



William Tennyson Berry

December 31, 1952 - January 23, 2023

Graveside Services for William (Bill) Tennyson Berry (Kiowa/Apache) of Lawton, OK will be held at 10:00 A.M. Friday, January 27th, 2023 at the Fort Cobb, OK Cemetery. Bill passed away on Monday, January 23, 2023 at Integris Baptist Hospital in Oklahoma City at the age of 70. Bill was born in Pawnee, OK to Philemon Berry and Leona Hovakah Wolf on December 31st, 1952 and comes from the Red Tipi Clan of the Kiowa Tribe and was a member of the Apache First Baptist Church. He graduated from Fort Cobb High School in Fort Cobb, OK, where he was named All-State baseball pitcher in 1971. He attended Cameron University on a baseball scholarship where he played four years of college baseball and graduated with his Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education and became a certified high school teacher. During his collegiate baseball career, he was a starting pitcher, while also playing first base and made All-Conference three times both as a pitcher and hitter (1971-1973). After graduation, he played three years of semi-professional baseball with the Lawton Pepsis. While at Cameron, he married his high school sweetheart, Donna Sanbranno and from this union had three children, Tennyson, Amanda, and Kelly, all of Lawton. He began his teaching and coaching career of 38 years at Lookeba Sickles coaching baseball and basketball. While coaching high school baseball for a majority of his career, he focused on coaching high school fastpitch for the remainder. He coached eighteen seasons as a high school softball coach in Oklahoma and coached twenty all-state selections. He compiled over 400 wins and reached the state

softball tournament eight times, with numerous regional and district championships. He was an Assistant Coach with the ASA 18U Gold Tulsa Eagles for seven years, where they reached the National Tournament five times placing ninth out of sixty-four teams in 2003. During his time with the Tulsa Eagles, he was the pitching and hitting coach, while also overseeing the recruitment of players. Coach Berry assisted with sending 25 players to NCAA Division I, II, and III programs, 12 to NAIA schools, and several others to various community and junior colleges on softball scholarships. He was an invited clinician for the University of Oklahoma, Baylor University, and the University of Louisiana Monroe softball camps. Coach Berry was named the Oklahoma High School Coaches Association American Legion Baseball Coach of the Year in 1980; Oklahoma High School Softball Coaches Association 5A-6A All-State Fast Pitch Coach of the Year in 2000; Oklahoma High School Softball Coaches Association 5A-6A All-State Fast Pitch West Coach in 2000; the Oklahoma High School Coaches Association Assistant All-State West 5A-6A Baseball Coach 2003; the Oklahoma High School Coaches Association All-State West Slow-Pitch Coach of the Year in 2012; and the Arizona Diamondbacks National Native American Softball Coach of the Year in 2014. In June of 2016, Coach Berry was inducted into the Oklahoma High School Fast Pitch Coaches Association Hall of Fame. He was also named the Oklahoma Native American All State Fast Pitch Games West Coach in June 2017 and 2018. In 2020, he was selected to be the head coach of a Team USA Select All-Star High School Girl's Fast Pitch team for a tournament in Spain but was cut short due to COVID-19. As a player, Coach Berry played twenty-eight years of professional men's fast pitch. He was named the National Indian Athletic Association (NIAA) National Fast Pitch Tournament Most Valuable Player in 1978 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, in 1979 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and in 1980 in Norman, Oklahoma. He was named the ASA National Fast Pitch Tournament Most Valuable Player in 1979 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and International Softball Congress (ISC) World Tournament Most Valuable Player in Sioux City, Iowa in 1983. Coach Berry is

