



William G. "Bill" Darnell

July 20, 1936 - June 6, 2024

William G. "Bill" Darnell passed away peacefully at his home Thursday, June 6. He was born in Houston, Texas, and moved to Benicia in 1982 after decades in Colorado, Montana and Southern California. Bill was a Co-Founder of Huntway Oil Company in 1982, later purchased by Valero Oil Company.

Bill served in the United States Army Special Forces, and was a member of the Green Berets. He was also a Paratrooper, then continued as an Advisor to the Military.

Bill was an avid skier, scuba diver, competitive rower, baseball coach and Boy Scout Leader. Later, he was a Boys and Girls Club Sponsor. Bill was also a longtime Benicia Yacht Club Member.

He is survived by his wife Delena; his three children, Max (Lindsay) Darnell, Mitch Darnell, and Tori Darnell; stepchildren Tim (Julie) & Pat (Denise) Empey; step children April (Bryan) Celosse, Mark (Sylvia) Honaker and John (Karen) Honaker; and his grandchildren Branton, Aubrey, Noah and stepgrandchildren Drake, Jack and Alex, and Samantha and John.

He was preceded in death by his wife Penny Darnell in 2006.

Memorial services including military honors will be held 11:00 a.m., Friday, June 28, 2024 at First Baptist Church, 1055 Southampton Road, Benicia. Arrangements are under the direction of Passalacqua Funeral Chapel,

Benicia.

Bill requested all interested parties, in lieu of flowers, to submit donations to either of the following charitable organizations: The Wounded Warriors Project: <https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/> or The League of Heroes Inspired: <https://www.leagueofheroesinspired.org>

Previous Events

Memorial

JUN **28**. 11:00 AM (PT)

First Baptist Church
1055 Southampton Road
Benicia, CA, CA 94510

Tribute Wall

FF

“ From John Honaker and Family purchased the E nduring Grace for the family of William G. "Bill" Darnell.



From John Honaker and Family - June 24, 2024 at 05:22 PM

RC

“ Bill Darnell was a giant of the asphalt pavement industry in California, and a member of the California Asphalt Pavement Association “Hall of Fame.” A longtime director of asphalt marketing for Valero in Northern California, Darnell was one of the founders in 1994 of the Northern California Asphalt Producers Association, which eventually merged in 2012 with a Southern California counterpart to become a statewide association known as CalAPA. He was a longtime board member of CalAPA, ever present at association events and meetings with public works officials and elected officials. He represented our industry with grace and dignity, which is why I always referred to him as “Gentleman Bill.” The list of people he mentored is longer than an asphalt highway. All of us are grateful for his many contributions to the success of our industry. He will be missed.

Russell W. Snyder, Executive Director, C - June 09, 2024 at 12:12 PM

WD

Thank you so much for this tremendously insightful contribution, Mr. Snyder!

W. Mitchell Darnell - June 20, 2024 at 05:30 PM

MT

We at the Telfer companies have had many professional and personal relations with Bill, he was instrumental to the successes we enjoyed at the Telfer companies. I will miss our many breakfast's we had at the Hickory Pit restaurant in Walnut Creek, he would scratch out deals we would make on a note pad that only he could decipher. Then order his favorite breakfast chicken fried steak extra gave, then never ate more than half, Bill was such a heath nut I could not understand why he ordered it but made up for it by eating only half! I remember going pheasant hunting with us going back to the mid 90's so our relationship goes many decades back. Sometimes we were competitors but most of the time we were his customer. I went to his charity events and he supported ours in kind, always a class act and a gentleman, I and all of the people at Telfer are saddened at Bills passing, I will miss him and all of us at Telfer will always be great full for the opportunity to have known him and worked with him!

*Sincerely
Mike Telfer*

michael telfer - June 22, 2024 at 12:33 PM

LT

*One of the finest gentleman the people of our industry have ever enjoyed.
He was much ,more than a business associate to me.
I'm proud to have been able to call him my friend.
So many times over the years Bill would drive clear to Redding to share a dinner, then drive back to the bay.
He was instrumental in guiding our company from the purchase of our first asphalt plant in the 80's until his retirement.
A man of unquestionable integrity, he will be missed.
Lyle Tullis*

Lyle Tullis - June 26, 2024 at 12:15 AM

PH

His name popped into my head and I did the google-thing. Bummed but a good man that lead a great life. Bill and I rowed whaleboats together for years. His ability to sit those hard seats and man the oars lasted far longer than me. I was proud to call him a friend.

*Paul Harford
Benicia, CA*

PAUL L HARFORD - July 18, 2025 at 04:36 PM