



William Leslie Cochrane

July 8, 1946 - May 31, 2024

COCHRANE, William Leslie, (Bill) age 77 of Eden Prairie, MN passed away peacefully, with his family by his side May 31, 2024.

Preceded in death by his beloved wife, Susan; and parents, Yvonne and Leslie. Survived by his brother, Patrick D. Cochrane (RaeAnn); children, Sarah Hornig, Anne Fineran (Shane), William (Sherry) and Patrick; and grandchildren, Lainey and Cate Hornig, Grace and Carrick Fineran, Camilla, Barrett, Creighton Cochrane and Rylen Bannon. Bill was more brilliant than anything else. Grounded, patient, compassionate, sound, and empathic.

He grew up in Richfield, MN attending RHS. That is where he fell in love with his bride Susan, and often referred to her as the "girl on the bus with the navy-blue coat and gold buttons". He never looked back. Bill attended UW Stout where he earned a degree in Industrial Engineering. He often hitch hiked back home for visits. After graduation, Bill knew his draft card for Vietnam was coming. After just starting his career with Ford and much deliberation with Susan he decided to enlist. He was eventually assigned to a remote firebase known as Ripcord.

On the morning of 7/1/1970, his battalion was attacked and during the second barrage of mortar fire he was almost fatally injured with a multitude of shrapnel wounds to his body as he was tending to heavy artillery equipment

he managed. Bill was awarded The Bronze Star and The Purple Heart, among other metals of valor, including a second Purple Heart from an earlier injury. Once convalescence was concluded and back in the States he bought a car, got married and reported back to his job at Ford. This all happened in a week!

Bill spent his entire career at Ford Motor Company. Retiring as a Midwest Fleet Manger. His work in heavy trucking sales took his family from Minneapolis to St. Louis and Detroit. In 1991, he brought the gang back home to the state that he loved. After retirement, he gave countless hours to the Minneapolis chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and VA hospital. He helped so many other vets navigate the system and was an advocate for all military personnel. As a child his devout passion for cars was apparent. Able to identify makes and models of cars based on exhaust tones, hubcaps, and subtle body lines. There was not a car in the world he was not interested in or at least had some knowledge of that was unknown to the masses. His most prized possession was his 1966 Shelby Mustang GT350. It gave him immense pleasure and solace. Bill had the gift of gab and often told very long stories and gave elaborate opinions. This was one of his greatest gifts.

Bill was a fantastic father and grandfather. He worked very hard, long hours (often away from home on the road) to provide his children with many things' others could not afford. In later years as a recent widow, he devoted much of his time to being as present as he could for his children and especially his grandchildren when they were very young and school aged. Bill was treasure to all - he and his worldly absence will be sorely missed by his children, grandchildren, in laws, niece, nephews, and friends. Rest in peace Dad.

Funeral Mass to be held on Wednesday, June 26, at 11 AM, with visitation one hour prior, at Pax Christi Catholic Community in Eden Prairie. Committal service with honors to be held at Ft. Snelling at 1:30 PM. Gather at assembly area #4 at 1:15 PM. Celebration of Life will be at Redstone in Eden Prairie

from 2-6 PM.

For those who are unable to attend the funeral Mass in person, a livestream will be available from the <https://www.paxchristi.com/> homepage. Click the green "LIVE STREAM" button. The video will be live about ten minutes prior to the Mass.

Donations can be made to the Magnus Veterans Foundation at <https://magnusveteransfoundation.org/>

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **26**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Pax Christi Catholic Church
12100 Pioneer Trail
Eden Prairie, MN 55347

Mass of Christian Burial

JUN **26**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Pax Christi Catholic Church
12100 Pioneer Trail
Eden Prairie, MN 55347

Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William Leslie Cochrane.*



June 25, 2024 at 09:49 AM



“ *I somehow ended up as a Ford Dealer in South St Paul. Lakeland Ford was the original name. Bill was working out of the Ford District Office then and spent much of his time helping me become a successful Ford Dealer. We became friends. I will always be grateful for his help and guidance. Rest in Peace.*

John Tenney

John Tenney - June 24, 2024 at 12:03 PM



“ *Military Order of the Purple Heart planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William Leslie Cochrane.*

Military Order of the Purple Heart - June 21, 2024 at 11:04 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of William Leslie Cochrane.*



June 21, 2024 at 11:04 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of William Leslie Cochrane.*



June 11, 2024 at 10:15 AM



“ *I first met Bill as a new employee of Ford Motor Company in March of 2001. I was hired in from a competitor (which was highly unusual for the time). Bill was the first person who welcomed me and showed a genuine interest in my abilities and experiences. I knew nothing about trucks. Bill provided unique insights and spoke of his experiences which made the truck world sound exciting. So much so, that most of my career at Ford ended up on the “truck side” of the business. I ended up doing many of the same jobs as Bill, including an assignment at world headquarters with commercial trucks. To conclude he was a significant influence on my career would be an understatement. We also shared a passion for “old cars”. I had a 1969 Camaro SS from my youth — so the Ford vs. Chevy rival was on! I have fond memories of “rat racing” his Shelby from stoplight to stoplight. I will not go into detail to prevent incrimination. Bill was humble, knowledgeable and a man of great character who (in my opinion) kept his priorities in the correct order. God Speed, my friend.*

Mark Lowrey - June 11, 2024 at 08:25 AM

MA

“ Mike A. purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of William Leslie Cochrane.



Mike A. - June 10, 2024 at 10:21 PM