



## William Gilbert McBride

April 3, 1929 - June 2, 2022

William (Bill) G. McBride, (93), died on June 2, 2022. Bill was born in Primrose, Nebraska, to Robert W. and Fern Kurth McBride. The family moved to Rocky Ford, Colorado, in 1936. Bill attended rural Colorado schools through the eighth grade and graduated as valedictorian with the Rocky Ford High School Class of 1946. He attended Colorado A&M College (now Colorado State University), graduating in 1950 with a degree in Animal Science. He returned to the farm but accepted a teaching job in Manzanola, Colorado that fall. In 1952, he enlisted in the army and served with the 7th Armored Division in Germany. In 1954, he returned to Manzanola as the English/speech/journalism teacher in grades 7-12. On June 2nd, 1956, he married Vivian Cook, a fellow teacher. They had two children: Diana and William J.

Bill completed a master's degree in English in 1957 at the University of Northern Colorado. In 1960, he and Vivian, with daughter Diana and son Bill, moved to Fort Collins where Bill had accepted a job to teach English at Fort Collins High School. In 1962, he also became the director of dramatics. When Poudre High School opened in 1964, Bill transferred there as an English teacher and department chair. He left Poudre High School in 1967 and moved with his family to Lincoln, Nebraska, to complete his doctorate. Upon the completion of the doctorate in 1969, Bill returned to Fort Collins to teach English and English education at Colorado State University. In 1963, he

became a charter member of the Colorado Language Arts Society, the state's professional English language arts organization for teachers K-graduate level. Subsequently, he served the organization as president, editor of the journal, and executive secretary-treasurer. In 1989, he was elected to a four-year term on the Secondary Section Steering Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English; he also served as a member of the NCTE Editorial Board and as a member of the International Consortium Executive Committee. He co-chaired the English Task Force for the Colorado State Board of Education in 1982 and served on the Poudre School District Board of Education from 1983-1991. In 1992, he was selected for a Pacesetter English Task Force, a group of people chosen by NCTE and the CollegeBoard to develop a twelfth-grade English language arts curriculum. He worked with that program and its various iterations until 2011. In 1966, Bill was named Colorado Teacher of the Year; in 1973, he received, from Colorado State University, the Harris T. Guard Distinguished Service Award "in recognition of excellence in teaching and scholarship"; in 1986 he received the Literacy Award from the Colorado Council of International Reading Association; in 1989 he received an Outstanding Educator Award from the Colorado State Board of Education; in 1999, he received a Distinguished Service Award from Colorado State University College of Liberal Arts; in 2009, he received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Council of Teachers of English, and in 2016 the Colorado Language Arts Society presented him with the first CLAS Literacy Award. Bill is survived by Vivian, his wife of 66 years, his son Bill (Tami), granddaughter Maggie and grandson Wil; his daughter Diana (David) Green, granddaughters Elizabeth and Kathleen; other cousins, nieces, nephews, and numerous colleagues, friends, and former students. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother and sister-in-law.

Bill spent six decades as a teacher. His life centered on his family and his students, friends, and colleagues with whom he shared his life and his profession. When he retired from Colorado State University in 1998, the

McBride Endowment was established as a way to provide financial support, in the form of an award, for educational and professional development of current and prospective English language arts teachers. Any donation to the McBride Endowment would be greatly appreciated. Donations can be sent to Colorado State University Foundation, Box 1870, Fort Collins, CO 80522-1870.

To post your memorials or expressions of sympathy, go to <https://www.bohlanderfuneralchapel.com/obituaries> and post on the tribute wall.

At this time, there will be no services.

Bill wrote his obituary. The younger generation would like to add a little more....

Bill was such a beloved teacher and presence in the community that to this day, his first class of Manzanola 6th graders, and students well beyond that, have kept in touch. We know he made such a difference to students, teachers, students becoming teachers, peers, and the community. We are so grateful for the time we had with him and the impact he had on our own lives. He was so dearly loved as a father, grandfather, and husband. His contributions to his work and family will be remembered forever.

