



Robert Norman Willis

October 11, 2022

Robert Norman Willis – ‘Bob’ to all and ‘Dad’ to his boys and ‘Pops’ to his grandchildren and great grandchildren – passed peacefully at 89 years of age on October 11, 2022. Bob lived a life full of service to others.

Bob leaves behind Joyce Leeth Willis, the love of his life and his wife of over 65 years; two sons Mike and Dick; grandchildren Bobby, Dani, Coli, Meggie, Ginny and Carli and great grandchildren Anna, Wheeler and Eli.

Bob is the son Newman Richard and Annie May Willis. Bob’s father was a career Navy officer which resulted in Bob’s birth on the naval base in Coronado California. Bob’s early years were resident on naval bases including San Diego, Puerto Rico and finally Jacksonville in his high school years.

The move to Jacksonville offered Bob the opportunity to attend the University of Florida. Bob was the first person in his family to attend college. To fund his education, Bob worked in the dormitory cafeteria while attending the UF engineering school. It was while working the breakfast shift one morning that he met Joyce, a cute coed and the woman that he subsequently married at the First Baptist Church in Bradenton Florida. Joyce is the daughter of Wheeler and Ruth Leeth, of Bradenton, Florida.

After their marriage, Bob and Joyce lived in Charleston South Carolina where

Bob completed his active duty Navy service. Bob was a Commander (Captain) in the Navy and after his active duty served in the naval reserve for over 20 years.

They moved to Sarasota County in 1958 and joined the First Baptist Church of Sarasota where they served in various capacities including deacon, Sunday School Teachers, Royal Ambassador Leaders, Usher, and others. Bob used his electrical engineering skills to install wiring when the current church sanctuary was built in 1962.

Bob joined Florida Power and Light as an electrical engineer in 1958 and served in various engineering supervisory roles in Sarasota and for a few years in West Palm Beach. After over 40 years of service, Bob retired from Florida Power and Light in West Palm Beach and returned to Sarasota and the community he loved.

Bob's life was one of service to others, notably through his roles at First Baptist Church and the Sarasota Kiwanis; but mainly to his family. A hallmark example of service to others.

Memorial Services will be held at the chapel at the Toale Brothers Funeral Home, Colonial Chapel, 40 N. Orange Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236, on Saturday October 22nd at 10am.

The interment will be held on the Sarasota National Cemetery on Monday October 24th at 9:30am.

In lieu of flowers, donations to your charity of choice would be consistent with Bob's wishes and his life of service to others.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT **22**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Toale Brothers Funeral Home & Crematory-Colonial Chapel
40 N. Orange Avenue
Sarasota, FL 34236

Tribute Wall

RW

“ *Bob is buried at the Sarasota National Cemetery located at 9810 State Road 72, Sarasota Florida. Section 4. Grave 2455.*

There is more info on the Veterans web site here <https://www.vlm.cm.va.gov/>

Robert Michael Willis - October 24, 2022 at 02:37 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Robert Norman Willis.*



October 24, 2022 at 08:19 AM

AM

“ *A wonderful roof mate and neighbor for 24 years with memories of many Happy Thanksgiving meals together with all of the Willis family members.*

Bob's generosity of spirit and love of those with whom he shared the planet was immeasurable. It is apparent that his value has been recognized and he now occupies that elevated position to which we may all wish to aspire.

My heartfelt and deepest sympathy to all of Bob's family as they now deal with the loss of their "POPS" / "DAD"

Sincerely, Adrienne

Adrienne J Matcham - October 18, 2022 at 11:31 AM