

A Tribute to Bill



It's with heavy hearts . . .

we announce that one of our beloved board members, **Mr. Bill Stankiewicz**, has finished his earthly journey. Bill passed quietly and peacefully on Sunday, January 22, 2023, after a year of declining health.

Bill was one of the three mayors of Troup County cities who came together, along with the County Commissioner, to address the elephant in the room, the racial divide in Troup County. They charged Ricky Wolfe and Rev. Carl Von Epps with exploring why Council votes at times seem to split along racial lines. Bill was the mayor of Hogansville when the Racial Trustbuilding Initiative began, and he remained a faithful board member until his passing.

Bill and his ability to see the big picture and his willingness to embrace it, will be a huge loss to our community and organization.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation for Bill's contribution to the work of Racial Trustbuilding. It took a lot of courage to go where no man's gone before. Bill was that man.

Bill remained passionately committed to the hard work of improving race relations among all the citizens of Troup County. Bill's contribution to this cause was genuine, authentic, and made a huge impact.

Bill faced his final stretch with courage and never showed any sign of weakness. We will miss Bill! Go Rest High on that Mountain! Your work down here is done. We release you to your eternal rest . . . until we all meet again on that other shore.

Trustbuilding, Inc



Remembering

BILL STANKIEWICZ

1944 - 2023



Bill mingled among friends sharing his wit, wisdom, and of course, his humor. Bill was always showing concern for others and the causes they supported. He really knew how to work a crowd. A fun time was had by all. Bill's wife Mary Stewart got a chance to share this moment with Bill.



BILL'S OBITUARY

Civic leader and two-term mayor of Hogansville, Ga., William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz has passed peacefully on January 22 at his home surrounded by his family. He was 78.

A native of Philadelphia, Bill served six years in the U.S. Navy from 1961 to 1967 with 2 years active duty as Second Class Radar-man aboard the USS Little Rock, a guided missile cruiser. He continued his affiliation with the Navy as President and board member of the USS Little Rock Association for many years.

Following discharge, he earned a degree from Drexel University in Business Administration with an emphasis on accounting and law and soon began a 30-year career with ARA Services (a.k.a. ARAMARK), a multinational service management corporation. He retired in 2000 as Vice President of Finance of their Uniform Rental Division.

Bill and his wife Mary Stewart were drawn from Atlanta to Hogansville in 1999 as an ideal place to realize their dream of opening an antique business. Collectors since their youth, they established William & Mary's Antiques and Sports Collectibles. From the beginning, Bill sought volunteer opportunities to best serve the community, and the legacy he has left is

immense.

He served as chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as on numerous board appointments including the Troup County Center for Strategic Planning, Troup County Chamber of Commerce, Hogansville Downtown Development Authority, United Way of West Georgia, Treasurer of the Hogansville-Meriwether County Joint Development Authority, and treasurer of the Hogansville Charitable Trust.

In 2006, the Hogansville City Council asked Bill to serve as City Manager, a post he held until 2011. Seeking to represent Hogansville's interest at the County and State level, Bill successfully ran for Mayor in 2013 and again in 2017. During a contentious second election, he sought to heal,

not divide. Numerous accomplishments during his two terms include overhaul of the city's water and waste water treatment infrastructures, proactive industry recruitment, improved fire service, major debt reduction from near insolvency to a retired debt, competitive utility rates and taxes, a new library, parks, parking lots and amenities. He was especially proud of his involvement with Racial Trustbuilding, Inc. and its achievements.

Bill and Mary, as co-directors, took on the promotion and coordination of The Hummingbird Festival, a 22-year endeavor which saw expansion from 1,200 annual attendees to 18,000. Managed by the Hogansville Charitable Trust, proceeds combined with matching grants totaling nearly \$1 million have funded civic projects and improvements.



Bill

GO REST HIGH ON THAT MOUNTAIN . . .

His life-long passion for sports was sparked by his cousin Eddie Stanky who played 11 seasons for National League baseball teams. This love, plus a bent for entrepreneurship, started early. At age 15, Bill ran a concession stand in front of Municipal Stadium in Philadelphia during the 1959 Army Navy game, a legendary match-up to this day. Playing rugby on a national team and a stint as a ski instructor in Alaska suggests that there was no sport he didn't love. Living in Atlanta for 10 years necessitated season tickets to the Braves baseball games during which time he served as a board member of the Braves 400 Club.

Bill was widely read and always had a story to tell from his vast store of knowledge, often quoting his favorite statesman, Winston Churchill. He routinely opened City Council meetings with a witticism, a "this day in history," or a tone-setting anecdote. His long-time assistant and City Clerk, **Lisa Kelly, now interim City Manager, thought of him as "a beacon who pointed us in the right direction and tireless in his dedication to our city."**

He is survived by his wife of 36 years, Mary, his son, William C. Stankiewicz, II, (Jennifer), and two sisters, Robin Stevens (Robert) and Joyce DeCarlo (John), plus several loving nieces and nephews.

Friends are invited to attend an ecumenical celebration of Bill's life at 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 7, at St. Peter's Catholic Church in LaGrange, with Father Timothy Gadziala officiating, followed by a reception in the Parish Hall.

A Funeral Mass of the Resurrection at St. Peter's will be planned for family and close friends, with inurnment to be at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Hogansville Charitable Trust, 200 E. Main Street, Hogansville, Georgia 30230.

Claude A. McKibben and Sons Funeral Home,
208 Johnson St., Hogansville, GA 30230



Bill speaking at the Isaiah Lofton Park Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.





SOME MOMENTS WE SHARED WITH BILL



The top right is when Bill received the Jane Fryer Award 2021 at the Lagrange Troup County Chamber Annual Meeting. It was a great honor to share this moment with two board members. Dr. Robert Tucker also received the Tom Hall Innovation Award at the same event. The top left is from a Trustbuilding breakfast in Hogansville. Bottom right is the ribbon cutting for the new City Hall.



Bill took special interest in the story of Isaiah Lofton. Bill was very proud of the work of Dr. Tony Lowe to bring the story to light and the actions of the city to acknowledge.

An event that caused historical harm in the City of Hogansville was transformed into a park where the family of Isaiah Lofton and others can come and reflect and citizens of Hogansville can learn about history and reconciliation.

This story now has a new chapter that all can admire. Way to go City of Hogansville!



FLAG CEREMONY



Memorial Service



Tuesday, February 07, 2023
2:00 PM



St. Peter's Catholic Church
200 LaFayette Parkway
LaGrange, GA 30240

Greetings and blessings to all of you gathered together in this celebration of life of Bill Stankiewicz. We pause for a brief moment of silence to pray for his soul and pray for one another as we grieve. Saint Paul reminds us in the first letter to the Thessalonians that we do not grieve as everyone else, but we grieve as Christians, as a people who have Hope and Hope does not disappoint. It's one of those great theological virtues. Faith, Hope and the greatest of these is Love. These individual invisible realities is what we come together. They galvanize our faith and as a Navy Ship man, if you will, Bill certainly knew what the anchor of faith hope and love really is. In the midst of the deep waters, you know, he journeyed as a naval ship man and also through his Christian faith. He also navigated his way through life and that's a beautiful thing. That's a testimony. So in the promises of Christ we know that the Lord will bring him through the waters of death steering within as a Navy ship man, if you will, to the place where there's total Faith Hope and Love and Eternity.



Mr. Bill C. Stankiewicz
Homily for the Ecumenical Service
February 7, 2023

By Father Tim Gadziala

1 Corinthians 12:31, 13:4-7, 12-13
Psalms 23
Matthew 5:1-12

"No one lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14). Mary and Bill, Jr., family, distinguished guests, and friends; we gather as an ecumenical community to celebrate the life of Bill Stankiewicz, a son, a father, a husband, a public servant, and a friend to so many. We come together as a people of faith to pray for the repose of his soul and to give thanks to God for the gift of life so wonderfully lived through Bill. Certainly, the Lord *"broke the mold"* when the Lord brought life through him as a gift to us.

In preparing my remarks, I asked Bill before he died what I should say to you today. In part, Bill told me not to go on and on about his achievements; but rather, Bill asked me to preach a short message of hope about the presence of God and how important it is to live out our talents through the lens of faith. In part, Bill said to me: ***"I hope that with my life, I can say that I made the world a better place, filled with humor, love and knowledge of things that matter."*** Bill said, ***"I always believed in God, but I have made many mistakes in my life; and***

through these times, for better or worse, I have come out stronger and filled with God's mercy."