# Tribute Wall

DC

“*Dr. McBride took me under his wing in the mid-90s. I was a college student with no clear direction and fell into one of his writing courses. He started talking to me about teaching, which I had not considered. There were several of us being towed in his wake. He guided the group of us (we jokingly called ourselves apostles) through college, student teaching, and our first few years in classrooms. I value the books he slid to me across the table at the start of every conversation (often at the Silver Grill). I value the feedback on my lesson plans. I value the way he politely reined me in when my frustrations with public systems were getting the better of me. Mostly, I value the professionalism and philosophy he embedded in me.*

*One story he told that has guided my career involves a student of his when he was first starting - the young man had come in and fallen asleep in his class (a one-room schoolhouse I believe). He reminded me that education in a classroom is only a small part of a student's life. That sometimes a student needs to sleep more than they need to learn about whatever lesson you have planned for them that day.*

*Several of us stayed in touch with Dr. McBride well after college. I touched base with Dr. McBride at various NCTE conferences over the years and one highlight of my career was when he organized a small breakfast for me and a group of my students while we were in the same city one year - such a treat for me to introduce my most influential teacher to another generation of students. Dr. McBride never failed to send me an email on (or near) my birthday. He often mentioned how much he loved his family and wife.*

*I last spoke to Dr. McBride in January of 2022. I was near Ft Collins and hoping to drop by for a cup of coffee. I was unable to make it as there was a covid scare at the conference I was attending. Dr. McBride, of course, was gracious in understanding.*

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dan cummings - June 19, 2023 at 10:53 AM

JB

“ Just saw that Dr. Mc Bride passed away in the CSU Magazine. He truly made such an impact on my education in education at CSU. He was my advisor. My Dad told me to seek out the best professor to be my college advisor. After doing some research, I found that Bill McBride was at the top of the list. I went to his office and asked him personally to be my advisor. We bonded over our small town southeastern CO roots (his - Swink and Rocky Ford; and mine Kit Carson). His advice to me was so valuable and had a lifelong impact. When it was time to be placed for student teaching, he assigned me to Greeley Central HS - a huge school to me since I graduated with 6 in my class! He told me it was going to be the best training for me to get me out of my comfort zone. Boy, did it ever! I was placed with two fine teachers and saw it all. Great training and a broad experience. It made me a solid teacher who could adapt to kids and circumstances. I owe some of my common sense and my stiff spine to Dr. McBride. May he rest in peace knowing what a large impact he has made in so many.

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**Jody Buck** - April 05, 2023 at 04:33 PM

RC

“ I quit college after three years and was hiding in Glenwood Springs when, somehow, Dr. Bill found me. He told me to grow up, go back to school and become a teacher. So of course I did, and am now about to retire after a 30 year teaching career. To say Dr. Bill had a huge impact on education is a gross understatement--his influence reaches all across the country. But his sincere interest in me as a human being is a gift I will carry with me for the rest of my life. I cherish the memory of his friendship, as well as the memory of attempting to teach him how to use email back when it was new. Thank you Dr. Bill for believing in me, and I hope the Silver Grill enshrines your mug.

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**Ron Clark** - August 12, 2022 at 12:16 PM

JR

“ *Very sad to hear of Bill's passing. Always enjoyed our family visits and so glad we stopped by last year. He was a lovely man and we will miss him. Our deepest condolences to cousin Vivian, Diana and Bill and their families.*

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**Jan Cook Robinson** - July 19, 2022 at 10:11 PM

RN

“ *It was wonderful having Mr. McBride as our English teacher and drama coach both at Poudre and Fort Collins High. He always challenged his students to strive for excellence. I felt so lucky to have visited with him and his family at our 1965 fiftieth class reunion. We will miss him!* Rebecca Stephens Nelson

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**Rebecca Stephens Nelson** - June 21, 2022 at 12:29 AM

DG

“ *Grandpa has been there for the whole family. He took us out to eat. We went to Barnes and Noble a lot with him. We celebrated all the holidays and birthdays. He's been there for Grandma and loved her always.*  
*Love, Elizabeth Green, granddaughter*

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**Diana Green** - June 10, 2022 at 03:23 PM

KF

“ Bill McBride hired me as an English teacher at Poudre High School in 1965. I remain grateful to this day that he chose me to become a member of the truly remarkable team of language arts professionals he assembled during those foundation-building years at Poudre. Those early years of teaching, learning, friendship, and mirth began life-long relationships which are vibrant yet today. Thank you, Bill, for your friendship and the lasting influence you have had on my career and life.

