



William Large

December 20, 1940 - May 28, 2024

William "Bill" Large, 83, of Washington Township, MI, passed away on May 28, 2024, surrounded by his loved ones. Bill was born on December 20, 1940, the cherished son of Thomas P. Large and Margaret Gojdics.

On June 23, 1962, Bill married the love of his life, Mary, in Grosse Pointe, MI. Their marriage was a testament to love and partnership, lasting until Mary's passing in 2017. Together, they built a life filled with joy and family.

Bill had a distinguished career at General Motors. He started at Chevrolet Engineering as a Mechanical Engineer where his dedication and expertise left a lasting impact. He was best known for his role at GM Powertrain as Chief Engineer of Truck Engines. He retired in 1998, after contributing significantly to the field.

A devout member of St. Kieran Catholic Church for 50 years, Bill's faith was a cornerstone of his life. His commitment to his community and church was unwavering.

Bill's passion was cars. He had his first vehicle, a 1947 Mercury, when he was 14 years old. He has since fully restored five vehicles, including a rare 1946 Mercury Sportsman and a 'perfect' factory restored 1948 Mercury Convertible. Bill was an enthusiastic and active member of various automotive clubs,

including Competition Specialists Auto Club since 1957, Michigan Hot Rod Association (MHRA) since 1957, the Ford & Mercury Restorers Club since 1990, the Ford V8 Club since 1994, and the Breakfast Club. His knowledge and love for cars were well-known throughout the automotive community. On the weekends, he loved going to car shows and swap meets.

Bill also continued to support the Cane and Able Stroke Recovery group even after his wife, Mary's passing.

Bill was also a loyal fan of the Detroit Tigers, and enjoyed traveling, going to the theater and movies, and attending as many of the grandkid activities as he could fit into his very busy social calendar!

Bill's memory will be cherished by his children: Thomas (Lori) and Kimberly (Kurt); his grandchildren: Grace (Sahil), Claire (Mark), Meghan, Robert, Kristina, and Paul; and his great-grandchild, Jameson. He is also survived by his siblings, Marie and Gerald. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Mary Large; his parents, Thomas and Margaret; and his siblings, Marge, Rita, Tom, Jim, and Anne.

A Celebration of Life Gathering will be held at Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors on Friday, June 28, 2024, visitation from 1 PM to 4 PM, a Memorial Service beginning at 4 PM, then additional visitation from 5 PM to 6 PM. The family invites you to share your memories of Bill at www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Visitation

JUN 28. 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

A Celebration of Life Service

JUN 28. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Tribute Wall

JN

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Joyce Nienhuis - June 28, 2024 at 01:58 AM

JA

“ Bill was a colleague and friend. We first met when he was Chief for the 60V6 and I was the power train person for implementing in the Pontiac Fiero. Lots of issues, but all got solved. When GM Powertrain formed , we were brought together as Chiefs and spent much time together as staff, but Bill was trucks and I was cars. Even so, we spent a lot of time together, including with wives. Loved to touch base during retirement at the joint lunches. Jim Aitken

Jim Aitken - June 25, 2024 at 05:20 PM

GT

“ GM Engine Calibration Team purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of William Large.



GM Engine Calibration Team - June 25, 2024 at 02:32 PM

PT

“ *What a wonderful man was Mr. Bill Large! I had the distinct gift of working with him at GM for 33 years. He mentored me as a young engineer and helped me so very much in my career at GM. I'm certain that he is now in Heaven... mentoring the 'young Angels'!*💖

Paul Treumuth - June 24, 2024 at 10:07 AM

RC

“ *I first met Bill in the very early 70's when I was quite active in the Western NY section of SAE and Bill came to Buffalo to give a presentation on the all new Chevrolet Vega. Subsequent to my transfer to Michigan in 1973 I eventually ended up working for Bill in the Truck Engine Group. I still recall a couple of Bill's famous quotes: "Plan your work and work your plan", also "Plastic is for toys, aluminum is for pots and pans and iron is for motors". On a more personal note, my wife Mary and I ran into Bill and his wife on many occasions and more recently would see Bill in his front row seat at St. Kieran's Church 11:30 AM mass. His passing is quite a shock and I am sure he will be sorely missed by many.....Richard "RJ" Cunningham*

P.S. I believe the second from the left in the Dick Michalski group photo is Don Armstrong.

