



Obituary

Bill Bergan of Ames, Iowa died on November 22, 2022 at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames, IA, surrounded by his wife, Karen, and his four children. He was 80 years old.

Visitation will be held from 3:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Ames, where there will be a Vigil Service held at 7:00 P.M. Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:00 A.M. on Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. Burial will be held at a later date.

Bill (William Harold Bergan) was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin, mentor and friend to many. He was born April 1, 1942 in Volga City, Iowa to Harold and Thelma (Carmichael) Bergan. Bill was introduced to Karen Dietz by his sister, Mary and Karen's sister, Patty and they were married on June 1, 1968 at St. Edward's Catholic Church (Waterloo, IA).

A graduate of Cedar Falls High School and the University of Northern Iowa (1965), he earned two subsequent Master's Degrees (1968 and 1971). He was a member of the UNI track & field and cross country teams.

Bill was the head track & field coach at Waterloo Columbus High School from 1965-71 before accepting a position with Iowa State University as their head cross country coach. While at Columbus, he led the Sailors to state titles in cross country and also began an annual track & field/cross country coaching clinic as well as initiating a State of Iowa Track & Field Coaches Association (the IATC).

Coaching was Bill's highest calling. In his coaching career of nearly 30 years, Iowa State won 25 Big Eight Conference team championships and two NCAA Cross Country team titles. He was named Big Eight Cross Country Coach of the Year five times, National Cross Country & Track Coach of the Year, and inducted into several Hall of Fames as a coach and an athlete.

Bill recruited talented athletes from in-state and also opened the doors to international athletes from places like Denmark, Belgium, Nigeria and Kenya. He took pride in being their mentor and was a father figure to many of them. He loved the meaningful relationships that were built between his athletes—and cherished witnessing their life-long friendships.

Bill was instrumental in the development of the ISU Cross Country Course and Iowa State honored Bergan in 2012 by dedicating its new track & field facility (The Bill and Karen Bergan Track) at the Cyclone Sports Complex. A statue of Coach Bergan raising one of his many Big Eight championship trophies welcomes visitors at the complex entrance.

In 1976, Bill and Karen began a publishing company with a series of track & field coaching books. Evolving over the next four decades, Championship Productions became the world's leading producer of coaching instructional videos. In 2007, Bill was awarded the 'Entrepreneur of the Year' by the Ames Chamber of Commerce.

Bill and Karen were guardians of a dear friend, Mark Kitchen, for over 30 years. This led Bill to helping direct the track & field portion of the Iowa Special Olympics for many years, culminating in being the Track & Field Commissioner for the first ever USA Special Olympics in 2006. He was also a founding board member of Friendship Ark and served on the board of directors for Mainstream Living.

Bill's faith was paramount throughout his life and at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Ames, he served on the Parish Council, Development Committees and Finance Committees for many years. He was a contributor to many fundraising efforts at both St. Thomas and St. Cecilia School, as well as the Archdiocese of Dubuque, both as a contributor and as an organizer.

Bill spent his recent years enjoying time with friends, family and cheering on his grandchildren in their activities and sports. A lifelong runner, Bill was known to run with his athletes while coaching and he maintained this daily exercise habit until his last day.

More than all of his professional accolades and accomplishments, Bill's love and devotion for his wife Karen, his children and their families plus his siblings and their families was his true passion.

Bill was humble, generous and loving to everyone. His family cherished the way he treated his athletes like sons, in the way he lived with true integrity and especially comforted in the legacy of love he leaves for all of us.

Bill is survived by his wife, Karen, and four children; Jody (Darryl) of Ames, Dan (Jessica) of Silverthorne, Colorado, Mike (Liz) of Wauwatosa, WI and Amy (Doug) of Lakewood, Colorado. Survivors also include ten grandchildren - Henry, Lucy, Charlie, Edie (Bennett), Drew, Lola, Jake (Bergan) and Fiona, Juniper and Sadie (Yetman), four sisters - Elaine Pfeiffer, Lois (Lew) Bishop, Mary (Steve) Scharfenberg, Betty (Mike) Hurley and one brother- Don (Maryann) Bergan. He was preceded in death by one sister, Lorna (Howard) Landas.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Adams Funeral Home and online condolences may be left for Bill's family at www.adamssoderstrum.com. In lieu of flowers, memorials in Bill's name may be directed to Friendship Ark, 130 S. Sheldon Ave. #203, Ames, Iowa 50014, MaryKnoll Fathers and Brothers, P.O. Box 302, MaryKnoll, NY 10545, Attn: Charlotte Harris, or Iowa State University's Track and Field and Cross Country Programs.