



Michael John Gill

January 14, 2025

Michael “Mike” J. Gill, of Oak Creek, Wisconsin, passed away peacefully on January 14th, 2025, at age 65, surrounded by loved ones, after battling cancer for nearly 3 years.

Mike is survived by his wife, Joyce (nee Wojtkowski), children, Kristin Szalanski (Justin), Megan Fucile-Stokes (Jason), Noah Gill (Kelly), grandchildren, Dayton Fucile, Ryan Szalanski, Camden Szalanski, and Mia Stokes, siblings and siblings-in-law, Pat Gill (Dianne), Geri Wilda (Pete), Mary Grove (Bob), Suzie Gill, Gary Wojtkowski (Barb), John Wojtkowski (Shari), Dave Wojtkowski, nieces and nephews, Amy Beloat, Matt Berend, Michelle Rinderle, Melissa Wojtkowski, Matthew Wojtkowski, Erika Tamminen, Dylan Wojtkowski, Jake L. Gill, Jake C. Gill, Mallory Walsh, Caiti Thornhill, Christine Wilda, other relatives, and many beloved friends.

Mike was preceded in death by his parents Mary Jane Gill (nee Rogge) and Harry C. Gill, Jr, siblings and siblings-in-law, Harry “Bud” C. Gill, III, Ceil Berend (John), and Robert Wojtkowski.

Mike was born in West Bend, Wisconsin on May 10, 1959. He had two brothers and three sisters. His family moved frequently, due to his father working as the groundskeeper for various golf courses. The family eventually settled in Milwaukee and his father, Harry C. Gill, Jr. became the groundskeeper for Milwaukee County Stadium, home of the Brewers.

Mike and Joyce both graduated from Bay View High School in 1978. However, they barely interacted during their time there because they ran in different crowds. Mike was more of a class clown and was into cars and fixing things. Joyce was a straight-A student who collected the classroom attendance sheets and sat in the front row of her classes. At their graduation ceremony, Joyce mustered up the courage to give Mike a kiss! They both worked at County Stadium after graduation. Mike worked security, was on the grounds crew, and was occasionally even the mascot, Bernie Brewer. Joyce was an usherette and ticket-taker. One day at the stadium, Mike offered Joyce a ride home from work. On their first-ever car ride together, that night, Mike unexpectedly pulled over on the side of the high-rise bridge, so they could watch fireworks! Joyce was panicking that they would get in trouble, but they didn't, and instead had a fun and memorable time. That was the first of their many fun and spontaneous adventures together. They got engaged after only dating for two weeks and going steady for two months! They were married a year later, and continued their love story for the next 45 years. They recently spent their wedding anniversary taking family pictures at Whitnall Park, where they also had their wedding pictures on that very day, 45 years prior.

After they were married, Mike and Joyce eventually moved to Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Mike was so proud to work on their first house. He built a large deck, finished their basement, planted many fruit trees in the backyard, and, with the help of some friends, built their garage. He also planted an infamous evergreen bush, that now towers about 20 feet above people's heads. His family visits the old house and bush every year during trick-or-treat in the neighborhood. As their family grew, 7 years later, they found a larger house, on the other side of the neighborhood, closer to the elementary school. They were happy that their family eventually included three children and four grandchildren.

Mike worked as an HVAC engineer, taking care of phone company buildings for 39 years. During his career, he made some great lifelong friends.

Thankfully, Mike retired at age 59, giving him 6 ½ years that were work-free and full of adventures.

Mike and Joyce spent their retirement as active as ever. They took trips to Yellowstone National Park, Laughlin, Nevada, Caribbean cruises, and Walt Disney World with all 12 immediate family members. Their days were filled with lots of camping trips, Great America, the Milwaukee County Zoo, exercise classes at Innovative gym, and events and services with Southbrook Church. Family continued to be a big part of Mike's life. Mike "Bumpa" and Joyce were always attending their grandkids' events, hosting Sunday night dinners for the family, teaching the oldest grandson how to drive, showing all the grandkids how to fix things, and passing down secret family recipes (chili, chopped meat and noodles, "pig slop," and thick smoke and peas, to name a few).

One of Mike's most endearing qualities was his ability to strike up conversations with anyone. Those who knew him best would often joke about the "Mike Gill Fan Club," because he had so many friends. His Fan Club included family, friends from work, neighbors, fellow Innovative gym rats, members of his church, waitresses at his favorite restaurants, and medical staff like those at his dentist and the nurses at the Froedtert Cancer Center. He was also so happy to spread his infectious optimism as he continued to check in on everyone else throughout his battle with cancer. It was important to him to keep others informed of his journey, even at the very end. He was also a favorite of many strangers, as he had an unmatched ability to befriend everyone, including random people in checkout lines and any children or babies nearby. Even after his passing, he continues to help others with his generous organ donation, which will restore vision to two people.

A celebration of Mike's life will be held on Saturday, February 1st. Please join us for the visitation (10:00-11:30 AM) and service to follow at Southbrook Church: 11010 W Saint Martins Road, Franklin, WI 53132. In lieu of flowers, Mike requested donations to the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation, whose mission is to fund research studies to better understand this rare and devastating form of cancer. Mike was blessed to receive excellent medical treatment, and one of his greatest wishes was that other families might have more time together than his did. Through your generosity, his legacy of helping others and spreading optimism will live on. You may donate through his website: <https://curecca.link/MichaelGill>

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

FEB 1. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Southbrook Church
11010 W. Saint Martins Road
Franklin, WI 53132

Celebration of Life Service

FEB 1. 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (CT)

Southbrook Church
11010 W. Saint Martins Road
Franklin, WI 53132

Tribute Wall

WP

“Joyce, I was so saddened to see that Mike had passed away. Karen Monte and I always had fond memories of the time you worked with us at NML. My wife and I will have you in our prayers for comfort and hope in this difficult time. Bill Petri

William Petri - February 04, 2025 at 08:25 AM

LA

“Love, Ashley purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Michael John Gill.



Love, Ashley - January 25, 2025 at 11:09 AM

H2

“Hartung family - OCHS class of 2000 purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Michael John Gill.



Hartung family - OCHS class of 2000 - January 24, 2025 at 11:56 PM



“Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Michael John Gill.



January 23, 2025 at 02:23 PM

YF

“ *Your Oak Creek Youth Cheer family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Michael John Gill.*



Your Oak Creek Youth Cheer family - January 21, 2025 at 04:00 PM

RW

“ *I never meet Mike in person but got to know him well through his wife, Joyce's Facebook posts. Mike fought a good fight while still enjoying his life with his wife, and family. Mike was such an encouragement to me during his journey with his illness. He was soo strong and always had a big smile on his face. I love the love you both had and showed for each other. Rest in Peace/ heaven 🙏 . Sincerely, Rosetta Weare.*

Rosetta Weare - January 20, 2025 at 11:04 PM