Richard Cunningham - June 19, 2024 at 04:30 PM

JB

“ I worked with Bill once a week for 10 years on his 1947 hot rod Mercury . Bill taught me many skills among was “it isn’t right it’s wrong . Will miss my friend.



Jack Baude - June 06, 2024 at 12:27 PM

DD

“ Bill Large a CHARACTER of a man and a great engineer, Bill hired me in from Engineering Staff, and shortly afterwards placed me to fix a fuel safety issue on the new J-car. My assignments under Bill showed his demands of good work and engineering expectations. Visiting his home garage to see his old car and outside GM love revealed the man. That continued in small manners via Chevrolet Marketing presentations and his friendly / strong character. I gained insight and mannerisms also, as we all do. In retirement, I saw Bill via Fish Fry Fridays and CERC gatherings, all of which reminded me greatly of my friendship. He will be missed.

Dennis Dysarz

Dennis Dysarz - June 06, 2024 at 09:04 AM

VH

“ I spent nearly 3 decades working for or with Bill. He always had a plan so when you came to our staff meeting with a plan, he would look it over and approve it. But if you didn't have a plan, you would leave the staff meeting with a plan that Bill gave you and it may not have been to your liking. As chief engineer for truck engines he was challenged to convince the truck organization to switch from carburetors to fuel injected engines. The challenge was that there was a believe that the average trucker would not want to be driving a truck with modern fuel injection technology. Bill had all the facts which finally convinced the truck organization.

Bill was very competitive so we staged a race in Phoenix, Arizona between the 4.3 L little truck and a big block full size truck. The first race was won by the little S truck. So Bill and his team worked all night on the big truck, which was obviously won by the big block truck which made Bill happy.

Bill's last project as Chief engineer was to modernize the big block engine and increase the displacement to 8.1L. Before the project completion, Bill decided to retire and he passed the baton to finish the job to me.

Always a great leader and engineer, I certainly owe him a lot.

Adelheid and I have deeply admired him for his dedication to his wife Mary, standing by her side and never giving up on her in the most difficult times.

May he rest in peace.

Volker Harhaus - June 04, 2024 at 04:21 PM

RS

I enjoyed working for Bill. He was a man of promise. He provided good guidance and always kept his promise. I enjoyed working for him immensely.

Raj Shah - June 24, 2024 at 09:59 AM

IW

“ *In love, Sam & Mary Winegarden planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William Large.*

In love, Sam & Mary Winegarden - June 04, 2024 at 01:00 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of William Large.*



June 04, 2024 at 01:00 PM

PC

“ I have some great memories of Bill and I from as far back as the late 1950s. Bill was in college and working part time in a metal fab shop in East Detroit when I asked for some help with the '49 Anglia B-gasser I was building at the time. He loved the project and became my partner and was the designated driver in the 1960 NHRA Summer Nationals at Detroit Dragway.

We ended up being best friends in our car club, Competition Specialists Auto Club, sharing years of drag racing activities, car tours, 66 Autoramas and more than 30 annual trips to the AACA Swap and Car Show in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Bill was a great car builder!

More important however, Bill was respected for his unswerving dedication in caring for Mary Beth and their family. We will miss you, Bill!

Paul Curtis - June 03, 2024 at 02:14 PM

TA

“ On August 9th, 2023, Bill joined in the fun for a day on Lake St Clair with John Stier and myself as we enjoyed the power of a pair of 8.1L EFI engines configured for marine applications. We had a day of cruising and a lunch stop and had some great conversations about the GM days. It was truly a memory day for all of us.....

