

Willard Wille 677K 9-16-2013



Willard Wille, 60, of Grinnell, died Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2013 at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines.

A funeral service was held on Saturday, Sept. 14, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Grinnell.

Memorials may be directed to the Willard Wille Memorial Fund and sent in care of the Smith Funeral Home, PO

Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Willard Raymond Wille was born on Aug. 17, 1953, to Raymond Henry and Vada Bahr Wille in Iowa City. He was raised in the Victor area and graduated in 1971 from HLV. He served in the Army from 1973 to 1975.

He married Barbara Less on Jan. 28, 1978, in Blainstown, and they had three girls. They raised their family in the Victor area before moving to Grinnell in 2003.

Willard was a hobby farmer who was always tinkering with something in his machine shed or at the farm. Willard enjoyed the outdoors and fishing, as well as feeding and watching his birds. While his children were in school, he was an avid supporter of the HLTV sports. Willard was also a member of the Victor American Legion.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara Wille of Grinnell; his daughters, Elizabeth McCaw of Glenwood, Sarah Paxton of Greenfield, and Melissa Rhinehart of Victor; five grandchildren; his mother, Vada Wille of Brooklyn; and his sister, Vadae Gohlke of Littlefield, Texas.

Willard was preceded in death by his father.

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Members of the Grinnell community were saddened to learn about the death of Willard Wille this past Wednesday. Wille, 60, worked at Grinnell College for the past 13 years and is fondly remembered by members of the campus community, who often met him in the JRC.

Nik Jameson '11, formed a close bond with Wille while at Grinnell and worked with him to implement a college policy whereby veterans, like Wille, could take Veteran's Day off without using their personal leave. Jameson continued to stay in touch with Wille after graduating.

"[Willard] opened his heart and home more than once for lost (or wandering) Grinnellians. I continued to send him mail since graduating and never thought he'd be so suddenly gone," wrote Jameson in an email. "He listened to my complaints about papers, administrative poli-

tics and the weather. In turn, I learned about his beautiful family (of which he was always happy to boast about), his farm and administrative politics ... However, he gave me much much more—courage, strength, sound advice and a friend when I was far away from home. He never hesitated to share photos, stories or a laugh, and would honk at me from his motorized floor cleaner as he smiled and waved."

Wille was widely known around campus for his kind nature and sense of humor.

"Willard ... was a staple in the JRC as well as [at] Grinnell College. Although he was more of a behind the scenes person at Grinnell, I am sure he left lasting impressions. I was fortunate to work with Willard on numerous occasions throughout my time at Grinnell. His humor and work ethic will always be remembered,"

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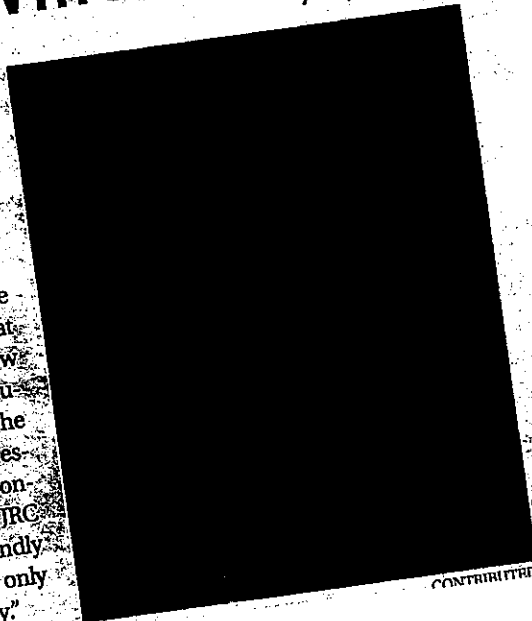
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wrote Victor Golden '13, in an email.

He is remembered and missed by students and staff alike.

"We will all greatly miss Willard, always warm-hearted and easy to talk with," wrote Rick Whitney, Director of Facilities Management.

"Willard was a fixture in the JRC. He touched so many lives during his time at Grinnell and all of us who were lucky to know him will fondly remember his sense of humor, kind smile and wink, and the concern he showed," wrote Houston Dougherty, Vice President for Student Affairs in an email. "Personally, it will not be the same to walk into the JRC and not hear Willard greet me with his friendly 'Well hello there young man.' There was only one Willard Wille and we miss him terribly."



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