During his last few weeks on earth, I walked with him in faith each day, spending some time with him and Mary. Each day, we began with a joke and a memorable phrase or history point that he wanted to share with me; Bill had a wild sense of humor, especially with his "Sean Jokes." Throughout these last days, we laughed, cried, and shared much about the joys, sorrows, and the glorious times of life! We shared the fullness of the mystery of God's love for us here on earth; we shared travels, the love of books and classical music as well as history as well how these aspects of life radiate our faith, hope, and love for God and one another.

Reflecting on his life, now I believe that Bill epitomized the essence of what it means to be human, for he had a sense of humor, he was humble too; he did not take himself too seriously, although he had a sense of purpose, control and discipline in living out his life among us. In the Latin language, there are three English words that derive from the Latin word, "Hummae" or "Earth," meaning, "dirt": Humanity, Humility and Humor. Bill was truly human as well as humble in spirit, meaning that he was "down to earth," practically speaking, as well as knowing well his personal flaws and weaknesses, together with his talents and strengths. He was confident in his person-hood and never exploited his or others weaknesses in life.

On the last day that I visited him and Mary, I asked Bill to tell me a joke and he said, "*Fr. Tim; today is not a good day for a joke; today we must be serious!*" This day was memorable; I believe now because I think at that time, Bill knew that his death was approaching. In giving Bill the last sacraments in accord with the Catholic Church, Bill affirmed his baptismal vows in his belief in God as a Christian. Amid our celebration, I asked Bill to share his thoughts. What he said is memorable: "***I don't understand the reality of death in its fullness, but, I accept it.***"

These would be some of Bill's last words; in fact, these words are similar to the words of Jesus at Gethsemane, "*Lord let this chalice pass me by, not my will, but yours' be done*" and again, Jesus exclaiming on the cross finally, "*Into your hands Lord, I commend my spirit.*"

Bill and Mary chose the scripture readings today because in brief, they exemplify the Christian vocation, that is the universal call to holiness of life. The Lord is our shepherd who guides us and strengthens our conscience in all we do; and the Lord God in Christ Jesus shall lead us from this life over the waters of death to the promise of heaven. As we are created in the image and likeness of God; in accepting the gift of Jesus Christ as our Lord, our hearts and minds are satiated with the fullness of faith, hope and the greatest of gifts, love. In the Gospel today, we hear Jesus preaching about the Beatitudes, the universal call of discipleship. In my opinion, Bill was a meek soul, especially at the end of his life for he embraced with great courage death. Truly, I witnessed a transformation of his soul, that while he suffered in the flesh, outwardly dying, his soul radiated the love of Jesus Christ.

Radiating the love of Christ is the call of all Christians; St. Nicholas, in his life, brought forth the spirit of Christmas, that is, the spirit of love to a world cold with sin and death. Bill loved Christmas and particularly, St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas is called in many languages, "Fr. Christmas," or in our American culture, "Santa Clause." Thinking of Bill, I cannot help to say that in his own way, he imbued the "Christmas spirit" every day of the year in the manner in which he lived his life among us; he brought faith, hope and especially love in a broken world. Through his actions and tenacity, God's presence was made known among us and we encountered love through his friendship. Rest in peace my dear friend, and may perpetual light shine upon you!

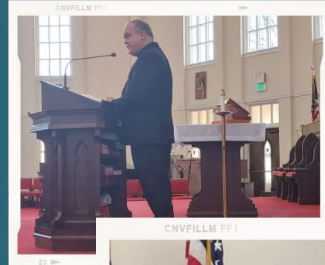


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WILLIAM "BILL" C. STANKIEWICZ

1 CORINTHIANS 12:31

³¹ But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly,^[b] but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.



**Remarks by
Chalton Askew
Executive Director
Trustbuilding**

We are here today not solely because someone has died but because someone lived. Borrowing a phrase from someone who knew him very well, Mary said Bill was fearless, especially when he had an inner conviction about something. Bill called on January 12th to update me on changes in his health status. He certainly displaced this fearless courageousness in that conversation.

Many of us had the good fortune of serving alongside our fearless friend in his quest to leave the world a better place than he found it.

I came to know Bill through the work of Racial Trustbuilding where I serve as Executive Director. An organization formed in 2015 to take a deep dive into exploring the racial divide in our local community.

Rev. Carl Von Epps, our Co-chair, advised that Bill was there in the initial conversations supporting and advocating for the cause of Trustbuilding.



Bill was always present and willing to lend his voice and intellect to the dialogues about race that became bridges of relational connection. Bill was open to growing his cultural competence and was unafraid to form relationships with others, even with the risk of vulnerability.

Bill stated, “you have to have someone willing to build bridges and research issues and be eager to address the problem alternatively.” Bill’s Gallup’s Strength assessment probably flagged his as being futuristic. People exceptionally talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be.

Dan McAlexander, our other Co-Chair, said he grew to really admire Bill while on the Strategic Planning Council together. Bill always added to the conversation as they sat next to each other, Bill always had something to amuse you and enlighten you. He personally expressed to Bill that he was a great admirer of his leadership, wisdom, wit, and courage. “You have brightened this place where you live, and we are grateful for it.”



Joe Ragland – stated that Bill always had a positive attitude and looked for opportunities to laugh. He was a great person to be around.



John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Bill Stankiewicz was that man.

Bill was the recipient of the Jane Fryer Award 2021. The Award was established to recognize a member of the community who has gone the extra mile to get involved in programs and activities that benefit many, exemplifying the dedication, work ethic, and community service that Jane Fryer demonstrated while serving Troup County as Chamber President for 35 years. Bill fit the Bill for this award. I was there to watch him receive it, not realizing I would be the next year’s recipient.

Dr. George Henry —



exclaimed, Bill as a life well lived and filled with wonderful service to so many. We all knew Bill as a dedicated person in service, to the citizens of Hogansville as Mayor, and to all we’ve done in Tustbuilding. He was a good friend.

Lou Dekmar says It was a peace when I visited him, I’m confident he’s at peace now.





(Dr. Robert Tucker, Tom Hall Innovation Award and Bill Stankiewicz, Jane Fryer Award.)



Bill finished STRONG!

This strength was on display when I watched Bill walk into the crowd at Patty Youngblood’s retirement reception. Bill was determined to be present despite Mary’s wishes. Bill valued authentic, genuine relationships and placed others above himself. “I had to be here,” Bill stated.

It reminds me of John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Per **Connie Hensler**, On behalf of the Lagrange Troup County Chamber of Commerce, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Bill’s family. Bill was



certainly a friend to the Chamber and an advocate for what the Chamber could bring to a community. He dedicated many hours to serving on the Chamber board, attending Chamber functions, and introducing the Chamber to businesses through-

out the community. His love for Hogansville and the success of businesses in Hogansville, in particular, was evident in all that he did. Bill's influence and dedication will be missed.

I got a chance to serve on the Troup County Center for Strategic Planning Board with Bill as he ended his tenure as Mayor. There I got to witness his voice and passion at work. Bill's Lessons Learned & Parting Advice to the group was Please don't stop. Continue this organization, continue working together, and show up. That was our Bill!

Similarly, when Bill spoke parting words to Ernest Ward, a Trustbuilding board member, he said, don't let the work we began in Racial Trustbuilding be in vain.



Maryanne Lovejoy, Executive Director of Strategic Planning, shares The Troup County Center for Strategic Planning is forever grateful to Bill for his role in forming our organization. He was always willing to take on leadership positions and emphasize the importance of our local leaders working together for the greater good. His genuine and generous service to Hogansville and Troup County will allow future generations to have the opportunity to flourish.

Bill was willing to be the change he wanted to see in the world.



How can you measure the Value of a Man by Roy Lessin

The measure of a man is not found
In the things he owns
Or what he saved for retirement
Or even his accomplishments...

The true measure of a man is found
In his faith and his heart.
It's found in the friends who stand by him. The strength he displayed under pressure. The sensitivity he unashamedly expresses
And his willingness to reveal vulnerability
Even at the risk of being hurt.

And it's found in the truth of his words,
The genuineness of his life
His unselfish actions
And the values he lives by.

Determine the measure of a man
Not by admiring his trophies
Nor by comparing him to other men
Either weaker or stronger.

