

## OBITUARY

*William Gene Swenson*

JANUARY 28, 1932 - JULY 14, 2022

IN THE CARE OF

Ahlberg Funeral Chapel

**A**fter 90 happy and productive years, William Gene Swenson--statesman, outdoorsman, craftsman, dad-- passed away peacefully on July 14 at the Atria Senior Living Center in Longmont, Colorado, At his death, he was in the immediate company of his constant canine companion, Jack, and within minutes of his three children.

Bill was an only child, born January 28, 1932 in Salina, Kansas to Walfred and Dora (Palmquist) Swenson, and reigned supreme as the spoiled nephew of several spinster aunts for many years. His favorite boyhood days were spent roaming on his family's farm, where he carried his rifle and anointed the hills with fancy names.

As a young man, Bill decided to go to school rather than continue in farming (his debilitating hay fever had a say in that) and in 1954 graduated from Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas with a degree in Math. On New Year's Day of the following year, he married his Bethany classmate and best friend, Betty Nelson, and they immediately set out with gusto to positively influence their socio-political landscapes over the next 60+ years.

After his military obligations were completed in Alabama and El Paso, Bill completed his second degree at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas and accepted a position as an Electrical Engineer with IBM in Poughkeepsie, NY. In 1966, he jumped on the opportunity to move with IBM to a then-new plant in Colorado, where he would dig deep roots, raise his family, celebrate the out-of-doors, and serve his community over his remaining years.

Though a bit shy and reserved, Bill believed in giving-back and making a difference. He took on numerous leadership positions, including Scout Master, Church Councilman, Longmont City Council, Longmont Mayor, and Colorado State Legislator. After term limits ended his stint at the Legislature, he was appointed to the State Transportation Commission, which he served into his 80s.

Bill was an avid sportsman and adored his mountains as much as he loved his farm hills as a boy. He was a hunter of elk, deer, and fish, but also a fierce protector of the state's water, land, and park resources. He taught his children to love the Colorado Rockies, taking them skiing, camping, and hiking whenever he could. He was particularly proud of having hiked to the top of Longs Peak, and every visitor was treated to Bill's precarious tour of RMNP's Fall River Road, his eyes everywhere but on the road.

Bill's workshop—an overly-packed, mishmash of every type of tool—was an unlikely place that produced beautiful and useful things. His pieces of functional art--wood boxes, fishing flies, refinished furniture—carry his personal hand-crafted by W.G. Swenson brand and will be treasured by family and friends now that he is gone. When not in his workshop, he was on the golf course with his buds, enjoying his lifetime membership at Twin Peaks; cheering the Avalanche, Broncos, and Rockies; or, puttering in his garden, which was always abundant with color, amazing tomatoes, and peaches.

His family imagines that Bill is now reunited with his partner-in-life, Betty, and that they are right back at work. Her departure in 2016 forced him to learn to cook--he was proud to have done so and also to have lived-on in the same house until the last two months before his passing. His humor, gentle spirit, generosity, and capable hands will always be remembered by his children: Julie Reusser (Willy), David Swenson, and Joy Swenson (Michael Queneau), his seven grandchildren: Signe, Mark, Leslie, Carolyn, Sarah, Ross and Marc; as well as seven great grandchildren.

His conviction, paired with kindness, is a quality sorely needed in this world. He will be missed.

Memorial Services for Bill will be held at 2pm, Saturday July 30, 2022, at First Evangelical Lutheran Church at 803 3rd Ave, in Longmont, CO 80501. Donations in lieu of flowers can be given in Bill's name to First Lutheran Church, or a charity of your choice.

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First Evangelical Lutheran Church

803 3rd Ave, Longmont, Colorado 80501

# Services

SATURDAY, JULY 30, 2022

## Memorial Service

2:00 pm

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

[103 3rd Ave](#)

[Longmont, CO 80501](#)

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## *In Memory Of* *William Gene Swenson*

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1 CANDLE HAS BEEN LIT

ADD A MEMORY

**Jon Judson**  
**Colleague**  
07/25/2022

Representatives Bill and Betty Swenson left a long lasting legacy in Bill's Colorado House of Representatives. They are both still remembered by many former legislators, legislative staff members and lobbyists. I was always impressed with the way he placed his constituents first. He and Betty were in the Colorado legislature for all the right reasons. Jon Judson Chief Sergeant-At-Arms Colorado House of Representatives

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ADD A COMMENT

**John Palmquist**  
**Family**  
07/23/2022

Thanking my cousin Bill for being a role model of a legislator. He was always putting his constituents first. I was always impressed with the way he placed his constituents first. He and Betty were in the Colorado legislature for all the right reasons. Jon Judson Chief Sergeant-At-Arms Colorado House of Representatives

ADD A COMMENT

**Damon Larson**  
**Friend**  
07/22/2022

Mr. Swenson was kind, gentle, witty, wise, caring, and a great person to know. I spent a lot of time in the world of him – and my whole family did. Sending love to you all.

**Ann Wiley**  
**Friend**  
07/21/2022

Our family's relationship with Bill and Betty has been one of the biggest cornerstones of my life. We have too many wonderful memories of them to even count. They had such a beautiful relationship, I am sure they are happily reunited now. Our deepest sympathy to the Swenson family in the loss of a wonderful man. With love, Ann and Joel (Carrico)

ADD A COMMENT

**Friend**  
07/19/2022

Bill was honest, congenial, forthright, intelligent and kind. He had a great sense of humor. They con-  
missed in this world and welcomed in the next.

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ADD A COMMENT

**Friend**  
07/20/2022

Bill Swenson was the kindest, most caring, and most helpful person I have ever known. He was a true friend and a great person to be around. He was always there for me and I was always there for him. He was a great person to be around and I will miss him very much. He was a great person to be around and I will miss him very much.

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ADD A COMMENT

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