



This obituary for Golden Eagles member Captain Bill Sellmeyer is posted subsequent to the Gone West notice posted for Captain Sellmeyer on July 16, 2024. The obituary was provided by Golden Eagles member Captain Charlie Starr. Charlie`s email message is posted below.

*Bill was a long-time and close friend -- going back to his early days with TTA and our common bond of being hard-core Dallas Cowboy fans.*

Charlie Starr



## ***Captain Bill Sellmeyer***

*July 18, 1943 – July 16, 2024*

On July 16, 2024, Bill Sellmeyer passed away at his home in Montgomery, TX with his wife and son by his side after a hard-fought battle against multiple myeloma cancer.

Bill lived his life with a love for family, aviation, and the world around him. The son of an American Airlines pilot and stewardess, Bill was born on July 18, 1943 in El Paso, TX. As Bill would say, he was never sure which side of the border he was born on. Bill was the only boy of five children, with one twin sister and three younger sisters.

During high school, he worked at a local airport fueling airplanes and worked towards his pilot's license, which he obtained at the age of 16. He graduated from Jesuit High School in Dallas and then went on to Texas A&M University. Armed with a degree in aeronautical aviation, Bill started flying for Trans-Texas Airways at the ripe young age of 22, which soon led at least one startled passenger to promptly exit the plane saying "If this kid is flying this airplane, I'm walking to Tyler!". Over the following 38 years, Bill would enjoy an amazing pilot

career, and in 2003 retired on the 777 as the second most senior Continental Airlines pilot.

There were many notable career highlights: bunking at a YMCA for \$325 / month as a young pilot while flying the DC-3, transporting corpses all over Texas in a Piper Comanche, navigating a Convair 240 around two tornadoes, avoiding a low-altitude mid-air collision with a plane running drugs in Laredo, captaining a Beech 18 all over West Texas, flying the family from London to Newark on the 747 the night of Y2K, and 777 military charters to Kuwait during the buildup of the Iraq War. His military charters were one of his most honored flying. Once he retired in 2003 from Continental, he honored our veterans flying historic WWII bombers (B-17, B-24, & B-25) across the USA for the Collins Foundation for nearly a decade.

Bill's love for family was bigger than the state of Texas. He met the love of his life and his future wife Carolyn in 1981 in Salt Lake City. They were married the next year and soon welcomed their children Charles and Barbara. The family would accompany Bill on his trips all over the world, and nothing would please him more than announcing what seats his kids were sitting in and reminding them to "not put your feet on the furniture in flight" during pre-flight announcements, much to other passengers' amusement.

Bill's genuine interest in others' lives would earn him a circle of friends around the world that could fill the Dallas Cowboys stadium and lead him down many paths, including entrepreneurship along with six years as a city councilman in Addison, TX. He never met a stranger and never forgot a name, living by the motto that his good friend Zig Ziglar had imparted to him early on "The most important thing a person owns is their name". Until the day he passed, Bill kept his modesty, and would avoid talking about himself "I know all about me, tell me about yourself."

For Bill, God and country were held in the highest regard, a true patriot and believer of leading a life based on values. Throughout his flying career, Bill felt closer to God as he flew above the clouds on the wings of angels. Throughout his battle with myeloma cancer, Bill's faith in the Lord never wavered, calling on him for strength every day to fight an unimaginable battle.

Bill is survived by his wife Carolyn, son Charles, daughter Barbara, son-in-law Phil, & granddaughters Helena and Valerie. His fighting spirit, goodwill, and larger-than-life personality will live on with his family and in every person lucky enough to cross his path.

Services will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 8277 Cr 205, Plantersville, TX 77363, on August 8, 2024

**Services at 10:30am**

**Going West at 11:30am**

**Lunch and Gathering at 12:00am**

In lieu of flowers or gifts, the family has set up a donation link for St. Mary's Catholic Church below. Bill's faith and love for his church were a major part of his life. With your donation, St. Mary's will be able to allocate funds to a much-needed item in Bill's name. Thank you and many blessings.



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