



## Willis A. "Bill" Springer Jr.

July 20, 1944 - April 24, 2019

My dad, Willis A. Springer, Jr. - AKA Bill, Dad, Grandpa, Mr. Springer, or Mr. Foot died on April 24, 2019 at the age of 74.

My dad was born on July 20, 1944 in Meridian, Mississippi to Willis A. "Bill" Sr. and Betty Springer. He and my mom, Mark were married after falling in love while teaching at Cape Junior High on August 8, 1970 and spent the next 48 years together making memories. He was an incredible father to my late brother, Trey and myself; a role-model and father-in-law to my husband, Jason; as well as a loving grandfather to Savanna and Zach who brought him so much joy.

As an only child, my dad found entertainment and joy from reading and spending countless hours in the library with his grandmother as well as many afternoons in the movie theater. He joined the Boy Scouts as a child and continued into adulthood spending many summers at Camp Lewallen making a multitude of friends. He also enjoyed his time as a student while at the University of Tennessee-Martin where he earned his degree in Secondary education.

My dad, moved to Cape Girardeau to begin his teaching career at Cape Central Jr. High where he began to grow into who so many people know as Mr. Springer or just Springer. He later moved to Cape Senior High where my

dad fully came into his own as an educator and mentor. According to many accounts, he managed to always make History, English and Reading interesting. He took a stint from teaching to be principal at St. Vincent de Paul Grade School and to work at Sohn's Menswear. My dad made an impact on everyone he met regardless of where he was serving. He was either making your mind sharper or he was making you dress sharper or just trying to trick you to look down at your shirt.

My dad seemed to know everyone. He saw people he knew everywhere we went. He either taught them or their children and was sincerely interested in the people they or their children had become. He was a force to be reckoned with no doubt. His smile was infectious and his wit was always entertaining and most often memorable.

While he was a classroom favorite and made such an impact on so many lives through teaching and just being Bill, it was his family that was his center. He was a family man at heart carrying out the duties of being a son, husband, father and grandfather to the highest degree. He was a doting son and a loving husband. He has been the best dad a girl could ever have. I smile as I envision him and my brother reunited as it is my brother's turn to be with him.

My dad is survived by his loving wife, Mark; his daughter Susan (Jason) Ayers; grandchildren, Savanna and Zach Ayers; sister-in-law, Vicki McMullen; many adopted family members- you know who you are- and countless friends. He also leaves behind his two beloved dogs.

I pray we continue to celebrate this man who has celebrated and loved so many of us.

Visitation will be held on Friday, April 26 from from 3:30 to 8:30 pm at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Cape Girardeau. Visitation will continue on

Saturday, from 8:30 to 9:30 am at the church with the funeral mass and celebration following at 10:00 am. Burial will take place directly after at Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in memory of Trey or the Trey Springer Scholarship Fund at Notre Dame Regional High School.

# Cemetery Details

## Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

2315 Highway 61 North  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 334-1909  
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 26. 3:30 PM - 8:30 PM (CT)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church  
1919 Ritter Dr.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

## Visitation

APR 27. 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM (CT)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church  
1919 Ritter Dr.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

## Funeral Mass

APR 27. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church  
1919 Ritter Dr.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701



# Tribute Wall

SR

“ *Very saddened to learn of Bill’s passing. I was out of town for the funeral, but had him in my thoughts all weekend. I was fortunate to know Bill as a colleague on the History Dept at Cape Central High School, and the summer paint crew. As a junior staff member, I learned a lot by just listening to him “pontificate”! He had wonderful stories, an incredibly sharp wit, and a razor tongue that would dash any opponent in a debate. Even after all these years, when I think of Mr Bill Springer, a smile immediately appears...a most fitting tribute!*

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**Steve Richardet** - May 06, 2019 at 02:42 PM

RN

“ *I am so sorry for your loss - I can understand how you must be feeling. I know you have strong faith and you are a strong person so in time will be able to carry on. You have great memories which will be very comforting. The newspaper articles were wonderful. Had planned to send them on to you but unable to find your address. Please know that your friends at Health Point are thinking of you. Much love - Ruth Needle*

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**Ruth Needle** - April 29, 2019 at 11:29 AM

SP

“ I was very fond of multi-talented Bill Springer as well as sweet Marki, darling Susan and remarkable Trey!  
I taught across the street at Notre Dame Regional High School when Bill was the intriguing, talented, amusing and compassionate Principal at St. Vincent de Paul School, where my three children Jason, Alex and Witney were exposed to and learned from Bill as well as some terrific teachers.