Determine the measure of a man
By how much you trust him
And believe in him
And by how much his life enhances yours.

So long my Fearless Friend!





Good afternoon, I'm **Jim Thornton**, and I had the privilege of knowing Bill Stankiewicz, and working alongside him, while I was Mayor of LaGrange, and he was Mayor of Hogansville.

Bill and I both ran for mayor at the same time. Our terms coincided; our inaugurations were just days apart.

And for a variety of reasons, the destinies of LaGrange and Hogansville have always been joined together. He and I both knew that.

From the very beginning, Bill wanted to work together. And I think that was an insight into Bill's philosophy of governing. He knew the importance of partnership, cooperation, and compromise.

Sometimes people get elected to a political office, and they think they have a mandate to impose their own view on others. That was not Bill.

By contrast, he knew that he was elected to one specific role inside the larger apparatus of government and society, and he intended to do his best to fulfill that role.

I'm guessing his time in the navy helped prepare him for that. Yes, he was in a command position for his city, but his city alone wasn't going to get very far unless it was working with the rest of the fleet.

From our first days in office, Bill was the main proponent of LaGrange, Hogansville, West Point, and Troup County working together. He was the fiercest advocate, perhaps only after Chairman Ricky Wolfe, for the Troup County Center for Strategic Planning and its work.

Much fruit came from that work. Shortly after we took office in January 2014, Ricky Wolfe called me, Bill, and Drew Ferguson, who at that time was mayor of West Point, together for lunch. It was a monthly tradition that continued for as long as Bill and I were in office together.

Out of those lunches, Bill helped us plan and organize the racial reconciliation work in Troup County, which continues to this day.

He was a strong advocate for people coming together to get to know each other, understand each others different perspectives and life experiences, and finding common ground to improve the community. Often the best way to do that, Bill knew, was to share a meal around a common table.

Over the years, there were many breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and drinks that Bill and I shared together. Early on in our mayoral terms, one day I suggested to Bill in a text that he and I might meet up for a "cold drink."

Bill knew exactly what I meant, and he immediately responded back that he would go anywhere there was a "cold drink."

We talked about how to best serve our communities, how to work together, and even how to deal with the CAVE people. CAVE standing for "citizens against virtually everything."

Even as we worked together, Bill knew that he was mayor of Hogansville, and he never lost sight of his obligation to do what was best for the residents of Hogansville.

I enjoyed working with Bill: because you could always trust him; because he was always going to tell you what was on his mind; because he

understood the issues well; because he was a great student of history, government, and people.

And let's be honest here: because Bill made the work fun.

Bill had great stories, interesting anecdotes, and many jokes. He was never reluctant to share those. And his stories were as insightful as they were humorous.

Admittedly, some of Bill's best stories are things I cannot share today. Bill could sometimes be, shall we say, colorful with his metaphors, and perhaps not all of them are suitable for recitation in the church.

Bill was a sailor, and he knew how to talk like a sailor.

I was thinking about that line from A Christmas Story when Ralphie comments that his father "worked in profanity the way other artists might work in oils or clay. It was his true medium—a master."

Bill's art went beyond simple profanity, though, even if there was an element of it in many of his stories. His art was connecting seemingly disparate narratives together to make a point. He was just always able to do it with both grace and humor, while also being instructive.

I remember during the early days of the Covid pandemic, Bill and I spent hours upon hours talking, and emailing, and texting, about how to respond on the local level.

For those of you who live in Troup County, you may remember the dozens of Facebook Live events we did during those first few months of the pandemic.

Bill was on almost every one of those, and he was great at sharing best practices, interpreting the latest guidance from the state and federal officials, and calling folks out when they weren't

doing what was best to protect themselves and their neighbors.

Bill didn't believe in being politically correct or talking like a lawyer. He would always cut to the chase, even if that involved calling someone out for being "stupid," as he occasionally did.

No matter what he said or did and even in those times he disagreed with you, you just never got mad at Bill about it.

He had a way of letting you know he wasn't mad at you and he didn't think any less of you, but in this particular instance, you were being stupid.

Jeff Todd had the undeniable joy of working as both my city attorney and Bill's city attorney. I'm guessing Bill and I offered a bit of contrast for him, but he truly loved Bill and knew what a committed civic leader Bill was. Bill reciprocated the friendship with Jeff, but he always liked to pick at lawyers.

Jeff told me the story that he and Bill never exchanged Christmas gifts except one time when Bill gave Jeff a gift. It was a nicely wrapped package, and inside the package was a t-shirt. When Jeff opened the gift he saw that the t-shirt read, "I'm billing you for this." Just a funny, subtle dig that showed both Bill's humor and affection.

Through his time as mayor, and truly through end of his life, Bill made it all fun. Towards the end, he was gracious in the transfer of power to a new generation of leadership in Hogansville. He was also upbeat as he struggled with health challenges.

Bill knew that he had lived a good life, had enjoyed his family and friends, and had made a lasting difference in his chosen hometown and community.

His was a life well lived, and certainly a life worth celebrating. We will miss seeing him, and hearing his stories, and enjoying cold drinks together.

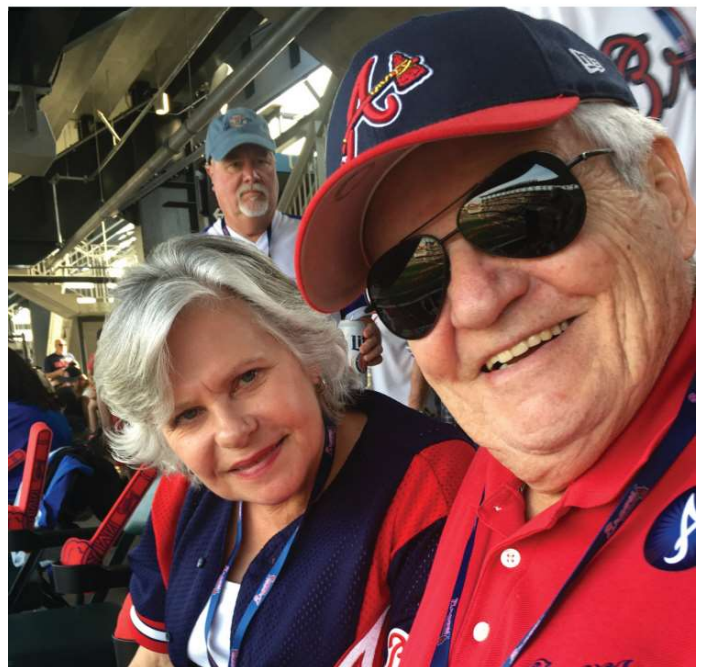


Moses Ector
Former Chief of Police
City of Hogansville

My condolences Mary and the family. I am so sorry. I thought the world would Bill. I never saw him as the city manager. I always saw him as a person that if I had a problem I could go and work with. We never had a boss, we had a relationship and that's hard to get. I spent 34 years with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation but I never felt the closeness with the director that I felt with Bill in the few months that I worked with him. He was one of the most giving, kindest people you will ever meet. I never will forget, I went in for an interview with him. He told some jokes, ask me one question, and said you got the job. It was easy. Then I said, "what about the pay." Bill was good with numbers so he gave me a number and I said OK I'll pick a portion of that if you will give the other portion to the police officers to give them a raise. Thinking that I was going to get pushed back but he did it. I took a good hit from what the previous chief made so that my people would be able to have more money. That's the kind of person Bill was he cared about other people he didn't just care about Bill.

Now, he loved the City of Hogansville. I think he loved the Braves a little bit more because anytime you talk to him we were gonna talk about the Braves, but he loved Mary and his family. There was never a sit down with Bill that you didn't hear about Mary and his family and the bookstore. He was just such a wonderful person that gave back and I said Bill you work all

the time. You got the Hummingbird Festival. You are just busy with everything here in Hogansville. Bill was a given kind person and I want Hogansville to do something for Bill. We talk about what a great person Bill is. No one was more instrumental in moving into that new City Hall than Bill Stankiewicz and I challenge the mayor and the City Council to move forward and name that building after him so that we will never forget Bill Stankiewicz and the lives he changed and made for the City of Hogansville (the audience broke out in applause here). I want to thank you I'm honored to be here Mary and your friendship will always be loved and appreciated. But we give thanks that our paths crossed and for the time we had together. A good man, a good friend. He will be missed but not forgotten.





My name is **Al Prado**.

