



## William Bowers Kruse

December 18, 1941 - September 4, 2024

William Herman Bowers Kruse (aka Bill) was born Horst Willi Hermann Baeske on December 18, 1941, in Anklam, Pommern, Germany to Katherina Baeske and Albert Kruse. Around the age of 3, Katherina began serving in the German military so Bill and his sister, Eva, moved in with their maternal grandparents in Bad Tolz, Bavaria, Germany. Bill reminisced about running for the woods while bombs were dropped during WWII. He remembered playing in the rubble of the church and the large scar on his forehead was from one such bombing – as he ran for safety, he fell and hit his head on a step. Following the war, the barrier dividing East and West Germany was raised. Bill's mother met and married Walter Bowers, an American Serviceman serving in Germany. In order to get Bill and his sister out of the Eastern side of the border, Katherina had falsified documents created so she could remove Bill and his sister from their fathers. Dad remembered the terror he felt knowing that if they were caught, their lives were at risk. They made it out safely and the family boarded a military ship in 1952, bound for New York City.

From NYC, they made their way to Columbus, GA, where Bill and his sister, Eva, attended an American school and where Bill's love of scouting began when he joined the Boy Scouts of America. Bill delivered newspapers in the military type housing, known as Baker Village. From Georgia, they moved with Mom (Kathy) to Tacoma, WA, by Greyhound bus to live with step-dad, Walter, who had been stationed there after returning from the Korean war. Bill

attended Captain Grey Jr. High and lived on S. 74th St. In Tacoma, Bill continued with the BSA and worked his first job at a bakery on So. Tacoma Way.

In 1954, Bill and his family set up a life in Idaho Falls, ID, where he continued participating in the BSA, while he attended Otis E. Bell Jr. High, then Idaho Falls High School, where he served as Team Manager for both the Wrestling Team and the Men's Basketball Team. During 1959, his senior year in high school, the family moved to Paris, France, where he graduated from HS in 1960, and then joined the U.S. Army.

Bill returned to the U.S. in January of 1961, to complete basic training at Fort Dix, NJ, with advanced individual training at Fort Monmouth, NJ. From there, he shipped across the United States by train to Sacramento, CA,, to then travel by aircraft to Korea. He remained stationed in Korea until the Fall of 1962, returning to the states to be stationed at Fort MacArthur, near San Pedro, CA. In 1963, Bill married his high school sweetheart, Elma. Bill completed his military career in January of 1964. He then worked for Irrigation Service, then Wells Radio Communications, and Scotty's Hamburgers in Idaho Falls, until January of 1966, when he was hired by the Boeing Company, in Seattle, WA, to work on the Boeing 707 aircraft. In April of 1966, he and Elma divorced.

Bill then moved to Olympia, WA, to live with his parents, while commuting to Renton, WA, to work at Boeing. When he fell asleep behind the wheel more than once during his commute, he realized it was time to find another job. WSP was hiring at the time, so he applied, and was hired in August of 1966. After one week of radio procedure training in North Bend, WA,, he was assigned to Wenatchee, WA, to work radio. On August 20, 1966, he and a friend were cruising main street Wenatchee, where he whistled at Judith Elder and her friend in an adjacent vehicle. They spent the entire night talking and

enjoying each other's company and married just over a year later on December 8, 1967, in the Oakland, CA, Temple.

Bill got his commission as Trooper for the Washington State Patrol, in 1967, assigned badge #656 and started his career in Seattle, specifically to work the North freeway, commonly known as "Zone 1". Bill and Judi lived in an apartment in Bothell, WA, for a few months, until they purchased a small home in Burien, WA, to begin their family, with Alicia born in April of 1969, Erika in June of 1971, and Lannette in December of 1973.

WSP assigned Bill to Chelan County, in 1974, where their youngest daughter, Melissa, was born in February of 1978, and where they lived until 1980. While in Chelan, Bill served as District Commissioner for BSA, continuing to earn the Order of the Arrow. Bill and family transferred to Kitsap County, in 1980, living in Bremerton until 1991. During that time, Judi went to work, serving in dispatch for WSP, where they both wore the uniform.

While in Bremerton, Bill performed a traffic stop of the Bothe's visiting the USA from Germany. He and Judi befriended the Bothe's, who a few years later, were instrumental in helping Bill locate his natural father, Albert and step-mother, Ilse living in West Germany. Albert was in poor health, so Bill and Judi visited, in 1986, just prior to Albert's death.

In 1991, Bill was finally transferred to Okanogan County and he and Judi returned to live in their home in Chelan. Judi preceded Bill in death by 8 years, in September of 2016.

For many years, while living in Chelan, Bill and Judi were good friends with Ron and Susan Yanac. In February of 2018, Ron passed away and Bill and Susan realized that their long-time friendship could be a beautiful foundation for an eternal relationship. They married on August 10, 2018, and then were

sealed in the Seattle, WA, temple on August 10, 2019.

Judith and Erika preceded Bill in death. He is survived by his daughters: Alicia, Lannette, and Melissa, sons-in-law: Mark and Jeremiah; ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. His loss will also be keenly felt by Susan, his wife; and her three children; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

He and his fun, loving manner will be missed.

A Celebration of Bill's Life will be held on Saturday, September 14 ,2024, at 11:00 a.m, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Chapel located at 195 West Manson Highway, Chelan, Washington. Zoom link available upon request.

# Previous Events

## Service

SEP **14.** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PT)

Chelan Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
195 Hwy 150  
Chelan, WA 98816

# Tribute Wall



“ *Precht Rose Chapel and Barnes Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of William Bowers Kruse*



Precht Rose Chapel and Barnes Chapel - September 14, 2024 at 04:30 PM

CN

“ *Christa Neumann-Kieslich sent a virtual gift in memory of William Bowers Kruse*



Christa Neumann-Kieslich - December 07, 2025 at 12:31 PM

CN

*Einen Gruß in die Unendlichkeit an einen Verwndten, den ich nie kennen lernen konnte. Seine Mutter Katharina geb. Baeske und meine Mutter Ursula geb. Baeske waren Cousinen. Herzliche Grüße aus Berlin Christa (geb. 1947) mit Ehemann Helmut und Tochter Svenja (1978)*

Christa Neumann-Kieslich - December 07, 2025 at 12:34 PM

CN

*Ehemann nicht Hemban  
neukies@gmail.com*

Christa Neumann-Kieslich - December 07, 2025 at 12:36 PM

JT

“ *Bill was the embodiment of the Scout Oath and Law. He touched so many lives through Scouting and had such a sense of humor. He was loved.* ”



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**Janis Tipton-King** - September 14, 2024 at 08:47 PM

LA

“ *1 file added to the album Bill* ”



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**Lannette** - September 10, 2024 at 09:14 PM