



Billy "Buster" West

January 4, 1934 - January 24, 2023

Billy G. "Buster" West passed away peacefully on January 24, 2023, at his home. Buster was born in Sweetwater January 4, 1934, and just recently celebrated his 89th birthday. He married his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, Sarah Wyona Hicks, on August 6, 1951. Prior to Wyona's passing, they celebrated their 66th anniversary. They had 3 children, Connie, Janice and Greg. Buster and Wyona owned and operated Valley Electric and Plumbing Supply in Sweetwater for over 40 years. Prior to that Buster worked at the Oak Ridge complex for 11 years. He was a lifelong member of First United Methodist Church of Sweetwater. Buster served 11 years in the U.S. Army National Guard 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

His life in politics started early, with service on the Student Council at Sweetwater High School where he played football and baseball. He was a long serving member in the Jaycees, partnering with them to build the baseball field at Sweetwater Jr. High. He coached Little League Baseball for 17 years which later became the Dixie Youth program. In 1970, the Jaycees petitioned the City School Board to name the Jr. High baseball field the "Billy G. West Field". In his first year with the Jaycees, he was named statewide "Jaycee of the Quarter" for the efforts he made in starting the Toys for Tots program. From 1966 – 1980, Buster was the color commentator for Sweetwater High School Football broadcasted on WDEH radio along with lifelong friend, Lynn Sherlin. The duo was known as "Hoss Man and Buzz".

He was first elected to the Sweetwater City Board in 1969 where he has served 29 years in various roles: Commissioner of Parks and Recreation, Fire Department Commissioner, current Street Commissioner and Vice-Mayor. He is very proud of the work of the Street Department in replacement of sidewalks throughout the town, the paving of miles of city streets, the renovations of the downtown, beautification projects, including the remodeling of the gazebo, parking areas and landscaping. During his term as City Commissioner, his proudest works included the development of the Industrial Park in cooperation with the Industrial Development Board on which he served. He lobbied for improvements at Engelman Park and the construction of the Recreation Complex on Starrett Street. As Fire Commissioner, Sweetwater's ISO rating was reduced from 6 to 5 which many said was impossible.

Buster felt the most rewarding projects he worked on during his terms were: Getting the Highway 322 project started with then Governor Ellington; Lobbying to get a second Sweetwater exit (#62); Helping start the Industrial Development Board and Industrial Park; and building the first spec building in the park around 1984 to recruit industry. Buster served on the Sweetwater Utility Board for 12 years. He also served as a board member at Sweetwater Valley Bank and served through many bank changes, ending with the current Regions Bank. He served over 13 years as Chairman of the Sweetwater Museum Board and oversaw the refurbishing of the Sweetwater Heritage Museum, with the help of the Street and Recreation Department and community volunteers. In 2021, the City of Sweetwater named Buster, Citizen of the Year and receiving that award was one of Buster's most humbling honors.

Buster was preceded in death by his mother, Lenda Elizabeth "Granny" West, his beloved wife, Wyona, and his son, Greg West.

He is survived by his daughters Connie (DeWitt) Upton, Janice (Dan) Baker and daughter-in-law Marcia West. In addition, he had 7 grandchildren: Jason (Becky) Upton, Jeffrey (Amy) Upton, Jeremy (Emily) Parker, Jamey Upton, Meaghan (Matt) Howard, Spencer West, and Hannah (Jordan) Black. His great-grandchildren include: Trent Walker, Taylor Upton, Makenzie (Hunter) Casto, Grant Parker, Jayce Upton, Emma Upton, Aiden Howard, Luke Parker, Marli Upton, Madden Upton, Grady Sue Parker, and Jameson West Upton. Brother-in-Law Dean Cawood, Ringgold, Georgia, along with many nieces, nephews, cousins, and other close friends. Buster also leaves behind his very special friend and companion, Nancy Wallace Baker, close personal friend, Joe Sherlin, special sweetheart, Charlee Morgan, and his "Round Table" buddies. He especially loved "The Girls" at Sweetwater City Hall and "The Guys" at the Street Department as well as all the other City employees and community volunteers.

Finally, Tommy Millsaps said it best when he said, "West was a Sweetwater man through and through and Sweetwater was at the center of his heart". The other part of his heart was occupied by his love and dedication to his family.

The family will receive friends on Friday, January 27, 2023, from 5pm to 7pm at Kyker Funeral Home, Sweetwater, TN with celebration of life service immediately following at 7pm with Rev. Ron Fisher officiating. Interment will be held Saturday, January 28, 2023, at 11am at Westview Cemetery, Sweetwater, TN. Pallbearers will include his: grandsons; close friends, Rick Berrong, Robert Jones, Larry Anderson, Robert Raby and Dick Johnson. Honorary pallbearers include Sweetwater City Street Department Employees.

In lieu of flowers the family request that donations be made to First United Methodist Church in Sweetwater or Sweetwater High School football, basketball or baseball programs, all in his memory.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 27. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Kyker Funeral Homes
OUR SWEETWATER CHAPEL
PO Box 309, 113 W. North Street
Sweetwater, TN 37874
(423) 337-5033
julie@kyker.net
<https://www.kykerfuneralhomes.com/>

Celebration of Life

JAN 27. 7:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ *Kyker Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Billy "Buster" West*



Kyker Funeral Home - January 26, 2023 at 01:41 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Billy "Buster" West.*



January 27, 2023 at 01:12 PM



“ *62 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Kyker Funeral Home - January 26, 2023 at 01:35 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Billy "Buster" West.*



January 26, 2023 at 09:51 AM



“ *Connie, Janice, Spencer & Hannah. Mindee texted me this morning about Buster. I am deeply heart broken. He was such a sweet and giving man & has always had a special place in my heart. My sincere condolences. Sending prayers for comfort and healing to all.*



Judie Shea - January 25, 2023 at 04:00 PM



When I looked at Facebook and saw Jeffery write about this my heart broke. He was one of the kindest along with Ms Wyona they always made it fun to get together and made sure everyone at the departments family especially children had a good time. He was Jack's boss but my special friend. We had many wonderful times together and I got the honor of being very close to all his grandchildren. They were his joy. He joked with me onetime and said if he knew he would have that much fun he would have skipped Connie, Janice, and Greg of course we all laughed because his entire family was the light of his life. I hope they have a very special day remembering everything he did for the community. I can't be with yo I'm in rehab for my knee but my prayers and thoughts will be with each and everyone of his family and to Sweetwater that was his life, family, and many friends.

Bonnie Powell - January 25, 2023 at 05:51 PM



We are very sorry for your loss. We remember the family well.

Joyce Gregory, Jill Nold

Jill Nold - January 30, 2023 at 05:39 PM