Bill asked me to be deprecating when speaking about him, so I will do my best. Many of you knew Bill in his role as a Civic Leader, but I would like to tell you about another side of Bill.

My wife, Roseanna, and I first met Bill & Mary on a cruise ship somewhere on the Mediterranean Sea in 1984. It was an amazing 14 day trip from Barcelona to Athens filled with many new sights and adventures, but by far the highlight of the trip was the beginning of our wonderful friendship with Bill & Mary.

There were several great stories from this trip, but the one that is clean enough to tell here is about the evening we had dinner in a lovely restaurant in Venice. Our table was in the front of the restaurant. We noticed that a fellow passenger from the ship, a young female passenger, was dining with a member of the ship's crew at a small table in the back of the restaurant. This was a major No No, since crew members were not allowed to socialize with passengers on shore. But we felt that the young lovers should be encouraged, so we began to sing "traditional" Italian love songs from across the room. Now perhaps we were singing a little too loudly or perhaps a little off key, but the Viennese patrons of the restaurant did not seem to appreciate our singing. So after some discussion and several wild hand gestures, we were politely asked to leave the restaurant. Good Times!

At that time, Bill & Mary lived in the Los Angeles

Area and we lived in the San Francisco Bay Area, so it was easy for us to keep in touch. Bill's career eventually took him to Atlanta while I was transferred to Connecticut and then Birmingham, Alabama in 1990.

From 1990 to 1996, we spent a lot of time together since we were only a two hour drive away. We took many road trips together, but these trips now included the two recent additions to our family, our daughter Joanna and our son Tony. I remember a road trip we took to Hilton Head Island where one evening we sat on the grass under the Old Oak Tree in Harbour Town with about 50 other children and their parents listening to Gregg Russell sing some of his classic children's songs including "Are we there yet?"

This inspired Bill and I to sing this song with the kids on many of our road trips. I remember one long road trip in Roseanna's Mommy Van with Bill and I in the front seats, Roseanna and Mary in the middle and the kids in back. After about two hours of Bill and I and the kids singing "Are we there yet?" at the top of our lungs, Roseanna and Mary yelled out "Will you guys stop it!" (Some people just don't appreciate fine music!)

Even as our kids grew older and became adults, Bill would take a line out of "Are we there Yet?" and tell our kids "Get in the Car!" at the start of a road trip. The kids would reply, "Yes, Uncle Bill" because Bill was a part of our family and was and always will be Uncle Bill. Good Times!

Bill loved to travel, he loved to eat, and he had a love/hate relationship with the Atlanta Braves.



He was a Board Member of the Braves 400 Club and a regular customer at the 755 Club at the old Turner Field and the Xfinity Lounge at Truist Park. It is good to see several of Bill's close friends from those establishments here today.

Bill was in his element at baseball games. He was always ready to engage in some witty repartee during the game. I remember one game with just the two of us, a fan was standing in the aisle talking with someone seated. The fan standing in the aisle was blocking our view of home plate, so Bill yelled out "Hey Buddy, sit down and write him a letter".

Later in the game, the Braves Announcer was honoring several of the Braves Players whose numbers were retired. When Eddie Mathews Number 41 was mentioned, a young fan behind us yelled out "Who's Eddie Mathews?" Bill and I turned around and looked at the young fan who was wearing a Braves Cap, a Braves Jersey and drinking a beer from a plastic cup with a Braves logo. So Bill said "You're a Braves fan and you've never heard of Eddie Mathews?" The Young Fan replied "He was before my time" To which Bill promptly responded "George Washington was before your time, have you ever heard of him?"

Good Times! Bill was one of a kind. We had Great Times! He will be missed.



Good afternoon I'm **Karl Phillip**, I've worked alongside Bill for over 20 years but more importantly, had been his friend for over 30 years. Before I say a few fascinating words about Bill, I would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of our entire family, co-workers, friends, and Hogansville residents to thank all of you for being here today—in person, in this beautiful, symbolic church—to help us celebrate Bill's life. Thanks to everyone who traveled near and far to be here today, including Bill's son who traveled from California.

When Bill and I first met we immediately became friends as I pronounced his name correctly from day one-Stankiewicz, but Bill asked to use the Americanized versus Stankiewicz- eventually Bill decided on Stanki from that day forward.



Instead of delivering a 5-minute eulogy on Bill, that I know he would've hated, I've decided to share some of our life experiences that may put a smile on your faces as well as make Bill chuckle in heaven. When we interviewed Bill for the Aramark VP Finance role, he was asked about what a great accountant do- he replied without skipping a beat- a great accountant solves a problem you didn't know you had -----in a way you'll never understand. Bill called it Financial Gymnastics; we called it job security.

He was asked how much $25 \text{ squared} / 5 + 75 - 200$ was- his answer was "what'd you want it to be. Obviously, Bill was hired on as the VP at Aramark Uniform's eastern division.

I was with Aramark for 25 years and never had a dull moment working with Bill. He was quick witnessed- I remember when asked for a small donation towards the building a community swimming pool for his neighborhood in Buckhead. Bill being the big-hearted guy he was-he gave him two glasses of water.

Bill and Mary loved to travel and particularly enjoyed the Aramark annual sales contest trips. Being in finance and the contest auditor, he always found a way to qualify-you remember the test question answer- What do you want the number to be. Bill and Mary were always well-prepared traveling- I recall when we arrived late to the hotel in Lake Tahoe and the bar was closed and the four of wanted a drink- we tried to convince the server-- but to no avail- that's when Mary pulled out a bottle of Grand Mariner from her travel bag. The server was shocked but joined us for a nightcap.

Talking about Lake Tahoe, Bill was a passionate skier, I believe he was an instructor. Here a mental picture, I want to paint- 20 southerners, never seeing snow, holding skis and snow boards, looking to Bill to advice- how to ski. Well, after a few hours, only a few were able to put on their skis- the rest went back to the hotel and Bill to the bar for a GM.

Bill knew our grandson and granddaughter- they lived with my wife and me for a while- they always enjoyed the annual Hummingbird Festival. Our grandson Steven always enjoyed hearing Bill's adventures in the Navy- on the Little Rock. Bill was instrumental in Steven joining the Navy and is currently serving on the USS America- an amphibious assault ship stationed out of Sesebo Japan.

After Aramark, Bill entered politics in Hogansville- as Bill shares his birthday with Bill Clinton and the Little Rock airport (his navy assignment) is named after Clinton- so he thought it was a calling to enter politics. Bill did a great job as mayor- he became known as the man with the long-last name.

Bill was compassionate and kind, funny yet stoic, cheerful yet reserved, and quietly bonded with the Aramark family through difficult storms and joyful moments. He loved the Braves, The Eagles, a good cheese steak, sushi, an end of the day Grand Marnier and Mary his wife -with a passion. He was the ever-present jokester, generous to a fault and the moral compass to those who knew him-like me.

In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt – because I couldn't find a Winston Churchill quote -"Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints on your heart." That's Bill Stankiewicz.



Rev. Dr. George Bailey

Psalm 121

A song of ascents.

1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
2 My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;
4 indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord watches over you—
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
6 the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
8 the Lord will watch over your coming and
going both now and forevermore.

Bill will be missed as a friend and mentor. Our birthday's are both in August. Bill was a great leader. If it wasn't for Mayor Bill I may not have become 1st African American chairman of Lagrange Troup County Chamber of Commerce. We have been far and near, even both to the White House attending events and classes for GMA. We graduated from the Robert Knox Leadership Course, Georgia Economics Course along with many many more.

When we were sworn in, the first order of business, he put me over the 1st Martin Luther King program for the City of Hogansville then he needed a replacement on the chamber board to represent Hogansville. He chose me. That made me feel that he was confident in me. We had many fun times. I drove mayor Bill and Mary around Jekyll Island. He gave me his Braves tickets and parking when Braves played at Turner field for some of the games.

Mayor Bill and Mr. Al Prado went to the Philadelphia Eagles and Falcons game with me. They road with me and I had them in the heart of the rough part of Atlanta, the bluff, but they felt safe (congregation laughs).

One thing we had in common is we both have beautiful wives. One of the last things Bill said to me was keep check on Mary.



Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.
Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
She bore to men a Savior,
When half spent was the night.
This Flow'r, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us,
And lightens every load.

The music was beautiful for the entire service!