Terry Andrzejewski



Terry Andrzejewski - June 02, 2024 at 10:57 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of William Large.



June 01, 2024 at 06:45 PM



“ I first met Bill in 1972.He was an engineer working on the Vega engine in the office next to mine. I was new to the product engineer job and was confused by some of the paperwork. Bill was the only engineer around at that moment so I asked him for help. Bill was very gracious and interrupted his busy day to help me through the paperwork maze. In 1984 Bill as a chief engineer hired me and I reported directly to him for nearly 15 years until his retirement. Bill’s requirements were simple: Show me the data. Bill was a straight shooter I missed him when he retired and now I’ll miss him at Duggans lunch first Tuesday of every month.

John Stier - May 30, 2024 at 08:05 PM



“ Some additional photos of Bill Large in 1984 on trip to Italy



Richard Michalski - May 30, 2024 at 02:48 PM

RM

“ Bill and I first met in 1975-6 when I worked in the Vega Engine Group. I worked on the Vega Engine, and Bill worked on the Chevette 4-cylinder engine. Over our careers Bill and I crossed paths many times. I worked WITH him - FOR him - WITH him - FOR him - and later in our careers again WITH him. I absolutely loved to work for Bill. He was ALWAYS demanding, knew what he wanted, willing to listen to others (if you had facts), and willing to change if necessary. He was a proud person well deserving of others respect. He was truly a PE – a Professional Engineer.

My wife and I first met, Bill's wife, Mary, around 1978. It was shortly before Mary had her stroke. Watching Bill's love and tender care for Mary through the years was inspirational for all who knew them. I remember going to a Tiger Baseball game with Bill and Mary. They both loved the Tigers. They truly loved the time they spent together.

Bill will be missed by all those who knew him. His legacy lives on in GM's products and the hearts of all who he interacted with. My condolences to his family members.

Dick Michalski



Richard Michalski - May 30, 2024 at 12:07 PM

RM

Left to Right - Tom Tyler, ?, Bill Large, Jay Strausbaugh, Mark VanderEyck, Barb Shuler, John Hansen, Vern Brown, Dick Michalski, Bill Miller, Francis Cox and ?

Richard Michalski - May 30, 2024 at 12:16 PM

FC

I remember Bill from way back when I was a senior detail draftsman on loan to the V8 engine design group at Chevrolet Engineering. More recently from seeing him at Breakfast Club on Saturday mornings. When us young draftsman had questions on the "heavy stuff" like Dimensional stack-ups, etc. Bill was the go-to guy! He knew his stuff and he knew how to explain things in understandable terms. Bill is one of the guys who helped shape the careers of many young people, myself included. Godspeed Bill...

Fred Cook - May 30, 2024 at 06:38 PM

PR

*I knew Bill from the Early Ford V-8 Club. He was always a super friendly guy.
Bill led many seminars. He was a great engineer and an excellent teacher. Ask him a question and you would get the most in-depth answer possible.
Rest in Peace old friend.
Paul Rebescher EFV-8 Club*

paul rebescher - May 30, 2024 at 08:32 PM

LM

I also knew Bill from the Early Ford V8 Club. He was a really nice guy. All of us club members will miss his old Ford meet at his beautiful place. Even though I was about 14 months older than Bill, I was always trying to get him to adopt me! I would love to have lived at his place and be around the really cool cars he had. Loren Moore

Loren Moore - May 31, 2024 at 01:37 AM

CM

The world has lost a wonderful man and a great engineer. As many said, Bill the engineer, was data driven and I truly admired him for that. But underneath the strong leader was a man who cared about not only the product, but especially his people. I was very fortunate to work in Bill's organization for over 10 years where although I never reported directly to him, he took the time to know and be involved with all his people. He would listen and analyze and provide direction when needed. Firm, but fair. A man I, and many others, admired for these traits. Thank you Bill for being a mentor, leader, a good and honest man, and all these years later, I can honestly say a friend. Peace be with you.

