



## William Shields

July 21, 1930 - June 18, 2022

On June 18, 2022, Bill Shields, beloved teacher, coach, husband, father, grandfather and friend passed away at the age of 92 years old.

Bill was born July 21, 1930 in Newport, New York. In 1935, his family journeyed west looking for a better life. They settled in Pasadena, California. Bill did not have a lot of success as a Pasadena High School basketball player, so he decided he wanted to try amateur boxing. He was trained by the legendary blind boxing coach, Canto Robledo, in Robledo's backyard gym in Pasadena. During Bill's boxing tenure, he competed in both lightweight and welterweight division tournaments. Bill won weight division championships in 4 tournaments. He was a finalist in every boxing tournament he entered! Bill was also awarded the Golden Gloves of Pasadena.

During the Korean War, he was drafted into the Army in 1951. He served in General Ridgway's Honor Guard, stationed in Tokyo, Japan. While there, he continued his boxing career as a member of the Army's boxing team.

When Bill returned from Japan, he used his GI Bill, graduated from UCSB in 1957 and earned a Master's Degree from USC in 1962. (Bill was a lifelong Trojan fan. Fight On!). He was hired by the Goleta School District in 1957, where he taught 6th grade at Cathedral Oaks, drove the school bus and developed a boys and girls after school athletic program. He went on to teach at Foothill, Kellogg, Hollister and La Patera Elementary Schools. He organized the Valley Elementary League, where boys and girls teams, coached by fellow teachers and parents, competed against one another on Saturday mornings in

Goleta. Bill's school won championships in flag football, basketball, softball, volleyball and track. After 19 years, when the Valley League was no longer needed, Bill organized and coached noon leagues at Hollister and La Patera schools. What was unique was that these teams were all co-ed. He was truly a visionary coach by promoting girls to participate in competitive sports 15 years before the implementation of Title IX. His young athletes remember his love of sports and his caring attitude toward athletes and students of every ability level. Sportsmanship, fair play and citizenship were emphasized in his classrooms and on the field and court.

Bill always said one of the highlights of his life was marrying his fellow teacher at Foothill Elementary School, Diana Grassfield. They enjoyed a marriage of laughs and good times for 40 years before her untimely death in 2006.

Bill was recognized for his coaching and teaching by being inducted into the Santa Barbara Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002. He was also proud of the 3 PTA Honorary Awards presented to him by three different schools.

His lifelong enjoyment of participating in competitive sports led him to play on various championship city and Goleta Boys Club basketball and softball teams. He played tennis into his late eighties.

As Bill always said "All in all, it was a pretty good run."

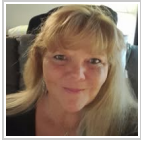
Bill is survived by his son, Greg Shields of San Diego, Jennifer Frederic (Peter) of Paso Robles, his cherished granddaughters, Vanessa Shields, Jayne Bruno-Ramsay, Carolyn Bruno, Ann Bruno and his bonus grandsons, Jon Frederic and Michael Frederic.

A special thank you to Esmeralda Bravo, Bill's amazing caregiver of the last 3 years. Even when his memories were robbed by Alzheimer's disease, he knew she was his friend and a "good gal." Esmeralda, you will always be an honorary Shields.

From Greg and Jenny: Our father was a visionary when it came to flag football. He truly believed that children should not be playing tackle football until they were more mature physically and mentally. He adhered to the belief that children should learn the fundamentals of football, to fall in love and

respect the sport. He didn't support children being burdened with the apprehension of the "next big hit." In lieu of a memorial service, we have established the Bill Shields Scholarship Fund with Santa Barbara Friday Night Lights Youth Flag Football. His legacy will live on for generations on and off the field. If possible, please make a donation to his scholarship so that the children of Santa Barbara can continue his dedication and passion for the game. Thank you. [santabarbarafnl.com](http://santabarbarafnl.com). <https://gofund.me/f4da3826>.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Our father met Bill on the bus when they were going to the Korean War. So sad to hear he passed. Just found out. Our father passed in Nov. And wanted to let Bill know. He also boxed with my orthodontist at USC. Peace to the family. Karen and Janet Trivers*

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**Janet Hart** - January 04, 2023 at 09:21 PM



“ *I use to play basketball with Bill every weekend at kellog school. I only knew that he was a teacher. I never knew about his boxing career. He will truly be missed such and kind man with a great sense of humor.*

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**Lance Kumm** - October 31, 2022 at 06:20 PM