**Recessional Hymn:
Amazing Grace
Bagpipes: Wayne Coleman**



Ferguson Honors Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz 1/31/2023

Thank you Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the passing of my dear friend, and former colleague, Mayor Bill Stankiewicz.

Mayor Bill was the staple of Troup County and he was loved by everyone. Bill served his community as City Manager, a two term mayor, throughout his involvement on a number of boards, including the Lagrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce, the joint authority, the development board, and Racial Trustbuilding Initiative.

He was an extremely dedicated public servant and he took great pride in doing the tough work to improve his community. As mayor he worked to reestablish the city's finances during a period of instability and he proudly worked to relocate and renovate city hall in Hogansville.

When I was Mayor of West Point, I had the privilege of working with Bill on many projects for the greater good for our county and our cities. He was a pleasure to be around. My heart goes out to his wife Mary and the entire Troup County family.

Bill will forever be remembered and honored for his invaluable service this community and to this nation. He will be sorely missed. Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

Congressman Drew

(You may listen to the message on YouTube)



2/9/2023 Vickie Brown

Bill certainly knew the game of life!

His networking skills created the power source he used to bring people together.

He had plenty of wins and loses, but it did not seem to deter his love for people and his ability to create connections and master the art of relationships to achieve much success.

Some of my fondest memories with Bill, were working along side him with The Hummingbird Festival Dinner at Victoria Belle Mansion.

Rest in Peace Bill Stankiewicz you left a firm imprint with the time you spent here on earth!



2/6/2023 Ray and Chris Rice, John and Amber Stidham

Mary, We're sending out prayers for peace and serenity .

Amazing Arboricola was purchased for the family of William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz by Ray and Chris Rice, John and Amber Stidham.

2/4/2023 Becky and Gregg

"William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz" will remain in our hearts forever. With love and hugs always, May

your heart and soul find peace and comfort.

A memorial tree was planted in memory of William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz.

Reflections of Glory Wreath was purchased for the family of William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz by Becky and Gregg.

A candle was lit for William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz.

2/1/2023 Sheri Metternick-Jones

Wonderful memories of the kindness shared by Bill and Mary on our international move to Hogansville. Moving from Australia was no easy task but Bill and Mary were there as new friends from the start. Loved going to their shop to source items for the B & B. During the Hummingbird festival dinner in 2016 Mary and Bill said, let's go to Paris, we did, and what a wonderful time we had. Bill loved his Croque Monsieur, what a joy to travel together. They supported us every step of the way growing our business in Hogansville. Their inclusiveness inviting us to Christmas celebrations was so important to us, as our extended family was in Australia. We immediately felt a connection with Bill and Mary, we are so grateful that on our recent visit from Australia in September 2022 we were able to connect with Bill and Mary sharing our love and memories together. ❤️ Bill, sadly missed but wonderfully remembered. Mary, our love for you continues, we miss you dearly. Love from Sheri, Georgia, Hannah, Silas and Mark.



1/31/2023 Yvonne Lopez

I am truly saddened to hear the passing of this wonderful human beings.

A memorial tree was planted in memory of William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz.

1/23/2023 Dr. Mike Moon

I am so very sorry to hear of the passing of Bill. He was a good friend to me and my family. I will keep Mary in my prayers during this very difficult time. I pray the Lord will lift her and give her strength to deal with life ahead. Bill was a good friend to Hogansv... Continue Reading

A candle was lit for William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz

1/24/2023 Angelita Lynn

My deepest condolences go out to you Ms. Mary and your family. Bill was such an inspiration to me. When I told him my son was in the Navy, he shared stories about his time in the Navy. Will miss seeing him around City Hall. My love to you and your family.

A Memorial Tree was planted for William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz

January 23

We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Claude A. McKibben and Sons Funeral Home

1/27/2023 Luz Anza Caba

Our deepest sympathy n condolence to the bereaved family...Eternal rest grant on the soul of Bill O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him...may he rest in peace. Amen.

1/26/2023 John and Glenda

Mary our thoughts and prayers are with you. Bill was a patriot , a server to his community and a true friend. He will be greatly missed. With Love.

With Distinction was purchased for the family of William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz by John and Glenda.

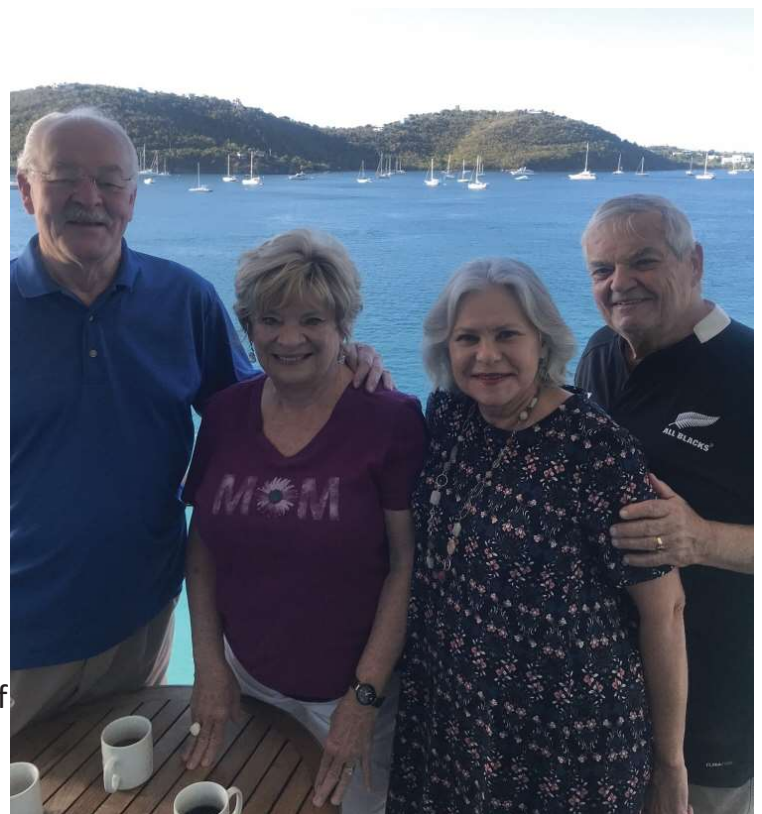
A tree was also planted in memory of William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz.

1/23/2023 Lisa Chase

Mary,

Steve first met Bill and served with him on the USS Little Rock in 1963. From Little Rock Reunions, to our cruise in March of 2019 and zoom "happy hours" during Covid will hold fond memories for Us and hopefully for you as well during difficult times. We love you and loved Bill with all his stories! Sending love and prayers as you navigate through this difficult journey.

Love, Steve and Lisa Chase



Mary, Steve first met Bill and served with him on the USS Little Rock in 1963. From Little Rock Reunions, to our cruise in March of 2019 and zoom "hap



Dr. Tony B. Lowe was drawn to Isaiah Lofton's story, enriching the civil rights record. Week in and week out, a collection of older African American men, respected elders in the community, would trade stories about the history and legacy of this tiny town in the western part of the state. They'd gather at a local diner in Hogansville, Georgia, and whenever they spoke, Tony Lowe listened. Armed with a pen and a pad, Lowe, would ask questions, take notes. At this breakfast event he shares his findings.



Isaiah Lofton TRUSTBUILDING BREAKFAST





In Loving Memory

Former Hogansville Mayor and City Manager Bill Stankiewicz





Former Hogansville Mayor and City Manager Bill Stankiewicz passed away on Sunday.

The two-term mayor was loved by his colleagues throughout the county and helped reestablish the City of Hogansville's finances during a time of instability.

Hogansville Interim City Manager Lisa Kelly said she worked with Stankiewicz the whole time he was city manager and later as mayor.

"I came to work for the city in 2004, and he became city manager in 2006," Kelly said.

Stankiewicz was later elected mayor in 2013 and served two terms through 2021.

Kelly said Stankiewicz worked to improve the city even before he became city manager.

"We worked for many years to get our credit rating up so that we could refinance our bonds. During his tenure as mayor, that actually happened. He was very proud of that," Kelly said.

Kelly said Stankiewicz was also really proud of helping get city hall out of its previous home in the Royal Theater so that it could be renovated and reopened. Stankiewicz was instrumental in relocating city hall to its new location in the former PNC bank, she said.

"His work on the Charitable Trust has made it possible for [the new] City Hall to be funded without any taxpayer dollars being spent," Kelly said.