*Kathy (Wallis) Fischer*

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**Kathy Fischer** - June 10, 2022 at 02:49 PM

MK

“ Bill and I served on the Poudre School Board at pretty much the same time. His calm demeanor and cogent wisdom were appreciated by his fellow Board Members as we worked our way through financial issues, expansion, and controversy. Thanks to Bill and his family for Bill's dedication to his adopted community.

*Mark Korb*

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**Mark Korb** - June 10, 2022 at 10:43 AM

S6

“ I had him as a teacher at FCHS and At PHS as an a teacher and gave me a nickname of “Romeo” as the story of Romeo and Juliet. Great teacher.

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**Samuel A. Trujillo class of 65** - June 10, 2022 at 02:40 AM

LL

“ I became a teacher because of Bill McBride. He encouraged me, supported my goals, believed in me, and I am eternally grateful to him. I took every class Bill taught at CSU, and marveled at his masterful teaching, hoping that one day I could teach even half as well. He was a model of patience and grace, sometimes a tad mischievous, and he always had a little twinkle in his eye just because he loved his chosen profession. His office at the end of the hall in the Eddy Building was a pleasure to visit with the massive, tumbling piles of books and the wonderful conversations to be had. He shared books generously, with the advice to always have a book nearby because you never want to lose an opportunity to read when you can. Good advice from a great man. My thoughts are with Vivian and the family.

Lindsay Lewan

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Lindsay Lewan - June 09, 2022 at 03:32 PM

AB

“ Good night dear friend. m You were the first CSU professor I met when we moved to Ft Collins 30 years ago. We served on CLAS together and took many road trips meeting those obligations. I loved working with you at the old Fort Collins HS helping students edit their papers. Your physical presence will be missed, but your legacy will live on in all those students, teachers, and board members you touched over your lifetime as an educator.

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Alexandra Butler - June 09, 2022 at 01:50 PM

BV

“ Thanks Doc, for all the fond memories and for letting us know you and your family. You helped guide and keep all of us on the right path. You are one of the good ones and will be greatly missed. We will always hold a special place for you in our hearts.

Love Barry & Renee

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Barry Vanderwyk - June 08, 2022 at 07:35 PM

JF

“ Dr. Bill was just leaving PHS in '67 as I was starting my teaching career. So I never worked with him but, through you, Vivian, I really got to know him. He was such a kind, caring man. Though he was a super intellectual, he never made any one feel he was smarter than they. Sending my prayers and love to you, Diana and Bill.

*Jeni Forbes*

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**Jeni Forbes** - June 08, 2022 at 07:17 PM

LH

“ I loved him dearly, treasure what I learned from him, and feel for his family.

*Larry Haise, FCHS Class of 1962*

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**Larry Haise** - June 08, 2022 at 03:37 PM

RW

“Dr Bill”, sometimes my boss, often my mentor, always my friend. I first met Bill in 1965, when he was my department chair at Poudre High School. His leadership was an inspiration to all, in the English department and throughout the school.

Bill was an inspiration to me throughout the 57 years since we first met. He shared his wisdom, about learning, about teaching, and about life itself.

I didn't know that I wanted to, and didn't even think I could earn a master's degree, but Bill did. He encouraged me and guided me through a master's program in communication development that he had created at CSU. He gave me the confidence to get involved in education statewide through the Colorado Language Arts Society. And together, over 35 years of weekly breakfasts at the Silver Grill, we were able to solve most of the problems of the world (although, some of our best solutions have yet to be put into effect :-> ).

Steadfast, kind, gentle, wise, loving, and an inspiration to all who knew him. Thank you, Bill, for being my friend.

