



Dr. William Robert Bates

April 6, 1962 - December 6, 2019

Memorial services will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2019, at 10:00 AM in Martin & Castille's La Fleur de Lis Chapel in Lafayette, for Dr. William Robert Bates, age 57, who passed away on Friday, December 6, 2019, at his home in Lafayette. The Reverend Patrick McCoy will conduct the services. The family will receive guests at the funeral home on Thursday morning from 9:00 AM until time of the service.

Will was born April 6, 1962 at Camp Le Jeune in North Carolina to Martha Ann Corley (Bates) Fincher and Benjamin Hill Bates, Jr., while his dad was in the Marines. It wasn't long before the little family returned to Louisiana carrying Will home in a Kotex box to the state he would call home for most of his life.

Will grew up in Coushatta, Louisiana, and proudly wore the term "redneck". That moniker was hardly sufficient for this complicated man with a passion for reading, a razor-sharp intellect and even sharper wit. Will had a passion for cars from a very early age, and started tinkering with anything and everything that had wheels. He bought his first car at ten and took out his first car loan at twelve with money he earned as janitor at his parents' drugstore. That was just the beginning of an addiction that delighted Will and plagued his loved ones for the rest of his days. His collection topped out at eighteen cars, but over his lifetime he owned scores, including a 1971 Cadillac hearse he bought by accident. Will read obsessively about cars, worked on them, raced them on pylon courses in mall parking lots and on tracks across the South, and attended dozens of racing schools to hone his skills. In the driver's seat he was in his element, and no matter how hot, rainy, acrid, or expensive it got, even a bad day on the track made him grin from ear to ear.

Will had a wicked sense of humor and a decidedly irreverent streak which often got him in trouble. Two bits of wisdom he felt were most important to impart to his daughter Molly were comedic timing and a healthy cynicism for authority.

If you were a friend to him, he could be unfailingly generous and loyal. If you crossed him, you knew it, for he suffered fools and traitors not at all. Will held onto friendships from the

Governor's Program for Gifted Children, which he began attending in 1974, his earliest days in Coushatta, his prep school days at Woodberry Forest, and undergraduate and graduate school. Will valued his closest and longest friendships above all else, but the center of his world was his family, especially Molly, her husband David, and their two children, Bo and Rosemary. They brought him unspeakable joy and allowed him to let the big kid that lived inside him to run amok.

Will loved dogs and had a big soft spot for stray cats, dogs, and people: the quirkiest, the better.

Oh, and he was a doctor, and a really good one. Will earned an M.S. in Pharmacology before he began medical school at LSU in Shreveport, and completed his residency at UAMS in Little Rock, Arkansas, where, he would proudly declare, "They killed Sam Walton." He practiced Internal Medicine with Hamilton Medical Group in Lafayette and then in his own private practice. He also served as Chief of Staff at Regional Medical Center of Southwest Louisiana for a number of years, including the days following hurricane Katrina, when he worked tirelessly for weeks on end. Later he was employed as a hospitalist in Lafayette and Alexandria until back issues forced his retirement.

Will left his indelible mark on an extended family of dear cousins, numerous friends, and patients. He is survived by his daughter, Dr. Molly Bates McCoy and her husband David, and their children James Bonham "Bo" McCoy and Rosemary Jane McCoy who make their home in Portland, Oregon. He spent the last twelve years in the company of Charlotte Fuhr, who made him smile, loved him and his many dogs, and put up with his grumpiness. Will also leaves behind a half-sister, Melissa Gayle Bates of Ridgeland, Mississippi. He was preceded in death by his brother, James Edwin Bates; his father, Benjamin Hill Bates, Jr.; his beloved mother Martha Ann Corley Fincher,; and uncle Robert L. Corley, Jr.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to The Governor's Program for Gifted Children MSU Box 91490, McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA 70609; and St. Mary's Residential Training School, 6715 LA Hwy 1, Boyce, LA 71409, which took excellent care of his little brother Jim.

View the obituary and guestbook online at www.mourning.com

Martin & Castille-SOUTHSIDE-600 E. Farrel Rd., Lafayette, LA 70508, 337-984-2811

Events

DEC **Visitation** 09:00AM - 10:00AM

12

Martin & Castille Funeral Home - Southside Location
600 East Farrel Rd., Lafayette, LA, US, 70508

DEC **Memorial Service** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

12

Martin & Castille's La Fleur de Lis Chapel
600 E. Farrel Road, Lafayette, LA, US, 70508

Comments



“ Dear Niece Dr Molly and husband David, Great nephew and niece Bo and Rosemary and Family, I was very sorry to hear of your father's Passing so very young, we send our love and condolences to you all at this very sad time, hugs and Oceans of love,
Mrs Robyn BROWN Uncle Chris Brown PERTH Western Australia

robyn brown - December 20, 2019 at 09:38 AM



“ Please accept my deepest sympathies on Will's passing. I really liked him and enjoyed his company. We worked together many times back in the day at RMCA. He was a superb physician and had a razor-sharp wit.
Mitchell Lirtzman MD

Mitchell Lirtzman MD - December 12, 2019 at 07:51 AM



“ Thanks, Mitch. Will always spoke well of you and enjoyed working with you.

