



Herbert Stirewalt Pressly

March 8, 1935 - August 11, 2020

Herbert Stirewalt Pressly died peacefully on August 11, surrounded by family, in Gainesville, Florida. He was 85. Born March 8, 1935 in Tampa, Herb lived his entire life in his beloved Florida, ever ready to “take a drive” to the soft sands and warm waters of the Gulf.

Herb was the son of Palmer William Pressly – an electrical engineer who operated the Tampa Tribune printing press; and Sadie Dembroke Pressly – an Italian beauty from California. He inherited his father’s passion for engineering and, in his 38 years as a civil engineer with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), he became one of its trailblazers in the area of Computer Aided Design (CAD). These trails are now among the most travelled roads and bridges in the Sunshine State.

Herb channeled the lightning-quick reflexes his father exhibited as a minor league baseball player and older brother, George, displayed on the North Carolina State basketball squad through his smooth style of tennis play: first, as a star at Tampa’s Hillsborough High School, then, as a club player at the University of Florida. Herb was crowned Bartow City Singles Champion in 1960.

After graduating from Hillsborough in 1953, Herb proudly joined the Gator Nation, Class of 1958. As a member of the Army ROTC at Florida, Captain Pressly, then, served in the Army Reserves until 1969.

Although they lived near one another in Tampa, Herb did not meet his future bride, Joyce Ann Mapstone, until the successful machinations of a blind date. They married in 1959.

Together, they raised three children the hard way: investing tremendous amounts of love, time, attention, discipline, and making many sacrifices. Herb designed roads, and he loved to drive them. The Pressly Family vacation circuit included almost every state in the Union, including two extended trips “out west” in the family station wagon, as well as annual trips to Gatlinburg, TN, and quarterly visits to Clearwater Beach. Opening Day at

Disney World in 1971 was a special memory, inspiring a family love affair with this iconic piece of Americana. And, of course, countless last minute drives to Atlanta to cheer on the hapless Braves of the 70s. Sports were an integral part of family life, and Herb was present each time his daughters cheered or his son played.

Professionally, Herb rose to the top of the booming world of computer-aided civil engineering techniques. His archives of hand-rendered drawings exemplify a mastery of the complex process of “building roads.” However, he was able to seamlessly transition to the new era of jumbo, water-cooled computers of the early 1960s. He was selected National President of the Highway Engineering Exchange Program in 1972 (greeting celebrity guest Mickey Rooney!) and was a longtime active member of the Florida Engineering Society and Florida Board of Professional Engineers. Following his retirement from the FDOT in 1997, Herb worked with CSI Software, Inc., a provider of customized application services.

Herb honed his skills as an international metal detector through annual trips to Norwich, England over the final decade of his life. His bounty of ancient coins will be cherished forever. He also enjoyed gardening, grilling “world famous barbeque chicken,” western lore, woodworking, and, of course, following the Florida Gators, “in all kinds of weather.”

With eight grandchildren at hand, Herb also easily made the transition to “Pappy.” He was beloved as a kind-hearted, story-telling role model of gentleness and forbearance. He was eventually known simply, and so appropriately, as “Sweet Pappy.” And, oh, how he will be missed!

Herb is survived by his wife of 61 years, Joyce Mapstone Pressly; children: Amy Durham (David), Juliann Kovan (Brad, predeceased), and Scott Pressly (Barbie.); grandchildren: Julia (David Goehring), Douglas, Teresa, and Nicholas Durham; Abby Kovan; Carden, K.J., Palmer Pressly; brother, George Pressly (Betty.)

The family will receive friends Saturday, August 15, 2020 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the chapel of WILLIAMS-THOMAS FUNERAL HOME WESTAREA, 823 NW 143rd Street CR 241 North, Gainesville/Newberry, FL 32669. The funeral service will begin at 12:00 p.m. A graveside service will be held Sunday, August 16, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. Culley’s MeadowWood Memorial Park, 700 Timberlane Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32312. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering for the benefit of Minority Engineering Students. Please make checks out to: UF Foundation and indicate “In Memory of Herbert Pressly”.

Mail Checks to: UF Foundation, P.O. Box 14425, Gainesville, FL 32604, Attention: Ann

Cemetery

Culley's MeadowWood Memorial Park

700 Timberlane Road,
Tallahassee, FL, 32312

Events

AUG 15 Family Will Receive 11:00AM -
15 Friends 12:00PM

Williams-Thomas Westarea
823 N.W 143rd Street, Newberry, FL, US,
32669

AUG 15 Funeral Service 12:00PM

Williams-Thomas Westarea
823 N.W 143rd Street, Newberry, FL, US,
32669

AUG 16 Graveside Service 01:00PM

Culley's MeadowWood Memorial Park
700 Timberlane Road,, Tallahassee, FL, US,
32312

Comments



“ funeral service



Williams-Thomas Funeral Homes - September 16, 2020 at 03:33 PM



“ I worked at the Department of Transportation in the late 60's and early 70's. I didn't work directly for Herb, but had a lot of contact with him over the years. He was very creative and energetic. He had a great sense of humor and an easy laugh. The things I remember most about him is that he cared about people, treated all of his staff with respect, and would really listen and consider what you were saying when you talked with him. He was a really good person. I will be praying for all of the family and his close friends. Fred Hudson

Fred Hudson - August 26, 2020 at 09:17 AM



“ I never knew Mr. Pressly, but found his name and obituary while looking at some family names. His mother, Sadie Dembroke Pressly was the younger sister of my grandfather, Francis O. Dembroke (1901). My father, Robert L. Dembroke would have been Mr. Pressly's cousin.

