



## William Hardin Winn Sr.

January 12, 1922 - December 9, 2014

William H. (Bill) Winn passed away December 9th, 2014 at the age of 92. He was born in Hamilton, Ohio on January 12, 1922. His father died when he was seven and he spent his formative years in an orphanage run by his mother. He was a student at Wabash College for two years until the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Like thousands of other young men he enlisted in the Army Infantry spending most of his time in France and Germany. Following WWII he graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a degree in business. On September 13, 1942 he married June C. Hathorn. They were married 72 years and she survives him. Bill is also survived by his sister, Donna Sadler, sons, Bill Jr., John (Zita), daughters-in-law Janna and Lolly, grandchildren George (Connie) Winn, Brenda Winn, Billy (Melissa) Winn, Wendy (Bill) Taylor, Heidi (Kevin) Hall, Amy (Sean) Smith, Kenny Anderson, Zita Anderson and 13 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death last year by his son, Charlie and grandsons, Trent Winn and Taylor Winn. Bill spent many years in the appliance industry in sales management. In 1971 he changed industries and became President of North American Sales and Marketing for Triumph, BSA Motorcycles. In 1975, he and his three sons, Charlie, Bill Jr. and John, formed Four Winns Inc. to manufacture fiberglass power boats in Cadillac, MI. In only 11 years the company grew to be the third largest in the world with headquarters in Cadillac including engineering, manufacturing and sales, and a satellite manufacturing in Athens, Texas employing a total of more than 1,600 people. From the very first year the

company made a profit, Bill insisted on starting an employee profit sharing program which grew into the millions until the family sold the company to Outboard Marine Corporation. He not only shared monetarily with the employees and community of Cadillac, he spent much of his time volunteering to make a better life for many, a trait he tried hard to pass on to all generations of his family. He wore a button that said RMA, Right Mental Attitude, and he was the epitome of that attitude. In 1978, our third year in business, we burned to the ground, losing everything. In 1980 consumer interest rates were 20%, Jimmy Carter proposed banning boating on weekends and our industry was hit with a 10% luxury tax on boats. While we were all frightened about our survival, Bill Sr. gave us hope and confidence and taught us to do more with less. He said you can't appreciate the good times unless you have experienced the bad. To the remaining employees we had, he passed out his RMA buttons and, as they say, the rest is history.

A family memorial will be held at a later date. Condolence cards may be mailed to June Winn at The Terraces, 26475 S. Tamiami Trail, Bonita Springs, FL 34135. Memorial contributions may be made in the support of the Leukemia Research Efforts of Dr. Moshe Talpaz at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, c/o Office of Health System Development, 1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 100, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6815; or the Michigan Chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in Bill's honor. Bill lost his son last year to leukemia.

# Tribute Wall



“ *William Hardin Winn Sr.*

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October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *Dear June & Family,*

*I was so sorry to hear of Bill's passing, and can only imagine how difficult this must be for you after losing Charlie just a year before. We also lost my mom to lymphoma this past April, and know what you all have been through.*

*What a wonderful friend and mentor Bill was. His boundless enthusiasm was simply infectious. I'll never forget meeting him for the first time as part of a class project while I was a business student at Ferris State. He invited us up for an interview and gave us a tour of the plant. He captivated us for hours with his brilliant business insights, and I have enjoyed his friendship ever since.*

*With Warmest Sympathies,*

*Dave Anderson*

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**Dave Anderson** - January 05, 2015 at 12:43 PM



“ *Please know that we are thinking of your family and offering our deepest sympathy. May God bless you all. Skip and Nancy Forcier. Stuart Fl.*

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**nancy forcier** - December 18, 2014 at 08:08 AM

TW

“ June, Bill Jr., John and Family. We are very sorry to hear of Bill's passing. I and so many of my co-workers owe our careers to the tremendous fortitude of Bill Sr. and Family. Without it, we would not have had the company to work for.

I will always remember my interview with Bill Sr. at your home in Charlevoix during my research of the company history. As always with Bill Sr., I learned a lot.

With our deepest condolences,  
Tom and Chris Wenstadt

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**Tom and Chris Wenstadt** - December 14, 2014 at 10:04 AM

IH

“ Ingrid H. purchased a sympathy card for the family of William Hardin Winn Sr..



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**Ingrid H.** - December 13, 2014 at 10:00 PM

DB

“ Played golf with Bill more than once in Cadillac. He was such a friendly chap and never failed to say, "Hi, Dan" when we met. Condolences to June and family. dan brooks

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**Dan Brooks** - December 12, 2014 at 02:20 AM

PH

“ Mr Winn was the person who interviewed me when I was hired at Four Winns and I worked for them for until they sold the company .I worked in the Cadillac plant until I transferred to the AthensTexas plant where I worked in the upholstery and sewing department for several year. Mr and Mrs Winn and their family were great people to work for and with and I am very sad to hear of Mr Winns passing. My sympathy and prayers go out to all of you. May God bless and comfort you in your loss.

*Patricia Hankins*

*Log Cabin. Texas*

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**Patricia Hankins** - December 11, 2014 at 09:10 PM

JW

“ June & family, We were so very sorry to hear of Bill's passing. Both Carrol & I have many happy memories whenever we think of Bill, myself especially. May God Bless you all at this special time. Love, John & Carrol Wheat...

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**John & Carrol Wheat** - December 11, 2014 at 06:22 PM

DO

“ It is sad to loose another of this generation. Bill and people like Bill are what made this country great. They were the most hard working and innovated generation and we can only hope that future generations will learn from them. Our deepest condolences to his family. Sincerely, Bill and Donna Oliver, Cadillac, Michigan

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**Donna Oliver** - December 11, 2014 at 11:37 AM

AL

“ June, Bill Jr, John and Family I am deeply sorry for your loss and so completely Blessed for having had the privilege of working and knowing such a wonderful man. Bill Sr. was one of the "Beautiful People". Beautiful people - They always give their best as long as they live, They walk through this world to love, to serve, to give. Through their kind words and deeds God's love comes shining through, and when I think of Beautiful People, I will always think of you Bill. I will never forget you Thank you for touching my life. May the Lord bless and keep you. Faithfully Annette Lukauskas (Former Four Winns employee)

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**Annette Lukauskas** - December 11, 2014 at 10:43 AM