One day I came to St. Vincent's before school, and I met up with Bill in the hallway. Out of the blue, he asked me what candy I would put in the shoes of all the children attending this great school. He threw out some ideas; I threw out some ideas; then I had “a Eureka moment, “ and suggested a hard candy the kiddos could suck on in lieu of jabbering too much- hard candy as in really hard to bite into. Then almost simultaneously we both said, “Jolly Ranchers!” It worked out well!

Blessings to you dear Bill and to your entire family 🙏

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**Sheila Neary Hopkins Phillips** - April 29, 2019 at 06:33 AM

KE

“ Kathryn Carney Evensen lit a candle in memory of Willis A. "Bill" Springer Jr.



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**Kathryn Carney Evensen** - April 28, 2019 at 11:01 PM

“ *Marki Sue McMullen - is the name I will always remember you by and, of course, just good 'ole, fun-loving Bill. I met you both in 1965 when my then boyfriend, Mike Snow of Paris, Tennessee, taught with both of you at the Junior High School. Mike and I married in late '65, had twin sons in 1968. I'm sure you know that Mike passed away from misdiagnosed heart problems at much too young an age.*

*Through out the years I've heard about Bill's amazing career connection to the Cape public school system through friends who still reside in Cape. Judging by Bill's picture, except for a few gray hairs, he hasn't changed a bit.*

*I see that you too lost a son, just as I did 5 years ago, a devastation from which we parents will never recover. Be assured Bill is now with your Trey, just as I know Mike is with my Spencer. I hope you can find some comfort in that.*

*Marki, I hope this little trip "down memory lane" will afford you a reason to smile and Marki Sue McMullen - is the name I will always remember you by and, of course, just good 'ole, fun-loving Bill. I met you both in 1965 when my then boyfriend, Mike Snow of Paris, Tennessee, taught with both of you at the Junior High School. Mike and I married in late '65, had twin sons in 1968. I'm sure you know that Mike passed away from misdiagnosed heart problems at much too young an age.*

*Through out the years I've heard about Bill's amazing career connection to the Cape public school system through friends who still reside in Cape. Judging by Bill's picture, except for a few gray hairs, he hasn't changed a bit.*

*I see that you too lost a son, just as I did 5 years ago, a devastation from which we parents will never recover. Be assured Bill is now with your Trey, just as I know Mike is with my Spencer. I hope you can find some comfort in that.*

*Marki, I hope this little trip "down memory lane" will afford you a reason to smile and brighten your spirits a bit. Keep God close, close in your heart, He will help you and your family get through this time of deep grieving.*

*Sending love and prayers to you and your family,  
Kathryn Carney Snow Evensen*

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**Kathryn Carney Evensen** - April 28, 2019 at 10:50 PM

JP

“*The Springers have a very special gift of taking people into their family. You learn quickly that you are always welcome, and no knock at the door is needed. Bill always had story after story to share, and could have you rolling with laughter. He loved to gather in the kitchen or back porch for some good conversation. He captivated everyone’s attention and had us hanging on his every word. He would give you a hard time, but that only made you love him more. As many have said, he truly cared, and had a way of making you feel special. Those same traits are true of Markie and Sue as well. Brandon and I are truly blessed to be some of the “strays” taken in by this sweet, sweet family. Bill was one of a kind, and his presence and love will be missed deeply.*

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**Jessica Pederson** - April 28, 2019 at 09:59 PM

DM

“*Marki...It has been many years since our paths crossed, but please accept my sympathy on Bill's passing. I remember him as a terrific teacher with a great sense of humor, and a credit to the profession.*  
*Dale Meier*

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**Dale Meier** - April 28, 2019 at 06:32 PM

SB

“ Dear Mrs. Springer and Susan,  
Mr. Springer was my favorite teacher and made the largest impact on me. My family says I'm a grammar nazi and I attribute that to him. His wit and sarcasm left motivated. Who would imagine telling a 14 year old girl that she is totally irrelevant would be motivating but he knew just how far to go and just what to say. He was one of a kind and he will be missed.  
Susan Richards Barnes

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Susan Richards Barnes - April 28, 2019 at 05:55 PM

PM

“ I am traveling in Vietnam and just received the sad new of Bill's passing away. My deepest sympathy and condolences to Mark, Susan and the family. Bill was the principal of St. Vincent's Parish when I was the Associate Pastor there beginning in 1986. I was just 28 years old and recently ordained a priest when I came to St. Vincent's in 1986. Bill welcomed me to work in the school and encouraged me in working with students. I appreciated his enthusiasm and creativity as an educator as well as his love for students. He had a free and open spirit. I assure Mark, Susan and the family of my prayers. And, I will offer Sunday Mass this evening for Bill here in Vietnam at 7PM Vietnam time and 7 AM Cape Girardeau time. God Bless, Fr. Pat McDevitt, C.M., Associate Pastor, St. Vincent's Parish, Cape Girardeau 1986-1989.

