



## Wilhelm J. Heider

August 21, 1928 - October 22, 2020

Wilhelm Josef Heider, age 92, passed away peacefully in his home in Ann Arbor on Thursday, October 22, 2020. He was born in Bad Driburg, Germany in 1928 and following World War 2 attended the University of Heidelberg and acted as a translator for the US Army. Bill then was awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Notre Dame and emigrated to the United States. While at Notre Dame, he met the former Gilda Caterino and they were married in 1954. After taking up flying as a hobby, he transitioned to become a corporate pilot for Bendix/AlliedSignal Corporation from where he retired in 1990. Bill was an avid tennis player with a tremendous sense of humor and enjoyed playing at many different tennis facilities in South Bend, Ann Arbor, and the surrounding areas. When not flying or playing tennis, he enjoyed maintaining his vegetable garden and traveling in Europe and the US with Gilda. Always quick with a joke, story to tell, or offer to help, Bill will be missed by family and friends. He is survived by his wife Gilda, son John, daughter-in-law Trish and grandchildren Will, Eric, Lisa and Ally. A funeral mass will be held Wednesday, November 4 at 11:00 am at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Ypsilanti, MI. The family will receive friends from 10:00 am until the time of service at 11:00 am. In lieu of flowers, donations in his name may be made to Autism Speaks or the Kirk Gibson Foundation for Parkinson's Research. To leave a memory you have of Bill, to sign his guestbook or for directions please visit [www.rbfhsaline.com](http://www.rbfhsaline.com).



# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church  
411 Florence Street  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
<https://www.ypsilanticatholic.com/>

## Funeral Service

NOV 4. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church  
411 Florence Street  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
<https://www.ypsilanticatholic.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Wilhelm J. Heider*

October 23, 2023 at 01:07 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Wilhelm J. Heider.*



November 03, 2020 at 12:55 PM



“ *Bill was a good friend and a great tennis buddy. I enjoyed our years on the tennis court. We also loved his good sense of humor. I remember fondly the fantastic airplane ride over South Bend and Lake Michigan. My wife, Sandy, and I extend our deepest sympathy to the family.*

*Bob Pattillo, South Bend, IN*

**Robert Pattillo** - November 02, 2020 at 11:35 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Wilhelm J. Heider.*



October 31, 2020 at 02:31 PM

“ From Ken Hurrelbrink:

*Sad news but a great guy.*

*I posted the following on an Obit page:*

*If I were a “stand-up” comedian, I could do a two hour special telling nothing but Bill Heider stories. Stories of wonderful humor, amazing quick wit and stories of a wonderful human being. I will relate two stories to illustrate. I will tell “The Oshkosh Story” and then “The Earl Shultz Story”. Believe me, after being his doubles partner for 25+ years, I have many stories and I still tell them frequently and they all have titles.*

*The Oshkosh Story*

*My daughter and Bill flew our Cessna 172 to the EAA Air Show at Oshkosh Wisconsin in 1992. I was flying a trip with Republic Airlines at the time and would eventually meet them at the airshow. After landing at Oshkosh and taxiing to a parking space, one of the volunteer taxi directors shouted, “Classic or Antique” (the parking location assignment was based on their answer). Without hesitation, Bill yells out the window, “She’s a classic and I’m an antique.” This was classic Heider. Impossible to be around him without constant hilarity.*

*The Earl Shultz Story*

*In the mid 80s, our good friend and a top Ann Arbor Tennis Player, Earl Schultz, was diagnosed with terminal leukemia. Both Bill and I decided that we had to do something to show Earl that he was loved by all. At least loved by two hank tennis players that didn’t deserve to carry his rackets let alone play with him on a regular basis. Our solution was to rake the leaves from his lawn and not tell him.*

*Doesn’t sound like much but it was normally a two day project and guaranteed blisters and back aches. Earl had a big lawn with lots of oak trees. We waited until Saturday morning, Earl had just left for the Michigan vs Michigan State game and we began this monstrous task. We divided the lawn in half and at the end of four hours Bill was finished with his half and joined to help me finish mine. We finished the lawn before Earl returned home from the game and we swore a pact to never tell anyone. To my great friend and doubles partner I say, “I release you from this covenant. When you see Earl,*

*you can tell him that we raked his lawn." I am sure he will enjoy it.*

**John Heider** - October 31, 2020 at 10:17 AM

KH

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Ken Hurrelbrink** - October 31, 2020 at 12:52 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Wilhelm J. Heider.



October 29, 2020 at 02:20 PM

ED

“ Will was a wonderful story teller and a consummate gentleman. He will be sorely missed.  
Our condolences to Gilda and the family.  
Ken and Eileen Donegan

**Eileen Donegan** - October 28, 2020 at 12:20 AM

MM

“ I remember as a kid going to the South Bend airport and Uncle Will would take us flying. That was my first time on an airplane. Probably wouldn't be allowed today! Was fun though. I'll think of you every time I have a beer. Love and prayers.

-----  
**Maria Murphy** - October 27, 2020 at 12:33 PM



“ Always enjoyed my time talking with Will. Great stories. Our condolences to his wonderful family.

-----  
**Dino Signore** - October 27, 2020 at 09:40 AM

MM

“ Uncle Will told me a story when he was a commercial pilot flying all over the United States when they landed at their destination he had to fill the plane up for the way back and back in the day they gave out S &H green stamps. It was a bonus to all sorts of prizes.

God Speed Uncle Will.

-----  
**Martin Murphy** - October 27, 2020 at 07:34 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Wilhelm J. Heider.



-----  
October 26, 2020 at 05:13 PM



“ Thinking of you all sending our love, thoughts and prayers to the family. "Grandpa Heider" as we called him will be missed. - The Dobson Family

---

**Tiffany Mastny-Dobson** - October 25, 2020 at 03:50 PM

JB

“ We send our condolences to the family and friends. We didn't know him that well, but well enough to know that he was such a lovely man, who had lived such an interesting life and was so loved by his family,who will miss him so much. John and Jenny Bull

---

**John Bull** - October 25, 2020 at 10:35 AM