Annie - December 15, 2019 at 09:35 PM



“ When I remember summers at the GPGC, Will comes to mind immediately. He was so much a part of everything good in those summers. Many years later, I was so glad to catch up with him again when I was a pediatrics resident and he was a medical student on our rotation. All the best of him was still true: his intelligence, razor sharp wit, kindness, and wonderful perspective. The world is a sadder place without him. I wish his family the peace of good memories of someone who was one of a kind.

Ellen Lancon Connor
GPGC Class of 1976

Ellen Lancon Connor - December 11, 2019 at 10:31 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. William Robert Bates.



December 11, 2019 at 02:52 PM



“ Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Dr. William Robert Bates.



December 10, 2019 at 02:49 PM



“ 40 files added to the album LifeTributes



Martin & Castille Funeral Home - December 10, 2019 at 01:54 PM



“ Will was my first cousin. So sorry to hear of his passing. I have fond memories of my visits to Coushatta.

Kevin Swindle

Kevin Swindle - December 10, 2019 at 01:36 PM



“ Thanks, Kevin. I was sorry to hear from Gayle of your mom's passing. She was such a sweet person, and always so kind to Will, Molly and me.

Annie - December 15, 2019 at 09:34 PM



“ Tommy, Mechelle & Taylor Bryson purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Dr. William Robert Bates.



Tommy, Mechelle & Taylor Bryson - December 10, 2019 at 10:09 AM



“ While words fail me on this occasion, there is still so much I want to say about my friend, Will. I stood as Best Man in his wedding and he did the same for me. Still, I thought I'd share one story that I'll always remember that really illustrates his personality.

In August of 1983, I had just graduated from LSU and was packed up to move back home to Shreveport. Still the undergrad, Will was traveling to north Louisiana that night as well. After quite a bit of procrastination, we left Baton Rouge, driving in tandem, a little after midnight. In those days before I-49, the trip was largely on two-lane highways. By about 5 a.m. as we were coming up through DeSoto Parish on Highway 1, we were both getting a bit foggy as fatigue started to set in. In a time before cell phones, Will's solution to keeping us both alert was, from his lead car, to dive into the bag of orange marshmallow circus peanuts he had on hand for a snack, roll down his window, and start launching them back at me at 65 miles per hour.

The last time I saw Will was at my mother's funeral in Shreveport. It was instantly as if the years had melted away and we picked up where we left off. I pray the next time I see him it will be much the same.

In the meantime, Mechelle, Taylor and I send our love and prayers to Molly, her family and all of Will's extended family and friends.

I will always remember and cherish the time spent with my friend, Will.

Tom Bryson - December 10, 2019 at 10:04 AM



“ Thanks, Tommy. I have so many great memories of the three of us together: APO, SCCA, movies, Monjuni's, Greenwood, the Weekly Waskomer, strawn's and on and on. He loved you like a brother.

Annie - December 15, 2019 at 09:30 PM



“ It was mutual.

Tom Bryson - December 15, 2019 at 10:18 PM



“ My best friend and companion thru high school and college. We rode motorcycles, worked on cars and ate pizza while playing pool in your game room (a refuge for me.)
We weren't in touch much in later years but could always pick up where we left off. I miss you my friend.

Jeff Bamburg

Jeff Bamburg - December 10, 2019 at 09:15 AM



“ Thanks, Jeff! You were so important to Will!

Annie - December 15, 2019 at 09:26 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. William Robert Bates.



December 10, 2019 at 09:07 AM



“ He was one a kind. He was so wonderful with his patients and was kind and caring. Will never forget his generosity when my dad died. I'll cherish all of our life talks and laughter. Will hold dear our last visit he had at the office last month. We laughed a whole lot. He was a funny guy. Will miss him dearly

Keisha Courville - December 10, 2019 at 06:58 AM



“ He is someone who helped me as a doctor and friend. I remember when I was going through a really hard time in my life and he pulled me out of my office into the hospital board room and told me things I needed to hear and his words helped me to take courage and brave steps to change my life that I am truly grateful for, his words will never be forgotten. Thank you William forever Rest In Peace my friend.

Cindy Menard - December 09, 2019 at 10:21 PM



“ Dr. and Mrs. Michael Jennings purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. William Robert Bates.



Dawn Trahan - December 09, 2019 at 05:59 PM



“ 16 files added to the album LifeTributes

Martin & Castille Funeral Home - December 09, 2019 at 05:23 PM