a two-time participant in the International Softball Congress (ISC) World Tournament, Sioux City, Iowa in 1983 and Prince Edward Island, Canada in 1994 the latter with the North Americans Men's Major Fast Pitch Team, whom he played with for twelve years across the Midwest, South, and Canada. Having a desire to coach girls fast-pitch at the collegiate level, he went back to school to complete a master's degree. He graduated with his Masters of Education degree with an emphasis in Sports Administration from East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma in May 2016. Fulfilling his dream of coaching in college, Bill served for one season as the Assistant Softball Coach at Oklahoma Panhandle State University in 2018 in Goodwell, Oklahoma. He oversaw pitching and outfielders while being there recruiting coordinator and assisting with fundraisers. After his one season at Panhandle State, he was hired as the head softball coach at Bacone College in 2019 until his retirement in 2020. In 2019, he was selected by AARP Oklahoma Indian Elders Honors in recognition of his inspirational and powerful differences he made to his community and Indian Country. In his later years, he enjoyed watching OU Football, Dallas Cowboys, Judge Judy and became a fan of Kansas State University. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Donna, their two sons, Tennyson & Kelly, and one daughter, Amanda, then one remaining sibling, Phillip and spouse Aleta, four nephews, Phil Warrior, Timmy Berry, Jeremy Tahhahwah and Brandon Isom (with his wife Brandi and children Oakley and Hailey), Sister-in-Law Lou Ann Lucero, one niece, April Berry, and many aunts, uncles, and other family members. Bill is preceded in death by his parents and two sisters: Cindy Berry Klinekole and Anna Mamie Berry. Visitation will be Wednesday 1:00-8:00, Thursday, 9:00-8:00 and Friday, 8:00-9:30. Arrangements are under the direction of Fort Cobb Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall

JT

“ I'm so sorry to hear of the passing of Bill, my Sincere Condolences to his sweet wife Donna and his children. He was a great person and he will be missed. Marlon and Janet Tahah family

Janet Tahah - February 02, 2023 at 12:00 AM

BS

“ I am so glad my daughter was able to play softball for Coach Berry. He was so good with the girls and the parents. And summer ball was so much fun. What a great softball experience he gave all of us.

If I'm not mistaken, I think he also taught driver's ed to Madison and some of the other softball girls...I think maybe Cassie and a couple of others? How he was able to survive that, I'll never know! 🤔😭

Bobbie Smith - January 31, 2023 at 12:00 AM

SW

“ Coach Berry welcomed my daughters at MacArthur school with open arms! We spent many hours with Coach Berry as he coached school ball and the Tulsa Eagles who our oldest daughter JayCee played for! Coach Berry rode to Denver, Colorado with us one summer and we laughed a lot and told lots of stories! Great memories shared! Our condolences 🌸 to his family at this time of mourning!

Star Wood - January 30, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ Coach Berry was my high school fastpitch softball coach in the early 2000s at MHS. He was one of the most patient coaches I ever played for and was just an all around good person. I was one of the many All-Staters he guided to that amazing distinction and am forever grateful for his positive influence and dedication to bettering me as a student, athlete, and person. My family and I are saddened by the news of his passing but know he is resting in Paradise. God bless you Coach Berry and we send our heartfelt love and condolences to his family and loved ones. Love, Cece (Carroll) Allen and The Carroll Family

Cece Allen - January 27, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CP

“ I played for Coach Berry at MHS, and I was also one of his students. Not only did he coach us during the school year, but also during the summer. To say all of our families spent a lot of time with Coach would be an understatement. As Cece said, he was very patient with a bunch of loud high school girls! He taught us a great deal, sweated out the Oklahoma two-a-days with us, kept a watchful eye, and encouraged us to do our best. He will be missed. Thanks for all you did for us. ❤️

Cassi (Chapman) Parker - January 27, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CW

“ I was a teammate of Bill's at Ft. Cobb in the summer of 1971. It was one heck of a summer. Also taught school with Bill at Riverside during the late 1980's. We always had good talks about Baseball , Basketball and the old days. My condolences to Donna, Phillip and the family. Good man. 1 Tim. 4:8 For while bodily training is of some value ,godliness is of value in every way. as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. God Bless. Charlie Whitehorse. Elberta, Alabama.

Charlie Whitehorse - January 26, 2023 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ I met Bill while working with his sweet mother at Discovery Day Care Center in Anadarko. He bought my red 1966 Ford Mustang Coupe. We used to talk about that car when we would run into each other at ballgames. He was a good man from a good family and I am praying for all those who will miss his presence here on earth.

Dana Palesano Morris - January 26, 2023 at 12:00 AM

AN

“ Please accept our sincere condolences. Words cannot express how sorry we are for your loss.

Anonymous - January 26, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ Soft spoken, easy going great teammate and one heck of a ballplayer. Played on the same team for 3 summers, 68, 70 and 71 and one season at Cameron, 72. Just plainly a good guy....deepest condolences to his family...

Jack Harvey - January 26, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JG

“ We were very saddened to hear of Bill's passing. He was a good person who loved his family. Our prayers and thoughts are with you.

Jerrie Fawbush and Keith Gooday - January 26, 2023 at 12:00 AM