Creighton (Creig) Mantey

Creig Mantey - May 31, 2024 at 07:04 AM

LI

I have known Bill both at G.M. and as a fellow restorer/street rodder. He was a true gentleman and although I was assigned to Bill's group, I never reported directly to him. He was great to work with, had a wonderful sense of humor, and most of all, I respected him. I will miss seeing him at the swap meets, and the occasional e-mail about our mutual love of cars. God speed my friend until we meet again.

Louis Ironside - May 31, 2024 at 03:02 PM

PD

I worked for Bill in the mid 90s as a release engineer for powertrain controls and then as a resident engineer for the '96 truck engine upgrade programs. I echo many of the comments already posted regarding Bill as a proud engineer always 'grounded' in the physics of the data. However, even more importantly for me, is how he treated people, and was principled in doing what was right [not convenient or politically correct], as was the 'norm' in GM's dysfunctional culture leading to its downfall. Many thanks Bill for demonstrating courage in business and life and for truly doing the 'right things at the right time in the right way'. A good man indeed. Condolences to his family and all of us who had the privilege of know him!

Paul DeMand

Paul DeMand - June 01, 2024 at 07:40 PM

RT

I first met Bill in the 60's when we were both young engineers at GM. I worked in the transmission design group while he worked in engine design. Don't remember how we met but we maintained a professional and friends relationship ever since and worked together on many truck projects. He was a engineer and person to admire and will be missed by many.

Ralph Tredway

Ralph Tredway - June 02, 2024 at 04:44 AM

AC

Bill Large was the Chief Engineer on projects I worked on for over 20 years. First as Chief Engineer on 60° V6 Engines in cars and later as Chief Engineer of Truck Engines. I was working as a calibration engineer on the 60° V6 X-11 car at the Milford Proving Grounds in the early 80's when our group set up for a "Cold Start Party" for Bill to come and Cold Start all the 60° V6 vehicles.

I was sitting in the passenger seat of the X-11 I was responsible for when Bill got into the driver's seat. He asked me, "What are we were supposed to do?". I answered, "We can follow the official GM GMUTS Cold Start procedure but you're the Chief Engineer and you can do whatever you want". He said, "We're going to do a "Va-Rumpa" test." I asked, "What's a Va-Rumpa test?" He answered, "You'll see."

Bill started the car and backed it out of the parking spot and lined it up with the entrance ramp of the Oval Track and put it in Drive. Instead of following the quarter throttle drive away of the procedure, he floored it. We went "Va-Rumpa" roaring down the entrance ramp without a hitch and Bill says "You Passed".

I learned that Bill wanted us to not only follow the official procedures to evaluate our products but to also think out of the box to catch any issues before our customers do.

Andrew R. Cacossa

Andrew R. Cacossa - June 02, 2024 at 06:20 PM

JN

I'm the volunteer Coordinator of Cane and Able Stroke Recovery Group. We support stroke survivors and caregivers in their journey post-stroke.

I have had the honor and privilege of knowing Bill and Mary for 20 years. They were active members of Cane and Able and rarely missed a meeting or special event.

Bill and Mary attended presentations from clinical experts as well as leaders in the community. They especially enjoyed group day trips and Detroit Ball Games. As an avid Tiger fan, Bill arranged for our group to attend games annually for many years. Bill and Mary also appreciated our park potlucks and annual dinner parties, which celebrated the holidays and the anniversary of the founding of Cane and Able. Twice, Bill hosted a potluck at his home for our group, sharing his clever design and functions of barrier-free home modifications to help other members glean some tips to optimize function.

Bill was a dedicated caregiver to Mary, a friend to members new and old, and never seemed to let a physical or communication challenge impact the ability to share fellowship and support. We appreciated that Bill stayed active in Cane and Able after Mary's passing. He will be greatly missed.

Joyce Fluegge Nienhuis

Joyce Nienhuis - June 28, 2024 at 01:55 AM