

William Urban Griffith, III

November 1, 1942 - March 10, 2023

WILLIAM URBAN GRIFFITH, III, fondly known as "Griff" entered Heaven on March 10, 2023, after a long illness. Surrounded by family and friends in the days preceding his death, his illness was healed and he was renewed according to the promises of the Holy Scriptures.

Long awaited, he was received with great joy at birth in the Houston Heights historic Heights Hospital on November 1st, 1942, by his parents Irene Lillian (Michalak) Griffith and William U. Griffith, Jr.

Griff married his dear Ollie Merline in April 2020. While together just a few years, Griff and Merline enjoyed life abundantly in their golden age, traveling, visiting friends, and cherishing and caring for one another.

Preceded in death by his parents and his beloved wife of nearly 38 years, Virgie Ann Griffith. Griff is survived by Merline; sister Linda O'Kelley; brother Thomas Griffith and wife Louise; sister Sharon Griffith; daughter Elizabeth Villarreal and husband Ernest; son William U. Griffith, IV; son Mark Griffith and wife Mandi; daughter Rachel Tuinstra and husband Bill; grandchildren Ariel Villarreal, Allison Villarreal, Abigail Villarreal, Zachary Villarreal, Haley Voumard, Eleanor Griffith, David Griffith, Kristina Schweyer, Eric Schweyer, Mason Griffith, Skyler Griffith, Tim Land; and great-grandchildren Anthony Briceno and Jackson Schweyer.

Graduated from John H. Reagan High School in Houston in 1961, Griff worked for Hughes Tool Co., Grant Prideco and later in life, Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice where he was an engineer with the Facilities Dept.

Griff was very blessed to have an enormous community of friends and the outpouring of love has been a shining tribute to a man who was a friend to all.

What a difference he made! From Hughes Tool and his Houston sphere of family and friends to Grant Prideco and his Navasota sphere of friends to TDCJ and his Huntsville and Central Texas sphere of family and friends, he was the same larger than life, kind, thoughtful gentleman who loved his family so.

Griff, always a true patriot who loved his Country, enjoyed visiting family and friends, reading the Holy Scriptures and found great joy in the outdoors camping, fishing and hunting. He was an avid collector of many fascinating things and gadgets.

True friends are rare, but they are those who show up at the hardest times. Among the dozens of visitors during Griff's hospital stay, several visited multiple times, communicated daily or supported Merline every single day. The loving support of his friends lifted Griff's spirits and gave him a smile. Particular thanks to Damon Starr, Richard Cowan, Patrick McGinty, Len Zazzarino, Chris Smith, Marilyn King, Ginger Norred, Joyce Ogle, Debbie and Joe Williams, and the Thursday Night Supper Club.

Griff's family would like to thank the outstanding nursing, dialysis and PT/OT staff at HCA Conroe Regional Hospital for their dedicated, compassionate and thoughtful care of Griff during his time there.

Pastor Mike Loftin will conduct Griff's services at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home in Huntsville, Texas at 10:00 AM Tuesday, March 21, 2023 as well as graveside services at Forest Park Lawndale in Houston, Texas at 2:00 PM on the same day.

Pallbearers are Tom Griffith, William Griffith, Mark Griffith, Mason Griffith, Zachary Villarreal and Richard Cowan. Honorary pallbearers are Ernest Villarreal, Bill Tuinstra and Chris Smith.

Visitation is scheduled at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home on Monday, March 20, 2023 from 4:00 PM until 8:00 PM.

To send a memorial gift in Griff's memory, please consider the PTSD Foundation of America's Camp Hope at <https://ptsdusa.org/give-help/>

Memorial condolences to the family may be made at www.shmfh.com.