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Patrick McDevitt - April 28, 2019 at 03:19 AM

LS

“ Bill Springer was one of the best teachers that I ever had. He was an amazing teacher and an even more gifted story teller. he made learning fun and memorable. I was so lucky to have been able to know him. My mother and father both taught with Bill at the Junior High in Cape for years and they always had a funny story that Springer told in the teachers' lounge that week. He let me know how he felt about me quitting college the first time and he also let me know how happy he was when I went back and when I graduated. He will be missed, but his stories will live on forever.

*My thoughts and prayers go out to the whole family!*

*Laura Shell*

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**Laura Shell** - April 27, 2019 at 07:10 PM

DS

“ Mark, our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time. God's blessings to you and your family. Doris and Mel Schmidt (Health Point friends)

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**Doris & Mel Schmidt** - April 27, 2019 at 08:31 AM

MA

“ Springer as we all called him was the greatest teacher I had. As I think back to my school days he really is the only teacher I remember. He truly cared for students and joked with us to make learning enjoyable. The best part was he was chosen to give the commencement speech for my graduating class. He stopped me prior to graduation and had me call his cell in the middle of his speech. My family will never forget as I'm sure others who attended that day. I'm truly blessed to have been in his classroom. May god bless his family. His legend will live on for years and years to come.

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**Matt** - April 26, 2019 at 11:22 PM

NR

“ So sorry to hear of Mr. Springers passing. He was my Jr. High teacher. Many Blessings to the family. Nancy Latham Reiminger

Nancy Reiminger - April 26, 2019 at 10:31 PM



“ Mr Springer was my American History teacher in 1995. An amazing teacher and human being who took an interest in everyone he met. The world has lost an outstanding human being. Condolences to the family, especially Mrs Springer, even though she gave me my only detention ever in life. <3

Susan Francis - April 26, 2019 at 09:31 PM

DB

“ So sorry to hear of Bills passing. We met Bill and Mark at the church dinner 2 years ago. We were new at St Vincent de Paul. Bill asked if they could sit at our table. Very friendly and sweet couple. Dave and Deb Bollinger

Debra Bollinger - April 26, 2019 at 02:39 PM

RW

“ Mr. Springer was my English teacher in 8th grade 1966-1967. It may have been his first year of teaching. (Miss McMullen was my p.e. teacher.) When he was checking attendance, his mispronunciation of my last name, Heimbaugh, made the whole class laugh. That included me too. Mr. Springer was one-of-a-kind teacher with his own style. I was blessed to have him as a teacher and he helped to provide a foundation for my own teaching style. (32.6 years full time and 12+ years part time.) Mr. Springer's legacy lives on through hundreds of students. His greatest legacy lives on through his family, Mrs. Springer, Susan, and family. May your Christian faith bring comfort. We can imagine that he and Trey are together. God's peace. Rita Heimbaugh Weber

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**Rita Weber** - April 26, 2019 at 01:04 PM

LF

“ Although I didn't have the good luck to have Bill as a teacher, I did get to meet him on a few social occasions and I saw in him what others did...a warm, very humorous and overall good guy.

Mark (Marki), you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. You and Bill made an awesome couple.

God's Peace and Love be with you all.

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**Linda M Farrar** - April 26, 2019 at 11:42 AM

KJ

“ Praying for peace, comfort, and understanding at this time. To the Springer family, I am sorry about your loss. I'm sure Trey has a lot of catching up to do now as they await the rest of the family to arrive in God's time.

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**Kenneth C. Pemberton, Jr.** - April 26, 2019 at 11:30 AM

CB

“ *Mr. Springer created a classroom where we all felt important, smart, and inspired. That's not an easy task when the room is full of a bunch of teenagers. But he did it and no one ever forgot it. I am so blessed to have experienced his legacy. What a wonderful impact he made on the world.*

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**Catherine Buchanan** - April 26, 2019 at 11:15 AM

GS

“ *I never had him as a Teacher, but I still liked him. I got to know him better many years later. He was Witty and I enjoyed his sense of humor. Prayers for your family.*

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**GALEN SANDERS** - April 26, 2019 at 09:56 AM

BJ

*Mr. Springer was my favorite teacher. He made learning fun and related well with his students. He certainly will be missed.*

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**Beverly Johnson** - April 26, 2019 at 10:21 AM

SM

“ *Mr. Springer made learning fun. He was always ready with his quick wit and a smile. A truly great man and teacher. He will be greatly missed.*

*Stacy Meyer*

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**Stacy Meyer** - April 26, 2019 at 09:50 AM



“ *Bill was a great teacher at Cape Central and had a huge impact on my life! This is a sad day for sure!*

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**Chase Wilson** - April 26, 2019 at 09:35 AM

BF

“ He was a customer at where I work and he always made me smile and would ask how I was doing. I looked forward to seeing them every week . My thoughts and prayers for his family..

