



**Sophocles John Gakos (Bill)** August 25, 1928, to November 19, 2024

It is with heavy hearts that we must announce the passing of Sophocles John Gakos (Bill), a long time and proud resident of Madison, NJ, who passed away on November 19th at the age of 96. His family and caregivers were with him as he passed peacefully in his sleep. Family, faith and patriotism were most important in his life. Bill was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, son, brother, Godfather,

uncle, cousin and friend. Bill was the oldest child of John and Soteria Gakos born on August 25, 1928, at Dr. Mills Hospital in Morristown, NJ. He grew up on 34 King Street in Morristown with his younger brothers Peter and Emanuel. During high school and college he worked at John's Delicatessen, a family-owned liquor store and delicatessen, in Morristown. He attended high school at Bordentown Military Institute and graduated in 1947. He went onto graduate from Seton Hall University with a BS in Business Administration in 1951.

Bill met his wife, Xenia, through his aunt and uncle who were friends with her father. One of their first dates was the movie "Wake of the Red Witch" with John Wayne. They were engaged in 1951. He was a veteran (served stateside during the Korean War) and had two stints in the service as his initial service was interrupted to come home to help his mother run the store after his father died in October 1951. Xenia and Bill married on January 18, 1953, and shared nearly 72 years of love and laughter together. He would always say that he married the love of his life. Xenia and Bill first lived together in Petersburg, VA where Bill finished out his 2nd service period. They returned to Madison, NJ in 1956. Bill and Xenia purchased their first and only house in Madison where they raised their three children, John, Nicholas and Sandra. Bill started with General Motors in NYC in March of 1956 as a staff

accountant and eventually became a Sales Manager for GMC Truck and Coach based out of Elizabeth, NJ. Bill was a long time GM employee and was very successful. He and Xenia were fortunate to travel on many GM sponsored sales reward trips (Hawaii; Alaska; Munich, Germany; Norway, Sweden, Mexico). He was retired in 1986.

Bill was a man who cherished his family and a man of faith. He would always say he was the luckiest man in the world and state "today Is not a good day, but a great day". He never took life for granted. He would say when the Good Lord rings the bell for him, he is going. He was ready and in a very good place mentally. He loved his church and served on the Parish Council for over 20 years. Many of those years were spent as Treasurer for the church. He was one of the chairmen of the church's first Greek festival. He was the First President of the Mr. and Mrs. Club at the church. Bill was also a Mason at the Cincinnati Lodge out of Morristown, NJ.

Bill spent as much time as possible with his beloved family. He really enjoyed celebrating family events (Pizza nights at their home) and holidays with Family at his children's homes. Bill was a history buff, especially with the American Civil War, loved hockey, football (not this year) and golf, Fritos and cutting the perfect lawn. It looked like a professional baseball field. In his retirement, Bill and Xenia were "snowbirds" in Naples, FL at the Pavilion Club. He loved it there and made many friends. He was active in that community as well, being Treasurer and Board Member for the Association for 16 years. He would typically be seen hanging under the Tiki Hut and serving up food from the grill. Bill is predeceased by his parents and two brothers and best friends, Jimmy, Charlie, Lee, Ray, Gene, Joe and Angelo. Though it brings sadness to see his presence gone from this world, it is now that we look to those he leaves behind to carry on his legacy of kindness, dedication and service. He is survived by his beloved wife of 71+ years Xenia Gakos, his children John Gakos (Betty) and Nicholas Gakos (Cynthia) and Sandra Hoehn (Mark). Bill is also survived by 6 grandchildren William (Maria), Dean (Deena), James (Shavaun), Alexandra, Kaitlyn (Colin) and Paul and 7 Great Grandchildren (Simeon, Adrian, John, Ephrem, Angelina, Photini and Xenia), as well

as cousins and nieces and nephews. He will be dearly missed by all. We would like to send a special thanks to Neli and Queen, the devoted caregivers for Bill.

A visitation will be held on Saturday, November 23, 2024, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Ss. Nicholas, Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church at 80 Laurel Avenue in [Roseland, NJ](#). followed immediately by a service at the church from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Burial to follow the service at Fairmont Cemetery in Chatham, NJ. We will celebrate Bill's life at a luncheon at the Hanover Manor, 16 Eagle Rock Avenue, East Hanover, NJ immediately following the burial. Funeral Services are entrusted to Shook-Farmer Funeral Home, [Roseland, NJ](#), [shookfarmer.com](http://shookfarmer.com).

In lieu of flowers, kindly consider a donation made in Sophocles Gakos' memory to Ss. Nicholas, Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church, 80 Laurel Avenue in [Roseland, NJ](#). 07068 or through their website