Ron Warren

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Ron Warren - June 08, 2022 at 01:54 PM

“ An Ode to Remembrance

*You are all here, scrolling through this wall, because you loved my grandfather. He was easy to love.*

*He was tall and proud and had a booming voice that carried his enunciations to ready ears. He was a storyteller; he often spoke in poetry and wasn't afraid to recite Olde English stories by heart. His stark wisdom seemed to tower above all the rest. And he aged, as anyone would, but it never took his mind. It never took his heart.*

*I will remember him young and spritely, never hesitating to play “troll under the bridge” when I was small.*

*And oh, I will always remember how his brow would raise when I used incorrect grammar. He never scolded me about it, but I knew from the eyebrow raise that my sentence needed fixing.*

*I will remember his staunch courage that resided from within—he always seemed to know what needed to be done.*

*I shall remember his selflessness and his immediate willingness to assist me in everything I could have ever dreamed, from picking a paper topic to study to giving me advice about moving so far away from home.*

*I will remember that he never raised his voice, even when kindness may not have been deserved.*

*I will remember him as he might not have remembered himself, for age may take but love cannot.*

*And I will forever remember him at the beginning, when my mind was fragile and yet he still showed me how to spread my wings.*

*So to my grandfather:*

*I have loved every single second I was able to share with you during your time in this life. Thank you for your endless support and love.*

*Thank you for nothing but good memories and stories I can share.*

*Thank you for being everything I could have ever asked for in a grandfather: a friend, a confidante, a mentor, a peacemaker, a book and wisdom sharer, and a fellow dreamer. Thank you for giving me the gift of remembrance, for it can only shine upon you kindly, and it will only ever give me peace in my heart.*

*-Granddaughter Maggie McBride*

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**Maggie McBride** - June 08, 2022 at 10:30 AM

JR

*Wonderful tribute to your Grandfather! We were so glad to have visited with you, cousin Vivian and Bill. He was the best guy. We'll miss him. Our deepest sympathies!*

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**Jan Cook Robinson** - July 19, 2022 at 10:01 PM

CH

*“ Bill and Reid Pope hired me to teach English at Poudre High in 1966. His confidence in me and his wise mentoring formed the foundation for my career in education for these many years. I've been ever-grateful. Frequently he reminded me that we left-handlers from Rocky Ford had to stick together; then he smiled. Many are the teachers touched by his kindness, guidance, humor, and love. A life well-lived. Sending love to Vivian and family.*

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**Carol Ann Hixon** - June 08, 2022 at 08:12 AM

CW

*“ Bill was an irresistible force in the world of teaching and learning. As his advisee, colleague, and friend for 56 years, I knew Bill from every view. What he modeled best, I think, was friendship. He was my second father, as well. We shared breakfast most Wednesdays during the school year for my entire career, and a decade after I retired. I always came away from such times, more heartened and wiser than ever. Bill cared about my family as he did his own. When I told my 34 year old son Erik of Bill's passing, Erik remarked, "Your friend for 56 years was my friend for 34." How true that was. No one was more true to friend, family, and his chosen profession than was Bill. I and so many others will miss him dearly.*

*Carl Wangsvick*

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**Carl Wangsvick** - June 07, 2022 at 03:44 PM

PD

“ Dr. McBride, one of the greats who taught with skill and humanity. I learned how to let students be at the center of learning from him. He recognized each student's personal genius (they all have it), and the way he modeled that rare skill carried through 30 years of teaching for me. Plus he was just a gentle and gentlemanly presence, always there with that easy smile. He taught my oldest sister at Poudre High School, and me at CSU, and we both remember him as one of the most influential teachers we had the pleasure of knowing. He has touched thousands, personally and through his legacy. A life lived so well. He will be greatly missed and lovingly remembered.

*Pam (Robb) Downing*

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**Pam (Robb) Downing** - June 07, 2022 at 11:01 AM

DB

“ As with so many others, as a student I was touched and impacted by "Mr. McBride" -- at FCHS in my case. His influence led me to minor in English while I achieved my BS in business at CSU, before he began teaching there.

*I always enjoyed encountering Bill here in Fort Collins through the years, in various informal settings. That smile and the accompanying, "How are you . . . ", was always so genuine and much appreciated.*

*Count me as among the many who are so thankful our tapestries include the spirited thread of Bill McBride.*

*Dave Brown*

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**Dave Brown** - June 07, 2022 at 10:46 AM

BS

“ We love you Mr. McBride. You made a positive difference.  
Fort Collins High class of 1962.

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**Bill “Jake” Schild** - June 07, 2022 at 08:44 AM

JL

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Jon Leydens** - June 06, 2022 at 11:09 PM

“ I owe so much of who I am as a teacher to Bill. We met in February of 1999 at a Train the Trainers conference at the facility we'd later refer to as *The Compound*, near Fort Worth, Texas. We became fast friends.