Cemetery Details

Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery

6900 Lawndale St
Houston, TX 77023

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 20. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr
Huntsville

Funeral Service

MAR 21. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr
Huntsville

Graveside Service

MAR 21. 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM (CT)

Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery
6900 Lawndale St
Houston, TX 77023

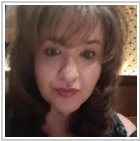
Tribute Wall

LA

“ *Merlene, my thoughts and prayers are you at this time.* ”



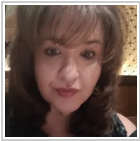
Linda Andrews - March 22, 2023 at 10:22 PM



“ *Julie Courtney lit a candle in memory of William Urban Griffith, III* ”



Julie Courtney - March 21, 2023 at 11:10 PM



“ *Mr.Griffith was such a sweet person. I was working at Facilities and he would always check on me and light up my day with a greeting. Even after I moved on to another area, he would still greet me most mornings with a wonderful bright greeting. He was such a sweet soul and will be missed. My prayers to his family.* ”

Julie Courtney - March 21, 2023 at 11:08 PM

CG

“ *Cindy Guajardo lit a candle in memory of William Urban Griffith, III* ”



Cindy Guajardo - March 21, 2023 at 05:14 PM

LA

“ Linda in AZ purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of William Urban Griffith, III.



Linda in AZ - March 20, 2023 at 03:19 PM

TS

“ I only worked with Griff at TDCJ for a few short years, but I became very fond of him. He always had a good story and made you smile. We will miss his texts and emails, but will look forward to seeing him again. May God comfort his family in this time of loss.

Terry Stinson

Terry Stinson - March 20, 2023 at 07:39 AM

DC

“ I first met Griff in May, 2008 when I moved to Huntsville and started working for TDCJ. You knew you were in the presence of a gentleman by his very deep, polite voice and respectful manner. He had a great sense of humor and could always put a smile on your face. I left TDCJ in 2013 and Griff was great at always making sure that you received a phone call on your birthday. Knowing that he is no longer having to fight health issues in his earthly body and is in his permanent home in Heaven is a peace that gives comfort, knowing we will meet again. Love and sympathy to family and friends.

Debby Cook

Debby Cook - March 19, 2023 at 09:12 PM

VN

“ I will greatly miss my dear friend, Griff! What a special people person he was, always wise, friendly, goofy at times, & never forgot a name (his memory amazed me)! We had some good times up at my brother's ranch (along with Virgie & later Merline). My heart goes out to his family, Merline, Elizabeth, Will, Mark, Rachel (along with their spouses & his grandchildren), & Tom & Louise. My hope is that the Lord will comfort you in your grief, knowing that his struggles are over & he is now in his wonderful, heavenly home God has prepared for him. He will suffer no more. Through our faith, we know we will see him again someday. Until we meet again, we love you, Griff, & will never forget you!



Ginger & Don Norred

Virginia (Ginger) Norred - March 19, 2023 at 08:39 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of William Urban Griffith, III.



March 18, 2023 at 09:49 AM

KB

“ Krystin Bratton lit a candle in memory of William Urban Griffith, III



Krystin Bratton - March 17, 2023 at 05:46 PM

SG

“ *Sheila Gaskins lit a candle in memory of William Urban Griffith, III*



Sheila Gaskins - March 16, 2023 at 05:58 PM

PW

“ *I am so sorry about Griff, He was such a good person I will miss him. We had such a good time working together at Hughes Tool Co. Prather Ward*

prather I. ward - March 16, 2023 at 03:34 PM



“ *I am heartbroken to hear this! Griff and I became friends several years ago when I was working at Palais Royal. He would come in just to say hello. I will miss his uplifting text messages, kind heart, and great big smile! Rest In Peace my dear friend!*

Symantha McMillan McCrerey - March 15, 2023 at 09:04 AM

TD

“ *Griff was a gracious man with a huge heart. I haven't known him long, but he always had a smile, a kind word and an occasional joke. My heart is so sad that he was not able to enjoy his retirement after so many dedicated years to TDCJ, but knowing he is in Heaven, no more pain or the disappointment of losing his health is present. Many prayers for Merline and his family. Heaven is Sweeter.*

Tami Dees - March 15, 2023 at 08:09 AM

JB

“ *Janice, Brad & Claudia, Rachel & Bill purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of William Urban Griffith, III.*



Janice, Brad & Claudia, Rachel & Bill - March 14, 2023 at 07:05 PM

MH

“ *M. Hyvl lit a candle in memory of William Urban Griffith, III*



M. Hyvl - March 14, 2023 at 12:57 PM

HM

“ *Heidelberg Materials purchased the Magnificent Life Spray for the family of William Urban Griffith, III.*



Heidelberg Materials - March 14, 2023 at 12:38 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of William Urban Griffith, III.*



March 14, 2023 at 10:06 AM