

# Bill Ward

- Bill Ward grew up in a small town of Hartford, Kentucky. He doesn't know too much about his family, but they came from Germany originally. His name Ward means to watch or guard. His mother had married three times and had eight children. Bill has 1 sister and 6 brothers.
- When he thinks of home, he thinks of the old farm. His family were sharecroppers, with tobacco being the main crop. They set the tobacco by hand, cut off the tops and hung it in the barn to dry. They all worked the farm when they were big enough. Their day started at 4 in the morning with chores before school. They went to school and started over with chores when they got home.
- Bill didn't go to high school. He went to live with his aunt and uncle in Indiana. There he worked in a steel mill. Later he moved to Chicago. He was employed by a company that made timers for stores and parking meters.
- At 17, He went into the navy for a better life. He became a Boatswain's Mate. He stayed in the Navy for 3 years and 8 months. He served on the aircraft USS Bennington. In 1954 it suffered an explosion in Providence, Rhode Island claiming the lives of over 100 men and officers. He was then transferred to the USS Lake Champion and stationed in Florida.
- Out of the Navy, Bill went to work for Union Hardware. They made roller-skates and ice skates. Later he went to work for Kimberly-Clark Corporation for 34 years. He ran the machine that rolled toilet paper, paper towels and dinner napkins. He also became an EMT while at Kimberly-Clark.
- Bill's last job was at a funeral home. He was the EMT on their ambulance.

- Bill's happiest memory was July 21, 1956. That was the day he married his first wife, Janet. They were married for 44  $\frac{1}{2}$  years. They met on a blind date in NYC. She was studying to be a nurse along with her best friend Irene. When they got married Irene was in the wedding party. The last five years of her life, Janet would plan the annual picnic and she made sure Irene was there. She knew that she was going to die, and she wanted Irene there for Bill. Bill and Irene later married.
- Bill and his wife, Janet had three children. They had two daughters, Lee-Ann and Kathryn and a son Joseph. Bill and Irene share 19 great grandchildren.
- Bill was always working 2 jobs, too busy to get into any trouble. He is proud that he was able to work and take care of his beloved family.
- His first car was a Dodge. He misses that he can't just walk out to his car and just drive away.
- Bill's advice for life is, "If you are married never go to bed mad, never leave the house without kissing your partner goodbye. Take care of your family!"
- Bill enjoys traditional country music. He remembers listening to the Grand Old Opry on the radio growing up. He is often asked to provide entertainment by singing. He is a member of the Note-ables, the chorus at the Senior Center. He frequently requests two of his favorite songs to be song, **Peace in the Valley** and **The Yellow Rose of Texas**.
- If you would like to meet Bill, you will find him at lunch with Irene on Wednesdays at the Senior Center. You can also join him in a game of Corn Hole also known as Bean Bag Toss.