



## William Russell Deel

December 7, 1945 - March 28, 2025

William "Bill" Deel, born on December 7, 1945, in Clintwood, Virginia, passed away peacefully on March 28, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of creativity, passion, and love. An exceptional artist, Bill devoted his life to expressing his unique vision of the world through his art. His works resonated with many, showcasing not only his talent but also his deep appreciation for the particular beauty of life in rural Southwest Virginia.

Sports were a passion of Bill's, particularly basketball. He was a devoted fan and a talented coach, guiding athletes with honest feedback and encouragement. Having been a standout player himself, Bill coached the Clintwood High School girls and boys basketball teams over several decades. His tenure included leading the CHS Lady Wave to the VHSL Group A Girls State Championship titles in 1985 and 1989, notably with two distinct rosters of players. His enthusiasm for the game was infectious, fostering a sense of teamwork and sportsmanship in those he coached. A remarkable high school and college scholar athlete, Bill was recognized throughout Virginia as one of only a few players in the 1000 Point 'Club' during his senior high school season. His enjoyment of the game lasted throughout his life, leading him to continue to follow the high school basketball teams of Southwest Virginia into retirement, occasionally traveling around the region to attend their games long after he had retired as a player and coach.

Bill was also a dedicated English teacher in Clintwood, inspiring countless students with his love for literature and language. His classroom was a haven for creativity and critical thinking, where he encouraged his students to explore their own voices and perspectives. An avid fisherman, Bill found solace in the tranquility of nature and the thrill of the catch. He cherished his time spent by the water, often sharing stories and laughter with family and friends during fishing trips.

In addition to his many interests, Bill had a love for crossword puzzles, often challenging himself with the intricacies of language and wordplay. This pastime reflected his sharp mind and his lifelong passion for words, further enriching his teaching and artistic pursuits. Bill was a loving uncle, brother, and friend. He is survived by his sister, Sheri Chaffin, brother-in-law Buford Barrett, nieces Lauren Barrett, Emily Chaffin, and Ashley Barrett, great-nephew Ashton Bigwarfe, and great-niece Addison Barrett. He was preceded in death by his parents, Howard Milton Deel and Jonnie Bohannon Deel, sister, Lynn Barrett,

and his nephew, Justin Chaffin. We will forever cherish the countless memories shared with him, from family gatherings to quiet moments of connection.

A Celebration of Bill's Life will be held at a later date to honor his memory and the impact he had on all who knew him.

As we remember Coach William "Bill" Deel, we celebrate a life well-lived—a life filled with art, education, love, laughter, and the joy of words. He will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege to know him.

For those of you attending the Celebration of Life for Bill.

As we are serving food, we need an accurate count of how many plan to attend. Please RSVP to [shchaffin@gmail.com](mailto:shchaffin@gmail.com) or message me at (276) 356-3158 by May 1.

For those coming long distances, lodging is available at the park. Go to the Breaks Interstate Park website and check lodging. As the event will be in a covered picnic pavilion, you might want to bring a folding chair.

We so appreciate all the people who touched Bill's life.

# Previous Events

## Celebration Of Life

MAY 17. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

The Breaks Interstate Park  
627 Commission Cir  
Breaks, VA 24607

*Shelter Two For those of you attending the Celebration of Life for Bill. As we are serving food, we need an accurate count of how many plan to attend. Please RSVP to [shchaffin@gmail.com](mailto:shchaffin@gmail.com) or message me at (276) 356-3158 by May 1. For those coming long distances, lodging is available at the park. Go to the Breaks Interstate Park website and check lodging. As the event will*

# Tribute Wall

BS

“ I was deeply saddened to hear of Bill's passing. Bill was a quiet classmate, an outstanding artist and poet. I distinctly remember we were sitting side by side on a podium in the gym when the announcement of JFK's assassination was announced. I somehow swiped his email address and sent him several emails bugging him to attend our reunions. I never received a response. My deepest condolences to him family and friends. He will be missed.  
Brenda (Mullins) Shortt  
CHS Class of 64