Kelly said Stankiewicz's dedication to Hogansville was clear during her decade-plus working with the former mayor.

"He was so dedicated to wrapping his head around everything that went on in this city, from police operations, down to the minor, little things like how a ticket works, and then electrical operations within the city. He was just he was a sponge. He just he wanted all the information he could get, so he would know what he was talking about," Kelly said.

"I always said, he should have been on Jeopardy. He would have won millions. He was a smart guy," she said.

Former Hogansville City Councilman George Bailey said when he was first elected to the council Stankiewicz was serving as city manager, and he was later elected mayor.

Bailey said Stankiewicz served all of Troup County, not just Hogansville. He said he served with Stankiewicz on numerous boards and community organizations such as the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce, the Racial Trustbuilding Initiative and the Joint Authority Board with Meriwether County.

"He's certainly going to be missed in Hogansville and Troup County," Bailey said.

Troup County Commission Chairman Patrick Crews and West Point Mayor Steve Tramell both said Stankiewicz was a pleasure to work with because he was quick to offer a funny story. All three mayors and the commission chair would frequently get together for meal to discuss what was going on with their respective cities.

"Every time I got to be with Bill it was fun because he always had a funny story or some crazy euphemism or colloquialism that he would say," Tramell said. "He was just an unending font of information. He was just a great guy. It's just such a sad loss for Troup County."

"He was always very entertaining, a very intriguing fellow, when we'd get together. There

was a period of time in there in which we had a lot of lunches with the mayors, myself and Bill, and he always had a colorful story to tell us," Crews said.

Crews and Tramell said Stankiewicz and his wife Mary Stewart are great community servants.

"I appreciate the fact that he and Mary were so involved, particularly in Hogansville. They really worked hard to improve the community with all the civic work they did for Hogansville," Crews said. "Not only was he involved in Hogansville, but he was a presence in LaGrange."

"I really appreciate his dedication to Hogansville and all the things he did and his wife Mary too. My heart goes out to them," Tramell said.

"He will be sorely missed. I know they love Hogansville," Crews said.

Kelly said funeral arrangements for Stankiewicz are being handled by Claude A. McKibben and Sons Funeral Home.

Daily News

William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz

Published 2:33 pm Friday, January 27, 2023

By FROM STAFF REPORTS

Civic leader and two-term mayor of Hogansville, William C. "Bill" Stankiewicz passed peacefully on Jan. 22, 2023, at his home surrounded by his family.

He was 78. A native of Philadelphia, Bill served six years in the U.S. Navy from 1961 to 1967 with 2 years active duty as Second Class Radarman aboard the USS Little Rock, a guided missile cruiser.

He continued his affiliation with the Navy as President and board member of the USS Little Rock Association for many years. Following discharge, he earned a degree from Drexel University in Business Administration with an

emphasis in accounting and law and soon began a 30-year career with ARA Services (a.k.a. ARAMARK), a multinational service management corporation. He retired in 2000 as Vice President of Finance of their Uniform Rental Division.

Bill and his wife, Mary Stewart, were drawn from Atlanta to Hogansville in 1999 as an ideal place to realize their dream of opening an antique business. Collectors since their youth, they established William & Mary Antiques and Sports Collectibles.

From the beginning, Bill sought volunteer opportunities to best serve the community, and the legacy he has left is immense. He served as chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as on numerous board appointments including the Troup County Center for Strategic Planning, Troup County Chamber of Commerce, Hogansville Downtown Development Authority, United Way of West Georgia, Treasurer of the Hogansville-Meriwether County Joint Development Authority, and treasurer of the Hogansville Charitable Trust.

In 2006, the Hogansville City Council asked Bill to serve as city manager, a post he held until 2011. Seeking to represent Hogansville's interest at the county and state level, Bill successfully ran for mayor in 2013 and again in 2017.

During a contentious second election, he sought to heal, not divide.

Numerous accomplishments during his two terms include overhaul of the city's water and waste water treatment infrastructures, proactive industry recruitment, improved fire service, major debt reduction from near insolvency to a retired debt, competitive utility rates and taxes, a new library, parks, parking lots and amenities.

He was especially proud of his involvement with Racial Trustbuilding, Inc. and its achievements.

Bill and Mary, as co-directors, took on the promotion and coordination of The Hummingbird Festival, a 22-year endeavor which

saw expansion from 1,200 annual attendees to 18,000.

Managed by the Hogansville Charitable Trust, proceeds combined with matching grants totaling nearly \$1 million have funded civic projects and improvements.

His life-long passion for sports was sparked by his cousin Eddie Stanky who played 11 seasons for National League baseball teams. This love, plus a bent for entrepreneurship, started early. At age 15, Bill ran a concession stand in front of Municipal Stadium in Philadelphia during the 1959 Army Navy game, a legendary matchup to this day. Playing rugby on a national team and a stint as a ski instructor in Alaska suggests that there was no sport he didn't love.

Living in Atlanta for 10 years necessitated season tickets to the Braves baseball games during which time he served as a board member of the Braves 400 Club.

Bill was widely read and always had a story to tell from his vast store of knowledge, often quoting his favorite statesman, Winston Churchill.

He routinely opened City Council meetings with a witticism, a "this day in history," or a tone-setting anecdote.

His long-time assistant and City Clerk, Lisa Kelly, now interim City Manager, thought of him as "a beacon who pointed us in the right direction and tireless in his dedication to our city."

He is survived by his wife of 36 years, Mary, his son, William C. Stankiewicz, II, (Jennifer), and two sisters, Robin Stevens (Robert) and Joyce DeCarlo (John), plus several loving nieces and nephews.

Friends are invited to attend an ecumenical celebration of Bill's life at 2 P.M., Tuesday, Feb. 7, at St. Peter's Catholic Church in LaGrange, with Father Timothy Gadziala officiating, followed by a reception in the Parish Hall.

A Funeral Mass of the Resurrection at St. Peter's will be planned for family and close friends, with

inurnment to be at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Hogansville Charitable Trust, 200 E. Main Street, Hogansville, Georgia 30230.

Claude A. McKibben and Sons Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Daily News

OUR VIEW: Stankiewicz had major impact on Hogansville

Published 11:30 am Saturday, January 28, 2023

By FROM STAFF REPORTS

As journalists, we get a lot of "coach speak." Anyone whose heard that term knows what it means, but for anyone who doesn't, just know it's the buttoned up, politically correct response to a question.

It's boring, and it's often without personality and without hearing how the interviewee really thinks.

That was rarely the case with former Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz.

Always respectful, Stankiewicz always made himself available to talk to the press. And he'd usually tell you exactly how he felt.

For two terms, Stankiewicz represented Hogansville well in the mayor's seat. He also previously served as city manager, including holding both positions for a while as the search for a city manager was conducted.

Stankiewicz passed away last week, and he's going to be missed by anyone who knew him. His impact on Hogansville was enormous, and his love for the city was evident any time he talked about new developments or events in town.

We miss him already.





Daily News

Hogansville breaks ground on new city hall

Published 10:30 am Wednesday, March 3, 2021
By Jenna Eady

The Hogansville City Council poses for a photo with City Manager Jonathan Lynn and Mayor Bill Stankiewicz at the ground breaking of the new city hall. --Jenna Oden

After years of anticipation, the City of Hogansville officially broke ground Monday on the city's new city hall.

The city was approved for a USDA loan of \$373,000, which has allowed for the PNC Bank building at 111 high street to be renovated. Mayor Bill Stankiewicz said when the city originally applied for the loan in May, but the loan didn't fit the city's request, and Hogansville had to reapply. The pandemic then delayed everything further.

Stankiewicz said major funding also came from the Hogansville Charitable Trust with money raised during the annual Hummingbird Festival.

"The trust paid for this building when it was bought," Stankiewicz said. "A developer, John Hardy Jones, paid to put a roof on this building, and he also contributed \$50,000 toward the renovation. We anticipate, and we really believe that we will complete this project purchase and the re-purposing of this building without costing taxpayers one dime. We are very proud of that."

Renovations to the Royal Theatre, which is where city hall is currently located, cannot begin until the city is completely moved out of the building. City Hall moved into the theater in 1984, but the building needs extensive repairs that will cost an estimated \$1.8 million.

With sledge hammers in hand, each city council member got to take a swing at a wall inside the old bank building.

Even a few residents joined in on the fun to take down the wall, signifying the beginning of the construction process.

