



Lt. Col. John V. Wilson Jr. (USAFR RET.)

SEP 9, 1926 - JAN 18, 2025



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L T. COL. JOHN V. WILSON, JR. (USAFR RET.)

John V. Wilson, Jr. retired U.S. Department of Justice official and former Indiana newspaperman, died on January 18, 2025, in Pinellas Park, FL. at the age of 98.

Wilson was born September 9, 1926, in Indianapolis, IN. He attended local schools and received an A.B. degree in journalism from Indiana University in 1948. He later attended Indiana University School of Law and George Washington University in Washington, DC.

Wilson had a 19-year newspaper career as a reporter and sportswriter, starting at the Logansport, IN Pharos-Tribune in 1948. Later that year, he joined the Indianapolis Times, rising to statehouse reporter, legislative bureau chief, political writer, and as Washington correspondent for the Times, the Evansville, IN Press, and the Birmingham AL Post-Herald in the Washington bureau of Scripps-Howard newspapers. During his newspaper career, Wilson received the American Political Science Association award for distinguished reporting of state and local government in 1956. During 1966-67, Wilson served as a freshman English instructor in the evening division of Montgomery College, Takoma Park, MD. In 1967, Wilson became a speech writer at the U.S. Department of Commerce. In 1969, Attorney General John N. Mitchell appointed him as assistant director of public affairs for the U.S. Department of Justice, where he specialized in civil rights enforcement matters. He served as department spokesman at the Wounded Knee, SD confrontation, the desegregation of Boston public schools, and the Kent State grand jury. He served under nine attorneys general and retired in 1986. He and Joy Hendrix, of Rosepine, LA were married in 1987 and moved to St. Petersburg Beach, FL. He later was selected as one of the first civilian investigative assistants for the St. Petersburg Police Department, serving on the auto theft squad. In 1993 they moved to the Bayou Club in Pinellas Park. Wilson served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. At the onset of the Korean conflict, he received a commission in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, served 27 years assigned to the Office of Special Investigations and to Air Force public affairs, and retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel, last serving as commander



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of the Air Reserve Information Squadron in Washington, D.C. Upon retirement, he was awarded the Air Force meritorious Service Medal. In 2006, Wilson wrote “Meridian Street,” an illustrated memoir of family history and account of his life and career in journalism, military, and government service.

He was a member of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity and a former officer of the Indianapolis Press Club.

Wilson is survived by his wife of 37 years, Joy Wilson; daughter, Jill Foster (Tom Luthman); son, Jeffrey Wilson (Pam); grandchildren, John Edwards (Elizabeth Golder), Amy Foster, Ryan Foster (Amanda), Evan Wilson, Ava Wilson and four great-grandchildren.

A Holy sacrifice of the Mass will be offered for the repose of his soul at 4:00 pm on Saturday, May 3, 2025 at St. Jude the Apostle Cathedral, 5815 5th Ave, North, St. Petersburg, FL 33710.

Military funeral services with honors and interment will be held at the Bay Pines National Cemetery, 10000 Bay Pines Blvd. St Petersburg, FL on Monday, May 5, 2025, at 1:30 pm.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to Moffitt Cancer Center.



Events

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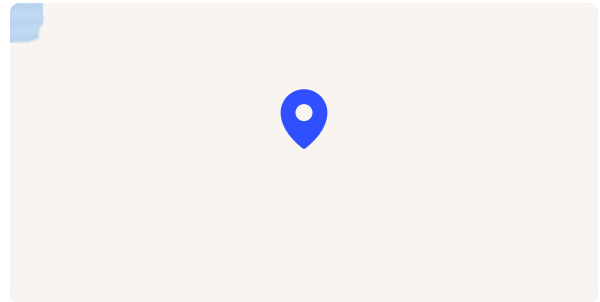
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Memorial Service

Saturday, May 3, 2025

4:00 PM ET

The Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle
FL

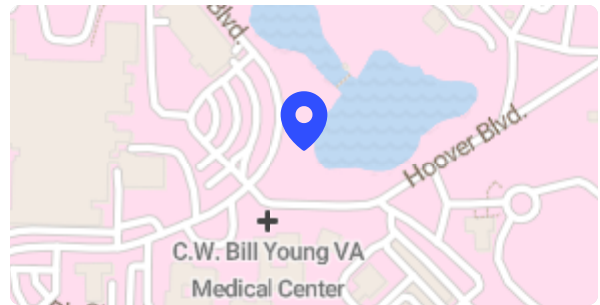


Burial

Monday, May 5, 2025

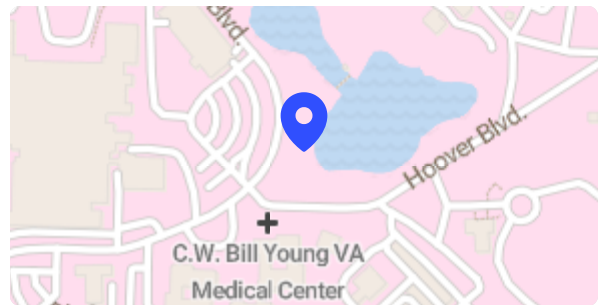
1:30 PM ET

Bay Pines National Cemetery
10000 Bay Pines Blvd, Bay Pines FL 33708



Cemetery Details

Bay Pines National Cemetery
10000 Bay Pines Blvd, Bay Pines FL 33708





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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