



## William (Bill) Sellmeyer

July 18, 1943 - July 16, 2024

On July 16, 2024, Bill Sellmeyer passed away at his home in Montgomery, TX with his wife and son by his side after a hard-fought battle against multiple myeloma cancer. Bill lived his life with a love for family, aviation, and the world around him.

The son of an American Airlines pilot and stewardess, Bill was born on July 18, 1943 in El Paso, TX. As Bill would say, he was never sure which side of the border he was born on. Bill was the only boy of five children, with one twin sister and three younger sisters.

During high school, he worked at a local airport fueling airplanes and worked towards his pilot's license, which he obtained at the age of 16. He graduated from Jesuit High School in Dallas and then went on to Texas A&M University. Armed with a degree in aeronautical aviation, Bill started flying for Trans-Texas Airways at the ripe young age of 22, which soon led at least one startled passenger to promptly exit the plane saying "If this kid is flying this airplane, I'm walking to Tyler!". Over the following 38 years, Bill would enjoy an amazing pilot career, and in 2003 retired on the 777 as the second most senior Continental Airlines pilot.

There were many notable career highlights: bunking at a YMCA for \$325 / month as a young pilot while flying the DC-3, transporting corpses all over Texas in a Piper Comanche, navigating a Convair 240 around two tornadoes, avoiding a low-altitude mid-air collision with a plane running drugs in Laredo, captaining a Beech 18 all over West Texas, flying the family from London to

Newark on the 747 the night of Y2K, and 777 military charters to Kuwait during the buildup of the Iraq War. His military charters were one of his most honored flying. Once he retired in 2003 from Continental, he honored our veterans flying historic WWII bombers (B-17, B-24, & B-25) across the USA for the Collins Foundation for nearly a decade.

Bill's love for family was bigger than the state of Texas. He met the love of his life and his future wife Carolyn in 1981 in Salt Lake City. They were married the next year and soon welcomed their children Charles and Barbara. The family would accompany Bill on his trips all over the world, and nothing would please him more than announcing what seats his kids were sitting in and reminding them to "not put your feet on the furniture in flight" during pre-flight announcements, much to other passengers' amusement.

Bill's genuine interest in others' lives would earn him a circle of friends around the world that could fill the Dallas Cowboys stadium and lead him down many paths, including entrepreneurship along with six years as a city councilman in Addison, TX. He never met a stranger and never forgot a name, living by the motto that his good friend Zig Ziglar had imparted to him early on "The most important thing a person owns is their name". Until the day he passed, Bill kept his modesty, and would avoid talking about himself "I know all about me, tell me about yourself."

For Bill, God and country were held in the highest regard, a true patriot and believer of leading a life based on values. Throughout his flying career, Bill felt closer to God as he flew above the clouds on the wings of angels. Throughout his battle with myeloma cancer, Bill's faith in the Lord never wavered, calling on him for strength every day to fight an unimaginable battle.

Bill is survived by his wife Carolyn, son Charles, daughter Barbara, son-in-law Phil, & granddaughters Helena and Valerie. His fighting spirit, goodwill, and larger-than-life personality will live on with his family and in every person lucky enough to cross his path.

Services will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 8277 Cr 205, Plantersville, TX 77363, on Thursday, August 8, 2024, at 10:30am.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, the family has set up a donation link for St. Mary's Catholic Church below. Bill's faith and love for his church were a major part of his life. With your donation, St. Mary's will be able to allocate funds to a much-needed item in Bill's name. Thank you and many blessings. Donation Link: <https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/F5EM3XJARALFA>

You may leave written memorials to his family at [www.shmfh.com](http://www.shmfh.com)

## Cemetery Details

### St Mary's Catholic Cemetery

Plantersville, TX

## Previous Events

### Funeral Service

AUG 8. 10:30 AM (CT)

St Mary's Church  
8185 County Road 205  
Plantersville, TX 77363

# Tribute Wall

SM

“ My husband Jim and I were simply heartbroken at the passing of Bill. Both he and his wife Carolyn were so warm and filled with personality We became instant friends. Bill and I shared a love for Johnny Cash music and both favored the song "Sunday Morning Coming Down". When I hear that song, now more than ever, memories of Bill's classic, fun-loving personality overwhelms me. He will live in our hearts forever. Rest in peace our beautiful friend. May the choirs of angels come and greet you. 'Til we meet again ❤️  
Love, Sharon and Jim McCormack

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**Sharon McCormack** - December 04, 2024 at 01:01 PM

SA

“ Prayers to the family RIP 🌹  
Sandy TXIA, Continental FA Early Out '85

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**Sandra Ashford** - August 05, 2024 at 04:07 PM

GJ

“ I am sorry for your loss, and you are in my prayers. Bill was instrumental in helping me achieve a successful 37-year career in aviation. He was my first instructor (and a friend at Jesuit) when I got my private pilot's license at Red Bird Airport in 1965. He gave me a great foundation to build on. Because of his help I had an extremely successful flying career at Braniff and United. You might even call me one of his "star" students. I will always be indebted to him for helping me find my dreams in aviation.

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**Greg George Class of 60 Jesuit** - July 31, 2024 at 03:36 PM



“ *Bill was a year ahead of me at Jesuit High School. In 1960 I briefly dated his sister Peggy and got to know her wonderful older brother, Bill. He was a terrific and kind person. Years later our paths crossed a couple of times on airline flights. I was happy to read of his wonderful life. My sincere condolences to the entire Sellmeyer families. Jerry Lyle Jones class of 1962*

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**Jerry Lyle Jones** - July 30, 2024 at 02:47 PM



“ *We were the lucky family next door when we became friends with all the Sellmeyer's. Bill was always smiling from ear to ear and always happy to see us. We are all so saddened by this news. Sending our love to all. Scott & Barbara and all the family.*



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**Barbara Taylor-Johnson** - July 26, 2024 at 06:24 PM