During construction, all the bank teller stations at the bank will have to be removed.

The drive-thru window will remain as it will be used for citizens to pay utility bills or other city fees. Construction and renovations were expected to begin the first week of January at the latest, but delays with contractors caused the construction timeline to be pushed back.

According to the terms of the loan, the city is required to contribute \$23,500.

The loan will be repayable over a period not to exceed 40 years from the date of loan closing. Hogansville will have to make its first payment from the date of loan closing, and it'll be an interest-only payment.

The second payment will be a fully amortized installment of both principal and interest and will be due 13 months after loan closing. All payments after will be due for the life of the loan, with each being a fully amortized installment of both principal and interest.



Stankiewicz delivers state of city

Published 7:39 pm Friday, January 18, 2019

By Gabrielle Jansen

Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz speaks during Thursday night's state of the city address. --Gabrielle Jansen

Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz gave a state of the city address about last year's progress of the town Thursday night at the Hogansville Public Library. Stankiewicz emphasized to the audience the need to get involved with the city and speak to its leaders.

"Anything we talk about tonight didn't happen because of the mayor. It didn't happen because of the city manager. It happened because of everybody, because of the team effort, the staff, the council who provides the support," Stankiewicz said. "After all, every decision we make about how we spend our money is not by the city manager, not by the mayor, it's decided by the council. They're critically important, but our citizens are critically important in what goes on in the city today, and we urge you all to become involved."

Stankiewicz started the state of the city by talking about the city's financial situation. The city's total debt decreased in 2018 to \$10,461,006 from \$11,06,686.

Stankiewicz talked about economic development with 100 new jobs from Continental ContiTech in Hogansville, and 50 new jobs from Miliken and Company. Stankiewicz also mentioned new downtown businesses including Karvelas Pizza, Atlas Fitness and Hometown Quilt Shop.

Stankiewicz also said the solution to the city's debt and small population is growth. He mentioned the 634 platted new units and 372 planned units in Hogansville.

"The population today is virtually the same as it was in 1999 when I moved here," Stankiewicz said.

The city's new wastewater treatment plant is currently under construction and is scheduled to be complete in 2020.

Stankiewicz then talked about the PNC Bank building renovation, which is where city hall will move when it's completed. The Hogansville Charitable Trust, a local nonprofit, purchased the building and donated it to the city.

Stankiewicz said the city submitted the architectural plans to the state department of corrections, which will save money on costs. Stankiewicz said the city plans on moving in without spending any taxpayer money.

"We hope that everything will be completed and will be moved into the new city hall during this calendar year," Stankiewicz said. "The benefit of this plan is in almost every case, we utilize the existing structure. There's not a lot of little additional construction."

With city hall moving out of the Royal Theatre, the theater will be renovated as a community arts space. It will hold performances and have a screen for film showings.

"It will never be an 800-seat theatre [again]," Stankiewicz said. "At one time, this was the largest theatre between Atlanta and Columbus."

Stankiewicz said the theatre wouldn't work economically with 800 seats. Stankiewicz said the theater renovation is planned to be completed by October 2020.

Other projects the city started in 2018 included renovating Lake Jimmy Jackson, extending the Tower Trail and starting the process for Dependable Affordable, Sustainable Housing project.

The city was given a grant by the Georgia Historical Society to purchase and install a historical marker recognizing former postmaster Isaiah Lofton, who survived an assassination attempt.

The city council passed the downtown revitalization master plan, which has already begun. The city council also adopted a corridor plan for each of the gateways leading into Hogansville.

Stankiewicz said the city completed a Community Development Block Grant for sewage system improvements, and another grant-funded project is underway to complete water and sewer improvements.

“[CDBG] funds are so critical to small cities success and providing the infrastructure that we talked about earlier to allow for growth,” Stankiewicz said. “Without that infrastructure, growth won’t happen.”

Stankiewicz said the city was designated as one of 18 rural zones in Georgia and was given a tax credit.

Near the end of the address, Stankiewicz talked about AMC filming scenes of an episode of “Walking Dead” in Hogansville last year. Stankiewicz said the city will be featured in an episode that will be tentatively released on March 3 at 9 p.m.

“We have some pictures we took at the time that were embargoed for release until the show airs. At 10 p.m. after the show is over, those photos will be available,” Stankiewicz said. “It was a fun day in Hogansville. We had people come from all over the country literally to watch the filming.”

Stankiewicz ended the meeting asking the audience to make sure to talk to him.

“We encourage your enquiries. We encourage you to participate and ask you hold us to a high standard,” Stankiewicz said.

Also at the address, Stankiewicz:

-Recognized Pastor Terry Rainwater and God’s Bread Basket for 10 years of work in the city.

-The nonprofit has distributed about 95,000 pounds of food.

-Recognized Hogansville Elementary School student Thomas Griffin for getting accepted into the Duke University Talent Identification Program.



Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz, a retired U.S. Navy serviceman, attended the commissioning of the USS Little Rock LCS9. Stankiewicz was a Radarman on the USS Little Rock (CLG-4) in 1963. He served from 1962 to 1968. (Contributed)

Although it’s been almost 50 years since he served in the U.S. Navy, Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz attended the commissioning for the USS Little Rock LCS9, named after the ship he served on, in Buffalo, New York, on Dec. 16. Stankiewicz served in the U. S. Navy from 1962 to 1968 and was a Radarman on the USS Little Rock (CLG-4) in 1963.

“I served on the USS Little Rock, which was a guided missile cruiser in the ‘60s, and we have an association of sailors who served on that ship, and I’m the president of that association,” Stankiewicz said.

Ray Mabus, former Secretary of the U.S. Navy and one of Stankiewicz’s shipmates,

helped arrange commissioning and naming of the boat.

“We have about 1,000 members (in the association). One of our members and a shipmate of mine was a gentleman by the name of Ray Mabus, and Ray went on to become the governor of Mississippi and then Secretary of the Navy,” Stankiewicz said. “He was primarily responsible for having a new ship that was being built named Little Rock. He was also responsible for having the new ship commissioned alongside the old USS Little Rock, which is a museum ship in Buffalo.”

The commissioning was the first time in U.S. Naval history that a ship was commissioned next to its namesake. It was commissioned at Canalside Buffalo next to the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park.

“It was supposed to be this summer, but it got delayed because of the process of having sea trials and having the ship accepted by the Navy,” Stankiewicz said.

The Hogansville mayor spent the week of the commissioning celebrating with others. Approximately 9,000 people attended the commissioning.

“The ship was commissioned on Saturday morning in 20-degree weather and in snow. It was brutal, and it’s an outside ceremony,” Stankiewicz said. “But nonetheless it was exciting for all of us old guys who had served on the old ship. There were about 80 of us there. We had a great time.”

Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz was re-elected Tuesday night, beating out challenger Winston Herren 284 votes to 132 votes.

Stankiewicz said he ran for office in the first place to help Hogansville, and that there is much left to do now that he has been re-elected.

“Four years ago, I saw a need and ran for mayor and won. There’s a lot left undone that I want to get done and that myself and the council want to get done,” Stankiewicz said. “It’s not a one-man show, it’s always a team effort. I want to get some things finished that we’ve started.”

Stankiewicz said he intends to follow through with the plans for making a recreation center for Lake Jimmy Jackson and to continue a study with the Georgia Conservancy for developing a master plan for downtown.

“We’re excited about that prospect, we think a vibrant downtown is critical to growing the city,” he said.

Candidate Winston Herren said he accepted the loss, but that Hogansville needs improvement as a city.

“Hogansville is a mess. I don’t see it getting any better,” Herren said. “There doesn’t seem to be anybody that has a concern to help Hogansville.”

Herren said he enjoyed the campaign and the people he met along the way.

“I had a good time running, I met a lot of nice people in Hogansville,” he said. “Hogansville spoke, I accept it and time goes on. As we say, a lot of times man’s rejection is God’s protection.”

Daily News

Stankiewicz re-elected as Hogansville mayor

Published 11:48 pm Tuesday, November 7, 2017
By Gabrielle Jansen



Historic marker unveiled in Hogansville Saturday

Published 5:08 pm Monday, September 16, 2019

By Daniel Evans



The Georgia Historical Society and City of Hogansville dedicated a historic marker Saturday in honor of former postmaster Isaiah Lofton, who lived through an assassination attempt in 1897.

The marker was placed at the intersection of West Main Street and Boozer Street and Saturday's ceremony included speeches by the descendants of the Lofton family.

