Linda Kee and Cole Bridges

Linda Kee - February 21 at 10:18 AM



“ Very sadden to see this. Mr.Bill and MS.Fran was so dear to me. I meet them thru Newnan Florist. And a great friendship grew even after I moved to Auburn Ala. Mr. Exner always had a smile and he knew so much about plants. He will be greatly missed by so many. I know I will. MS.Fran God bless you and your family in days ahead.



Larry Fogarty - February 21 at 02:11 AM



“ Craig and Josie, I am so sorry to learn about your families loss. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. May the good Lord comfort you now and in the days ahead



Jamie Hixson - February 18 at 10:11 PM



“ He taught me chemistry and physics, giving me a firm foundation for college. He had a wonderful smile that was always present. My thoughts and prayers continue for the family, especially Jane and Eric.

Kim Wilder-Dyer - February 27 at 09:16 AM



“ Mr. Exner taught me Chemistry at Campbell High School! Very caring teacher who helped us get through chemistry! Fond memories of him! My thoughts and prayers are with his family! He leaves a beautiful legacy!

Patricia Moody - February 18 at 01:06 PM



“ Mr. Exner was one of my teachers, in high school, wonderful teacher and man. He always took the time to come to our class reunion's., always enjoying talking to him. Deepest sympathy to his family.

Judy Scarbrough Rivers - February 18 at 09:28 AM



“ This is such a beautiful tribute to a very special man! He left this world a better place! It is a lesson to all of us. I know a number of his wonderful children and am thinking of them today. I hope their memories of Bill will give them comfort.

Claudia Johnson - February 17 at 09:03 PM



“ Mike and Jill, so sorry to hear this. Please know that Jeannine and desire our Lord to bring comfort and peace to you and all your family.

Buddy Waldron - February 17 at 07:34 PM



“ Sincerest condolences. Mr. Exner certainly had a long and well lived life. May he Rest In Peace.



Geraldine Welch - February 17 at 06:59 PM



“ Dear Ansley & Adam:

The Camps, one & all, share our sincere condolences on the loss of a fine man & outstanding Citizen in Coweta, in GEORGIA & on behalf of our Nation.

Please know we are thinking of you. What a blessing that your families benefited from his GUIDANCE.

Fondly,

Mr & Mrs Jack Camp
Harry & Jeaneane
Alex & Sophie McCracken

Liz Camp - February 18 at 07:05 AM



“ Judy and I extend our prayers and condolences to you and your family during this time.

Doug and Judy Kearns - February 18 at 09:18 AM



“ My condolences to the Exner family. Mr. Bill was such a sweet man. I know he will be missed. Paulette LeClair, RN

Paulette LeClair - February 18 at 10:58 AM



“ Mr. Exner was my favorite teacher at Campbell High School - I was inspired by him to major in chemistry in college. He was a kind, gentle, and patient teacher who could manage with grace a classroom of rowdy juniors and seniors. I visited him and his wife a couple of years ago and was delighted to hear of his travels. His love of family and friends was evident in all he said and did. He's celebrating with our Lord now after a life well-lived. Thank you, Mr. Exner!

Lizabeth Andrew - February 18 at 07:48 PM



“ Mr. Exner was my chemistry and physics teacher at Campbell High School in 1968 and 1969. He was loved by me and the entire student body. He was always pleasant and friendly and I had the pleasure of seeing him again after I went to work in the Fulton County school system in the late 1970's. I give my deepest sympathy to the family.

Mike Rohrbaugh - February 22 at 05:20 PM