

## William D. Fraley



Bill Fraley was a Lieutenant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon of the 101<sup>st</sup> Radio Research Company in 1971 and 1972. When the platoons were all moved to Bien Hoa in 1972 in preparation for stand down, Bill was relocated to Saigon and assigned to project Purple Dragon. When the Commanding Officer of the 101<sup>st</sup> was injured and medevacked out of country, Bill was made the CO of the 101<sup>st</sup>.

Born in December, 1946, Bill passed away in March, 2026. He is interred at the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery in North Little Rock, AR.

### William Fraley Obituary

William "Bill" Downing Fraley, 79, of Sherwood, Arkansas, passed away peacefully on March 14.

Bill was born December 28, 1946, in Chelsea, Oklahoma. After the death of his parents in 1962, he moved to Harrison, Arkansas, where he lived with his aunt and uncle, Martin B. "Mike" and Lodema "Dema" Windham. He graduated from high school in Harrison and then attended Hendrix College in Conway, earning a degree in chemistry in 1969. During his senior year he met fellow science major Judy Cox in a political science class that both of them later joked they nearly failed because neither spoke "politicalese." That class began a partnership that would last the rest of his life.

Following graduation in 1969, Bill enlisted in the United States Army and later earned a commission through Officer Candidate School as an intelligence officer. From April 1971 to April 1972 he served in the Vietnam War, for which he received the Bronze Star with "V" device for valor under fire and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

Bill and Judy married on June 10, 1973, and began a life shaped by military service and adventure. Over the next two decades, they lived at several Army posts, including Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Huachuca, Arizona; Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; and Stuttgart, Germany. His final assignment was along the border between East and West Germany during the final years of the Cold War. While overseas, he developed a love of German food and culture, and traveled extensively throughout Europe with his family.

While in the Army, Bill also earned a master's degree in information systems and held a variety of intelligence and leadership assignments. He retired from military service in September 1989 after 20 years. In addition to the Bronze Star, he received numerous honors including two Meritorious Service Medals and the Joint Service Commendation Medal.

Following military retirement, Bill returned to central Arkansas and began a lengthy second career in computer programming. He first worked for the Pulaski County tax office, becoming senior programmer, and later for Electronic Data Systems. His final programming job was at UCA in Conway, after which he retired from professional work in 2012.

Throughout his life Bill was deeply involved in Scouting and served as an adult leader in the Boy Scouts of America for nearly three decades. Beginning with a troop he helped start in Germany for military families, he led generations of Scouts on outdoor adventures that included backpacking in Europe and the Rocky Mountains. His own love of wilderness exploration eventually led him on treks in the Himalayas to Mount Everest, the Alaskan wilderness, and the Andes of Peru.

Bill was also a longtime member of Sylvan Hills United Methodist Church in Sherwood, where he was active in many aspects of church life. He sang in the choir, played handbells, volunteered in community service, and later chaired the church's Buildings and Grounds Committee. His wife Judy continues to serve the congregation as music director for more than three decades.

Whether spending time with his family, serving his country, exploring the world, or being active in his faith, Bill approached life with discipline, curiosity, and a quiet sense of humor. He will be forever loved and deeply missed by his family, friends, and community.

Bill is survived by his beloved wife, Judy Fraley (nee Cox); his sons, Daniel Fraley (Crystal) and Patrick Fraley (Gina); and his grandchildren, Owen Fraley and Kailyn Fraley. He was preceded in death by his parents, William and Louila Fraley, and his siblings David, Mona, and Genie.