"It represents a time for us to commemorate and uncomfortable but historic event in the history of our city, and it's appropriate that we do that because if you don't remember your history, you are doomed to repeat it," said Hogansville Mayor Bill Stankiewicz.

Lofton, who was Hogansville's first black postmaster, was shot in the arm on Wednesday, Sept. 15, 1897, in an attempted assassination attempt. Dr. Tony Lowe, an associate professor at the University of Georgia, first presented Lofton's story to the Hogansville City Council in November 2017. According to Lowe's presentation from that meeting, Lofton had returned to the post office on the evening of Sept. 15, 1897, after a boy came by his house to ask if his family had received a package. On Lofton's way back home from the post office, three shots

were fired at him, and his assailants thought they had killed him.

Instead, he lived, and the shooting was covered in newspapers over the days ahead, with many referring to it as "The Hogansville Affair." An investigation of the shooting was left up to local authorities, but no one was ever prosecuted.

"I realized that I had a responsibility. I couldn't just sit on the story itself. I had to investigate and ask myself was there truth to the story? It started my journey in really examining the story. As I looked, the story became larger, larger and larger," said Lowe at Saturday's ceremony. "It had much broader meaning beyond Hogansville. It extended to the Capitol of Georgia, it extended into the halls of the governorship of Georgia and it extended to the presidency of the United States. The Hogansville story, our story, was part of the national story."

As the marker notes, Lofton's appointment to postmaster was very controversial as many citizens boycotted the post office. It's believed that the attempted assassination of Lofton — as well as other acts of violence against black officials — may have led to the creation of the National Afro-American Council in 1898, which officially became the NAACP.

"The story of postmaster Lofton is about his resolve, it's his resiliency, it's about his commitment, his belief in America and his willingness to die to exercise his right," Lowe said.

"I thank the Lofton family who entrusted me to tell this story."

David Getachew-Smith and Charlene Johnson Brown, both members of the Lofton family, spoke at Saturday's ceremony. Getachew-Smith said his grandmother's father, Benjamin Lofton, was Isaiah's Lofton's brother.

“I think this is a very important time,” he said. “We are on hallowed ground here today because of what happened 122 years ago and has continued to affect us even until today.”

Brown said she’s heard the story many times from her mother, who told it to her to remind her she could be anything she wanted to be in life.

“This is the Lofton family history, but this is Georgia history,” Brown said. “This is the history of our struggles, which continue even today, and we will continue to fight.”

Elyse Butler with the Georgia Historical Society said they have erected more than 200 markers around the state and Hogansville’s marker highlights one of the earliest events on the Georgia Civil Rights Trail.

Daily News

Isaiah Lofton descendants, researcher, recognize park ion as the first step in historic healing

Published 10:00 am Wednesday,
December 15, 2021
By Shiann Sivell



HOGANSVILLE – Charlene Johnson-Brown held the proclamation bearing her great uncle’s name and story close to her. She thanked Hogansville and Dr. Tony Lowe profusely for bringing her ancestor’s history to the light of modern times.

“I heard these stories growing up, but I never actually did anything with them,” she said during the proclamation ceremony at the newly constructed Lofton Park Saturday officially dedicated Sept. 15 as Isaiah Lofton Day.

The day, Johnson-Brown said, celebrates her ancestor’s survived an assassination attempt in 1897. It also celebrates his courage to continue his postmaster duties and continued efforts to advocate for the African American community.

Lofton, a Grantville native, served as Hogansville’s first black postmaster in the late 1890s.

One of Johnson-Brown’s great-grandparents and Lofton’s parents were siblings, making her a grand-niece of Lofton, she said.

On the evening of Sept. 15, 1897, Lofton became the target of a failed assassination attempt by unknown assailants after performing his duties in the post office. It was located in the old black business district, locally known as “Cross Town.”

Per the proclamation, Lofton was pressured into leaving his post following an economic boycott of his office and violence. However, he refused and his rebellion became a major event. It is widely memorialized across the state and nation in over 100 newspapers across the country.

Lowe, an associate professor at the University of Georgia, conducted personal research on Lofton after hearing his story from elders in the Hogansville community, he said.

His family lived on the plot of land which the City of Hogansville constructed 55 years ago.

“Our house caught fire and we moved, but it was amazing that when I found [Lofton’s] story, it brought me back where we lived,” Lowe said.

“That’s not something you can plan, it just happens.”

Hogansville built Lofton Park, located between W. Main St. and Boozer St. around the historic marker retaining Lofton's story. Georgia Historical Society constructed it with a Special Civil Rights Trail Historical Marker in 2019.

"The stories [the elders] left something with me that I was responsible for," Lowe said.

"This is a story of trauma, of his family and of the trauma inflicted on the community of Hogansville. Those elders held onto those stories and passed it on. The trauma was still there."

Lowe noted that Lofton's story was about triumph for him and the Hogansville community.

"This is about a city who's taken a small step forward and tries to address and recognize [that trauma] in a very concrete way," he said.

"Other communities have had similar traumas, but they don't make these kinds of efforts. It pushes us forward by putting light on it."

Lofton's attempted assassination is recognized by historical scholars as a contributing factor to the organization of the National Afro-American Council in 1898.

This council was the forerunner of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909, the nation's oldest civil rights organization.

Lofton went on to become an advocate for African American rights. This included voting and engaging in civic governance. The administration of the United States' 25th president, William McKinley supported this.

He eventually moved to Washington D.C. and had seven children. Johnson-Brown said, to her knowledge, none of Lofton's children had children of their own.

Johnson-Brown's mother and grandmother have already passed, but she said they would have been immensely proud of Lowe's work and the city of Hogansville for honoring Lofton.

"I'm hoping this empowers a lot of the youth here in Hogansville to see that we all matter," she said.

"We're a small town, but that's no limit other than the sky. I hope this is a living testament to me and David."

David Smith is a distant cousin of Johnson-Brown. The two were introduced through Lowe as he conducted his research. Smith had already begun researching his ties with Lofton.

"My interest in a lynching in Palmetto, Georgia peaked my curiosity because it involved a maternal relative," he said.

The incident was documented in a book, "What Virtue There Is in Fire" by Hogansville author Edwin Arnold. It referenced Lofton's assassination attempt.

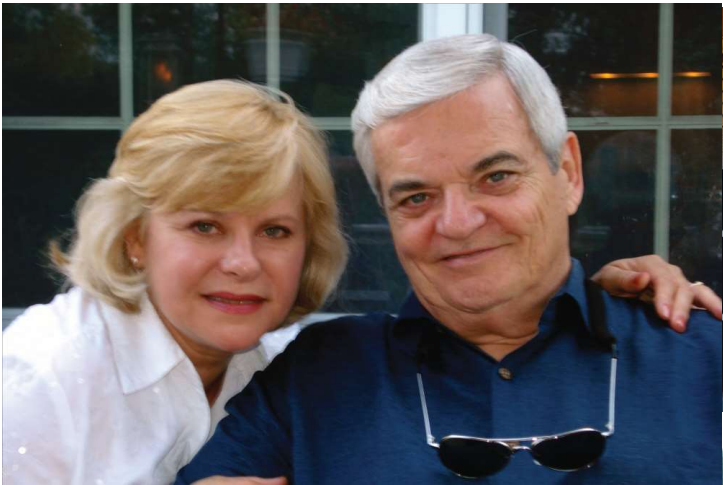
The name Lofton instantly sparked Smith's interest as it shared with his own great-grandfather's name, Benjamin Lofton. Through his own research, he discovered his grandfather and Lofton were brothers, and that Lowe was researching his family.

Johnson-Brown and Smith said their families are scattered throughout the country, and they were the only two direct descendants able to attend the proclamation ceremony.

"This is a monument that can stand in the city of Hogansville and continue all that storytelling from our ancestors," Johnson-Brown said.

"Our young people need to know their history, not just African American young people, but all young people. They need to know history and value history so that we don't go backward."









Compiled by Chalton Askew. I used pictures I took, a tribute pic from Rev. George Bailey, others from Facebook, and the Internet. Obituary from Claude A. McKibben's and Sons Funeral Home website, along with pictures included in the obituary. Remarks from some of Bill's friends. Eulogies came from the speakers. Congressman Drew Ferguson's remarks from YouTube. Lagrange Daily News articles about Bill's passing and accomplishments.



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