Brenda M Shortt - April 09, 2025 at 07:10 PM

HB

“ One teacher that knew how TEACH, in and out of the classroom. Mr. Deel came off HARD to many that didn't take the time to know him. Those students really missed out because once you got him out of the classroom and into literally any other setting; whether it be on the basketball court, in a grocery store, or even in the parking lot as school was dismissing, Mr. Deel was a VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE and interesting man with so much more to teach than what our tiny high school or even our tiny town could hold. He seemed to know everything about everything!! Apparent, of course was his love for the English language and BASKETBALL ( his first love), but then came art, fishing, and so..so..much more! HARD? Sure you could call this brilliant mind hard....until u got to know his heart. He couldn't stand one major fact about himself that he showed to very few.....No matter how much of a pain you were...He loved you as a student, a friend, an associate, a coworker, or a neighbor. Anyone that he could share his knowledge with was his reason for waking up and blessing us with all his many gifts! I thank God that I am blessed to be able to call him my teacher, a mentor, and a friend from years gone by. JUST A WARNING TO MR. BILL DEEL.... I WILL SEE YOU WHEN MY WORK HERE IS DONE.... Knowing him then and remembering him now and always will forever be a blessing to my life and to the lives of so many others that had the honor of ..as he would say (JOKINGLY) "sharing his oxygen". Rest peacefully now Sir.

Heather Baldwin - April 03, 2025 at 10:21 AM

 Scott Ramey

“ Scott Ramey lit a candle in memory of William Russell Deel



Scott Ramey - April 02, 2025 at 01:08 PM



SO SAD!!!, REALLY ENJOYED HIS CLASS BACK IN EARLY 80S, R.I.P. MR. DEEL, YOUR LEGACY LIVES ON. ITS NOT WHAT YOU TAKE WHEN YOU GO ,BUT WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND. PRAYERS FOR THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Scott Ramey - April 02, 2025 at 01:14 PM

DR

“ May our precious Lord bring peace, love, comfort and healing to the family and friends of Bill Deel. Bill was an excellent person, teacher, coach. It has been a pleasure to know and work with him over the years.

Damon Rasnick

Damon A Rasnick - April 02, 2025 at 10:52 AM

MS

“ I was lucky enough to grow up across Long Street from Bill & his wonderful family. Bill was a guy I always looked up to - both figuratively and literally. He was extremely talented in many ways including being an accomplished artist; great athlete; championship coach and a teacher whom his students loved. Bill was very friendly & he never met a stranger. He made a lasting impression on anyone he ever met. RIP big guy!

Morris Skeen - April 01, 2025 at 02:30 PM



“ A good person who I'll remember for the moments that shaped who you were. Rest in peace my friend, Love, Willie-Bill Chaffin

Willie Chaffin - April 01, 2025 at 12:05 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of William Russell Deel.

April 01, 2025 at 11:56 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of William Russell Deel.



April 01, 2025 at 11:56 AM

HO

“ Rest in peace my friend and class mate

Harold Orr - April 01, 2025 at 10:54 AM

RM

“ Roma Mullins lit a candle in memory of William Russell Deel



Roma Mullins - April 01, 2025 at 10:04 AM

EC

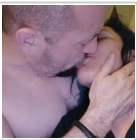
“ I'm so sorry to hear of this. Wishing you comfort -Jill Chaffin

Elizabeth Chaffin - April 01, 2025 at 09:21 AM

CE

“ Mr. Deel's art class was one of the (few) highlights of going to CHS. He was a down to earth person, never pretentious.

Catherine Edwards - April 01, 2025 at 01:19 AM



“ Bill was one of my favorite teachers at Clintwood. I was in his art class two different times and I learned so much from him, things that I still remember almost 30 years later. He was a great man. You're gonna be missed

Jeremy Mullins - March 31, 2025 at 11:02 PM

LF

“ He painted Cinderella stage coach for our prom. Such a talented person. Will be missed.

Linda C Foster - March 31, 2025 at 09:47 PM

JB

“ My condolences to the family. I attended high school with Bill.  
Jequeta Mullins Briskey

Jequeta Mullins Briskey - March 31, 2025 at 06:48 PM

DB

“ *Dunk one for me and i will shoot a 3 pointer for you.*Rexx Baker

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**donna baker** - March 31, 2025 at 06:14 PM