



William Ralph "Bear Tom" Willis

December 1, 1928 - December 25, 2012

Big Stone Gap, VA

William Ralph "Bear Tom" Willis, 84, passed away on Tuesday, December 25, 2012 at his home in Powell Valley, where he had been a lifelong resident.

He was a U.S. Army Veteran of the Korean War, having served from 1950-1952. He was retired from V.D.O.T., after 26 years of service. Ralph loved people, loved to talk, was an avid hunter and loved to work on engines. He attended West End Baptist Church in Big Stone Gap.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bryan and Bonnie (Dorton) Willis; and a sister, Reba Neal.

Surviving are his wife of 60 years, Adelean Lawson Willis, and their love for one another was a true love story. Also surviving are an aunt, Eva Terry of Mount Vernon, VA; two nieces, Kim and Ben Mays of Castlewood, VA and Carol and David Vanlandingham, Jr. of Mobile, Alabama.

The family will receive friends from 1 to 2:15 p.m. on Friday at Holding Funeral Home (17 E. 3rd St., N.) in Big Stone Gap, VA.

Military graveside rites, by local V. F. W. and D. A. V. posts and the Virginia

National Guard Honors Team, and graveside service, officiated by Steve Maddox, will be conducted at 3 p.m. at Powell Valley Memorial Gardens.

Pallbearers will be: Bobby Mabe, Cody Mabe, Tim Thomas, Mark Frazier, Jimmy Lawson, Johnny Lawson, Bryan Richardson, Earl Kelly and Kevin Hickman.

Honorary pallbearers will be: Ted Messer, Johnny Wells and Richard Beard.

The family requests memorial contributions be made to the Diabetes Association at diabetes.org or the American Heart Association at heart.org, in Ralph's name.

To view the obituary online and offer condolences, please visit www.holdingfuneralhome.com.

Holding Funeral Home is honored to serve the Willis family.

Tribute Wall



“ *William Ralph "Bear Tom" Willis*

October 07, 2023 at 10:50 AM



“ *I am so sorry to learn about Ralph's passing. I will always remember him as a person with a tender heart and a ready smile for everyone. He was so special and will be missed by all. Please accept my deepest condolences.*

Cecilia Robinette - December 10, 2013 at 08:10 AM



“ *Adelean,
I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your dear husband, Ralph. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers and I pray that God will give you a peace that surpasses all understanding.*

Carolyn Bishop Herren - December 10, 2013 at 08:10 AM



“ *Recalling many of the wonderful memories that Bear Tom & you produced for us. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and the families sharing your grief.*

January 03, 2013 at 12:00 AM