



William Boyd Diederich

December 1, 1925 - September 26, 2019

William Boyd Diederich, age 93, died Thursday, September 26, 2019 at the Riceville Family Care Center. He was born December 1, 1925 to Ernest M. and Erma (Boyd) Diederich in Austin, Minnesota. Bill attended Pacelli and Austin Public Schools. After graduation, Bill enlisted in the US Navy on June 12, 1943 and served aboard the USS Mendocino as a Signalman First Class in the South Pacific during WWII. Following the war, he came home and married Merriam Nelson on December 27, 1947. They moved to Duluth and he attended the University of Minnesota Duluth where he graduated Cum Laude.

His first and only teaching post was in Riceville, Iowa where he ran the music program from 1950-1972. In order to further his education, he attended summer school at the University of Iowa and graduated with honors with his Masters. In 1972 Bill accepted the position of High School Principal where he stayed until retirement in 1987.

Bill was involved in many community programs during his time in Riceville: Boy Scout leader, Booster Club, volunteer fire fighter, Jay Cees, Community Club, American Legion, Knights of Columbus, Riceville golf course, and choir leader for Immaculate Conception Church. He was known far and wide for his beautiful voice and was requested by many to sing for weddings, funerals, and other celebrations. Some of his favorite ways to enjoy life were golfing, playing cards with friends, and of course fishing with the gang on 8th Crow Wing. In later years you could always find him at Kenny's Oak Grill sharing a cup of coffee and a few stories with the Kenny's crew.

Survivors include his children, Deanna (Tom) Lifka, Bob Diederich, and Barb Diederich; grandchildren, Becky (Dennis) McInroy, Jeff (Diane) Lubbert, Jeremy Diederich, and Lexis (Joel) Sluys; great grandchildren, Christopher (Jennifer) McInroy, Zach McInroy, and Samuel Sluys; great great grandchildren, Savannah and Camden McInroy.

He is preceded in death by his wife of 67 years, Merry; his parents; and brother.

His body has been donated to Mayo Foundation for research and education. There will be a memorial service on Saturday, October 19, 2019 from 2-4 pm in the church hall at Immaculate Conception Church in Riceville. There will be a private burial at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family is suggesting donations to the Riceville Family Care & Therapy Center where Bill spent the last three years of his life with his guardian angels.

Condolences may be left online at www.mayerfh.com

Events

OCT **Service** 02:00PM - 04:00PM

19

Immaculate Conception Church

Riceville, IA, US

Comments



“ Mr D was a great inspiration to me to pursue music for my career. I was a band director for 21 years and thought of him many times as I tried to get a student to play a horn correctly. I remember him getting out a baritone horn and playing our part in chorus so we could hear it. He was full of energy and always had a good word for people. Since I was in the class of "56" I didn't have him as a principal but I'm sure he was loved and respected. He taught me clarinet and saxophone which was a great help in my pursuit of a BME and Masters degree later. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Thank you Mr D. Merlyn Finley

Merlyn Finley - October 19 at 11:36 AM



“ Riceville Class of 1979 purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of William Boyd Diederich.



Riceville Class of 1979 - October 18 at 11:34 PM



“ Mr. D you were the best! You were my first Boss along with being my Band Director. Loved every minute of Band and have many fond memories. I think 3 of my siblings were also taught music by you. Thank you. My sympathy to your family. Karen Dutton Johnson

Bob Karen Johnson - October 03 at 04:41 PM



“ O what fun we had at Riceville High with Mr. D as our music teacher. Alot of wonderful memories to hold on to. He was the best!! Now it's time to join the angels chorus in heaven Mr. D. My sympathies to the family. Ruth Meier

Ruth Meier - October 02 at 10:31 PM



“ In chorus or band,if we didn't get it correct,he called us knuckle heads!!A pleasant man.sorry to get this news.Verna Wasserman



“ from J.T. walker RHS(56) Whenever I think of my old home town and the many memories I have Bill Diedrich comes to mind.He gave us an appreciation for all different genres of music from classical to folk.I remember most that I had a hard time reading and tempo usually off a beat or two.Mr.D would hum the melody for me. thus enabling me to play.Jim Richmond and I spent many happy hours on the golf course with him. He was a good friend and mentor.

