



## William Ross Helm Jr.

February 9, 1933 - January 4, 2024

.William "Billy" Ross Helm Jr., age 90, passed away on Thursday, January 4, with all of his family by his side at Archbold Hospital in Thomasville, GA.

He was born in Albany, GA, on February 9, 1933, to William Ross Helm Sr. and Lougenia Bullard Helm. After graduating from Albany High School, Billy attended Clemson University before joining the Army. He was a veteran of the Korean War, stationed in Washington, DC. Following completion of his service, he enrolled at South Georgia College in Douglas, GA. There he met his future wife of 63 years, Nancy Hunter. They both went on to University of Georgia. Billy Graduated with a degree in Forestry in 1958 and Nancy graduated a year later with a degree in Sociology. Upon graduation, Billy joined the Florida Forest Service in Brooksville, Florida. Nancy and Billy married on December 12, 1959, at the home of Nancy's aunt in Macon, GA. While in Brooksville, they had their first child Elizabeth Anne Helm. Billy was relocated to Tallahassee, Florida, where his second daughter, Jennifer, and son, Ross, were born, and their family was completed.

Billy had a lifelong love of baseball, having played for Clemson in college and on the Army baseball team as a left-handed pitcher. He later coached little league baseball at Myers Park. Billy was employed by the Florida Forest Service and Department of Agriculture for nearly 37 years (with brief stint at Dept. of General Services before returning to Forestry in 1970). He served as

Chief of Forestry Management from 1974 until his retirement in 1995. Throughout the years, he has received numerous awards and accolades for his contributions in forestry.

During his retirement, Billy and Nancy traveled overseas to many countries and enjoyed numerous occasions with friends and family. He was an expert outdoorsman and had a passion for hunting, fishing, and camping. His hunting and fishing friends and family have many funny and insightful stories about their times together. He loved sports and never missed an opportunity to attend the FSU baseball games and watch FSU and Georgia play football.

He is preceded in death by his parents and his brother Walter "Buddy" Helm. He is survived by his loving wife Nancy Helm of 63 years, his daughters Elizabeth McKeown and Jennifer Holm (Mike), and son, Ross (Natalie). His grandchildren Savannah Atwell (Louie), Hannah Branum (JC), Sean McKeown, Olivia Frank (William), Sam McKeown, and Juliana Atwell, two great-grandsons Ace Branum and Atticus Frank, sister-in-law Judy Helm, nephew Walter "Bud" Helm, Jr. (Kayla), Lisa Smith (Marty) and grandnieces and nephew, Jenna, Emily and Davis (Victoria) whom he loved dearly.

A Celebration of life service will be held Friday, February 9, 2024 at 11:00AM at Bevis Funeral Home. The family will have a reception following the service in the Bevis event room.

Dayne Parker of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or [www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com)) is assisting the family with their arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

FEB 9. 11:00 AM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory  
200 John Knox Rd  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 385-2193

## Reception immediately following the service

FEB 9 (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory  
200 John Knox Rd  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 385-2193

# Tribute Wall



“ *Bevis Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of William Ross Helm Jr.*



Bevis Funeral Home - February 09, 2024 at 10:59 AM



“ *I will be forever grateful to Billy for hiring me as a secretary with the Division of Forestry in 1985. I was 22 at the time, and he was the perfect boss for a young career-minded woman. I learned about workplace respect, kindness, and discipline; I learned the value of hard work and, more specifically, how important it was to have that work appreciated and to have that appreciation communicated to me. I remained in state government for 30 years and had a wonderful career that I loved. I have come to realize how rare that is, and how lucky I was to cross paths with Billy. He hired me almost on the spot when I came in a few days after my interview and told him my employer had fired me when they found out I was job hunting. What a heart he had! I loved the man, and always think of him when the phone rings. More than two rings and someone's gonna get fussed at...*

*Donna Watkins, Forest Management, 1985-1989*

Donna Watkins - January 30, 2024 at 12:20 PM

PJ

“ *I am so sorry for the family's loss. Billy was very special to me even though has been decades since I worked as his secretary. I'm sure his passing will be a loss for many. It was a pleasure to have known and worked for him.*

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**Phyllis Johnson** - January 12, 2024 at 01:24 PM