*When we first worked together at workshops, I used to grab a handful of binder clips when all was said and done and we were cleaning up. My school never had any. Bill thought it was funny, and he'd grab a few for me to put in my bag, along with the Mr. Goodbar miniatures he knew were my favorite.*

*At some point, we'd been talking about my writing, and he sent me a package of gold binder clips for me to use on "something good." I forget exactly how he put it. But I saved them for years. The container is still on my dresser in my room. I never had anything good enough, though.*

*Once, at a training in New York, we slipped away for a steak, just the two of us. We wound up at a small French restaurant, as it happened, on the anniversary of VE Day. Before our meals, we were given little cardboard boxes mimicking WWII ration boxes. As we examined the contents, Bill told me the story of how he came within a hair's breadth of being sent to Korea during the war there - and the one difficult choice he'd made that made all the difference.*

*Another time, back in Fort Worth, Bill, Paul Marquez, and I - once again in search of good steak, coffee, and bread pudding - found ourselves the only patrons in a local restaurant. The wait staff on duty doted on us and the kitchen sent out several different cuts for us to try. Outside, snow began to fall. It was a beautiful moment. As the snow fell harder, we realized we were in very real danger of being snowed in at a Texas steakhouse. It was everything we could do to get back to *The Compound*.*

*Once safely back, Bill, Paul, and I made a beeline for the pantry. Bill almost always had the key. We'd sit, eating ice cream, until our eyes*

*were heavy and the stories had run dry.*

*Another time, I watched him teach *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* to a room full of teachers from all over the country, every one of them eating out of the palms of his hands. He wore a long-sleeved plaid shirt and a black vest, and he looked as though he'd known the characters personally. He was in his element.*

*We talked often of family, the pride thick in his voice as he spoke of his beautiful wife, Vivian, and his children and grandchildren. We'd often compare notes on his grandson Wil and my son Garrett, and talk about how we thought they'd be great friends.*

*Bill and I both loved the fact that Garrett - born while we were working on writing the last *Pacesetter* book - came so very close to sharing a birthday with Bill.*

*There have been three people in my life, not counting my wife, who truly understood me, and who loved me in spite of myself: my granddaddy Bud, my son, and Bill.*

*Bill was an incredible human being, and if someday I could be half the man he was, I'd consider myself a success.*

*A few years back, I decided to write a book I'd been putting off. It borrowed heavily from lessons Bill taught me, and as I wrote, I was inspired to continue by the thought of being able to show Bill what he'd helped me do.*

*When I finished my manuscript and it was proofed and on its way to be printed, I sent a copy of the manuscript to Bill - with those gold binder clips from so long ago holding it together. I finally had something good enough. And for his birthday, I sent him one of the first printed copies. The dedication reads, "To Bud, who taught me how to tell a good story, and to Bill, who taught me how to teach it."*

*I miss my friend.*

**Bryant Crisp** - June 06, 2022 at 09:54 PM

DC

“ *My memories of Bill are etched in my experience as an educator. My first class with Bill was in 1978. I am a better teacher and educator because he was a professor of mine. I learned a lot from him.*

**Dr. Dierdre Cook** - June 06, 2022 at 09:34 PM

DW

*In 1963 Reid Pope, the principal at the new Poudre High School, gave me the opportunity to build a library for the new school.*

*What a challenge! I worked in the library at FCHS. and began the process of ordering books. It was there that I met Bill and he helped me order the books that would implement the English curriculum.*

*With his help when Poudre High opened in the fall of 1964, we had books on the shelves and a library.*

*Thank you Bill.*

*Dorothy White*

**Dorothy White** - June 09, 2022 at 03:34 PM

TD

*Bill McBride, a Peerless Prince of Pedagogy*

*... farewell to you, with boundless gratitude*

**TD** - June 14, 2022 at 10:51 AM

WC

*Bill and I became friends as we shared ideas and stories during our NCTE tenure. Bill was a compassionate friend who never forgot my birthday. This Alabama sharecropper 11-11-33. I cherish the notes and cards. Bill did a good work. Willie Mae Crews*

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**Willie Mae Crews** - May 19, 2025 at 12:20 PM