Tim Walker - October 02 at 12:54 PM



“ We can't think of a teacher who made a bigger impact on us. He will be missed by many and a welcome voice in the choirs of heaven. Steve and Sue Swancutt

Sue Swancutt - October 02 at 12:49 PM



“ We remember Mr. D as a really nice man - Paul's memory of him as Band instructor when he was in HS - Sheri's memories are when he was HS Principal when she did substitute teaching & for our daughters.
We extend our Sympathy, Thoughts & Prayers to the family.

Paul & Sheri Erickson - October 02 at 09:10 AM



“ A great man and friend! The kind of boss I wish everyone could have! Tough, but respectful, compassionate and fair! Bill touched a lot of lives in a positive way! Those of us who knew him will really miss him! Rest In Peace!

Warren Haacke - October 02 at 07:45 AM



“ Bill was my band instructor and laughed how i could blow the old coronet I had as he had a hard time blowing it loved to tease me about it. He was loved by all and had a great sense of humor so happy God gave him a long life and now he has another life with God

myrna jacoby - October 02 at 06:43 AM



“ Bill was both a super principal to our daughter’s Rhonda and Krista. He was also the principal to my deceased husband Ron. I never ever heard a complaint about Bill. He was a model principal.

Marlene Reisinger - October 01 at 08:04 PM



“ Mr D’s First year as principal was my last year of high school so I like to think our class broke him in. He was fair, compassionate, respectful and expected respect in return. He gave so much of himself to his students and the community and will be remembered by many!

Diane Adams Howland - October 01 at 07:56 PM



“ How do I even begin! The Hughes’s were beyond blessed to have Bill and Merry as family friends! He was the best school principal anyone could ask for! I’m the last few months I’ve had the pleasure to see and talk with him! He always gave me “his” smile and called me Jose all the way to two weeks ago! Heaven gained an awesome angel! Tom and I will be forever grateful to you for singing Ave Maria at our wedding 31 years ago! RIP MR. D.

Joey Hughes Crockin - October 01 at 06:20 PM



“ My greatest memories of "Mr. D" as our high school principal: "the look" given over his glasses-- then- someone may be in trouble; now- great adult care of all the youth in his charge; "the bongo drum belly cadences"-- then and now- part of Mr. D creating a culture of playfulness and genuine spirit building with everyone; and my most favorite: when Mr. D would come in to the choir room during Christmas concert rehearsals, beaming from ear to ear, take his place in the back row tenors, and BELT out the Hallelujah chorus with us!

Even in his last days, Mr. D enjoyed people and continued shaping the next generation. Dementia is the most difficult of afflictions I've seen over the years visiting the nursing home. I do remember just in August hearing him shout out the Lord's Prayer in its entirety during one of his difficult times-- a true mentor of "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6)" in his final days. His face lit up when I barged in for a well-advised "distraction" attempt. It was his return to his old self of voicing a quick quip, watching for my reaction, then enjoying the "go with the flow" interaction that helped me overcome the apprehension to that affliction. Even in his last days, Mr. D helped challenge and stretch the next generation into new areas of growth with his personality and humor! He will be missed, greatly remembered, and always appreciated for everything he poured in to people and the community as a whole.

I'm quite certain the angels in Heaven are enjoying that booming tenor voice singing that Hallelujah chorus as part of the Heavenly choir mix!

Sue Elwood - October 01 at 11:39 AM



“ Mr. D, or Birdie as many called him was a favorite of many students in the Riceville school system. His affectionate name for those of us in the band was "Knuckleheads". I was in the class of 1957 and there were about a dozen of us who visited him at our last reunion in Riceville 2017. He was napping in his chair at the care facility. We said, "Mr D, some of your knuckleheads are here to visit" He opened his eyes and gave us a big smile.

My condolences to the family and friends who treasured him for all those years. He will be missed more than words can say.

Audrey (Wolfe) Hauser - September 30 at 03:27 PM



“ Mr. D was my high school principal for 13 of the 15 years I taught in Riceville. As a principal, he was tops -- best I ever worked for. He created an atmosphere where students could be successful and teachers could be creative in their teaching methods. As good as Mr. D was as a principal, he was an even better human being. He was well-respected in the community as he was such a trusted, positive role model. He was my mentor, my inspiration and my friend. Our sincere condolences to the Diederich family.

Mark and Pat McCright - September 29 at 02:53 PM