So, I just wanted to express my condolences and wish I had met him.

Michael Dembroke
Pleasant Hill, CA
mike_dembroke@pacbell.net

Michael Dembroke - August 19, 2020 at 09:34 PM



“ Dear Joyce and family
You are in my thoughts and prayers. I've missed you since you left Kilkenny West.
You were wonderful friends and neighbors.
Marylee Peebles

Marylee Peebles - August 16, 2020 at 04:43 PM



“ Joyce, this is a sad time for me for several reasons. I never received any info on when ya'll moved but I understood the circumstances. I'm sorry for your loss but you can rejoice in his Legacy.

Herb and I knew each other early on beginning in 1972 when I started working for the FDOT in Bartow and I was interfacing with him on CADD issues while he was in Tallahassee. He was easy to talk to and having worked in the same District he knew the challenges of design and people issues. He never shrunk back from a challenge and was always supportive, innovative and a real thinker in general.

Herb shined most in his trail blazing CADD innovation within the FDOT, but he didn't get the recognition he deserved in general computer applications within the FDOT. But his zeal caught on first within the Consultant industry because Herb was promoting it within the Highway Engineering Industry whether the FDOT ever took it up or not. So CADD caught on first. Herb also challenged management in other areas but like a great ship it turns slowly. But he was also a pioneer of computerized Project Management for Quantities and Estimates leading to a computerized FDOT Work Program in spite of the old school mentality that held on for a long time. Without that innovation the FDOT couldn't handle the massive data and number of projects it does today.

I ended up moving to Tallahassee in 1983 and became re-acquainted with Herb but this time it had nothing to do with work and in 1987 I established the Tallahassee area Metal Detecting Club often hosted by Paul Sampson at Capital Coin and Diamond. Herb came to our first Metal Detecting Club Meeting and that's really when I got to enjoy the social side of Herb. We detected together on Seminole War sites to WW 2 bases, and of course parks and schools. Monetary value was of no concern to Herb. He just loved the historical significance and liked to see shiny silver. For Herb and me it wasn't all about metal detecting for expensive things. Herb was a generous person and we both loved woodcraft. He gave me his grandfathers wood lathe which I still have and appreciate even though its greatest value is as an artifact rather than a tool.

I finally convinced Herb to go to England detecting and at that point it was no turning back for him even though he was losing a mobility in his legs. While it hurt at times it never stopped his wide smile when he dug a old coin or military button. I regret we were never able to go to England at the same time. He was not a boastful person but the closest he came was in bragging that his son was paying for his trip to England. When he returned I would call to see what he found. I know he reflected on his trips in that station wagon in the US treating his kids to an adventure, and now they were treating him on a vacation adventure of a lifetime.

Well now Herb is on another adventure! I'm sure he will fit right in on the management team!

Ken Weldon



“ A wonderful tribute for a wonderful guy, Mr Weldon

M.a. - August 16, 2020 at 11:40 PM



“ My condolences to all of Herb's family.

Classmate HHS Class of 1953
U of FL class of 1958

John R. "Dolph" Cone III

john r "dolph" cone III - August 14, 2020 at 05:05 PM



“ We were good friends of Herb and Joyce and we lost track of them when our Christmas Card and Joyce's Birthday card was returned as undeliverable. We had no idea where they had moved. Herb and Dave both worked for the FDOT and we had a common love for Scottie Dogs. Herb and Joyce kept our beloved "Fergie" several times when we went on vacation. We never had to worry about our Scottie when they were in the loving hands of Herb and Joyce. So sad to see Herb's obituary in the paper this morning. Our heart aches and our sympathy is extended to Joyce and their children and grandchildren. We will try to attend the graveside service at Culley's MeadowWood on Sunday.

David and Rosemary Ferguson - August 14, 2020 at 03:54 PM



“ Please accept our sincerest sympathy and condolences -
Northside Hospital Pain Treatment Center Staff -
Colleagues of Juliann

Janet Horvath - August 14, 2020 at 11:38 AM



“ Dear Joyce and Children,

So very sorry to hear of your loss. You were amazing neighbors, still remembered fondly all of these years later. Our prayers are with you.

Jim and Nancy Miller

Jim and Nancy Miller - August 14, 2020 at 11:02 AM



“ So sorry to see Herb gone. He was a great detecting buddy to everyone in the Tally area to the Sierra UK hunting group. We will miss you. Paul

Paul D Sampson - August 14, 2020 at 10:53 AM