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**Betty Fischer** - April 26, 2019 at 08:47 AM

FH

“ Bill will be greatly missed. Sorry I won't be able to attend services.

*Fr. John Harth*

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**Fr. John Harth** - April 26, 2019 at 08:44 AM

PL

“ So sorry to to hear of Mr. Springers passing, he's one teacher that I always remember from my Jr. High days. God bless your family.

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**Phyllis Shrum LaMar** - April 26, 2019 at 06:39 AM

LZ

“ Dear Mark and Susan, I am so sorry that Bill has passed away. When we met at the grocery in Meridian, Mississippi we did not realize we would soon be working together at CHS for 20 years. Bill was most often amusing and always a reliable gentleman. May God bless you all. LouAnn Hays Zoffuto

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**LAH Zoffuto** - April 26, 2019 at 04:04 AM



“ Bill was a great man. When I saw him out, I told people, he was my dad. People always got a kick out of that. He was a great Christian man. I never heard him say anything bad about no one. I am going to miss him. I am really going to miss him.

*I will continue to pray for you and your family.*

*God Bless You,*

*Wavis Jordan*

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**Wavis Jordan** - April 25, 2019 at 10:15 PM

SO

“ What can I say about Bill.....one great guy. I am in shock and sadness over his passing. Love you Mr. Bill. You will be sorely missed. My thoughts and prayers are with Mark and Susan and family.



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**Susie O'Connell** - April 25, 2019 at 09:17 PM

LM

“ I remember Bill so well when I was Mr. Brinkopf's secretary at Jr. High. He always had a smile for everyone.

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**LaVerne McNeely-Ford** - April 25, 2019 at 09:12 PM

BW

“ I have the greatest memories of Bill as both a friend and a colleague during the years we taught at Central High School. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Bonnie Woods

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**Bonnie Woods** - April 25, 2019 at 08:04 PM

RH

“ Bill and I have been friends for about 55 years every since we met at UTMB at the Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity. We had an old upright piano in the fraternity house, and he would absolutely "tear it up" playing our old fraternity songs and anything else anyone wanted to hear. Always full of wit, he was so much fun to be with. He and I were both English majors in Secondary Education and had many classes together.



Bill took me on a tour of the Cajun country a summer during college with a tour of the Tabasco plant. I can still feel my eyes and nose and skin tingle from the smell. I visited with him at his home in Donelson several times. I loved his parents, and it was easy to see where he inherited his wit!

He was a groomsman in Nancy and my wedding; and I was a groomsman in his and Mark's. He was one of several of my groomsmen who returned for our daughter, Rachel's wedding some thirty years later.

Susan and Trey were about 10 and 12 when they visited our home in Trimble, TN with Mark and Bill for a family fraternity reunion.

Bill was a wonderful friend to many and will be missed by a large group of folks. It's your time to enjoy Trey now, Bill. Enjoy it.

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**Robert Hurt** - April 25, 2019 at 06:57 PM



Amen, Brother Hurt...Amen.  
I was at Bill and Mark's wedding, (and my own was the next weekend).  
His passing saddens me, he was an absolute favorite.

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**Tici Chambers** - April 25, 2019 at 11:59 PM

GF

“ I have so many memories. The years I taught across the hall from Bill at Central Junior High. It was Christmas time and most teachers had put up a Christmas bulletin board, Bill's was so different, he had found a little paper moose head , he stapled it to the center of the bulletin board with the caption Happy Christmoose. I also had the privilege of being introduced to "Mr. Foot" one summer at the Farmers Market, I had been talking to Mark and she told me Bill was sitting in the car and when I went over to talk to him he had his bare foot on the dash and introduced me. Bill was one of a kind and I am so glad to have been able to call him "friend" You will be missed my friend.

Gretchen Fee

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Gretchen Fee - April 25, 2019 at 06:42 PM

RC

“ It would be impossible to enumerate the impact “Springer” has made on my life. I am grateful for having known him, shared in his light, will miss him, but will carry on inspired and grateful for having been lucky enough to count myself among his students and friends. I know you are laughing, and writing your own Letterman-inspired top ten list in heaven.

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Rachel (Roberts) Cain - April 25, 2019 at 06:28 PM

EH

“ I sure will miss running into you at Walmart. Talking about your dogs, school, my daughter and of course your Facebook foot pictures.

You will be missed so much by so many.❤️

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Emily Hagan - April 25, 2019 at 06:25 PM

MM

“ *Too many to pick from...thank you Bill for all the wonderful memories.... we will never forget ❤️ Mitch and Diane*

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**Mitch and Diane Miller** - April 25, 2019 at 05:57 PM