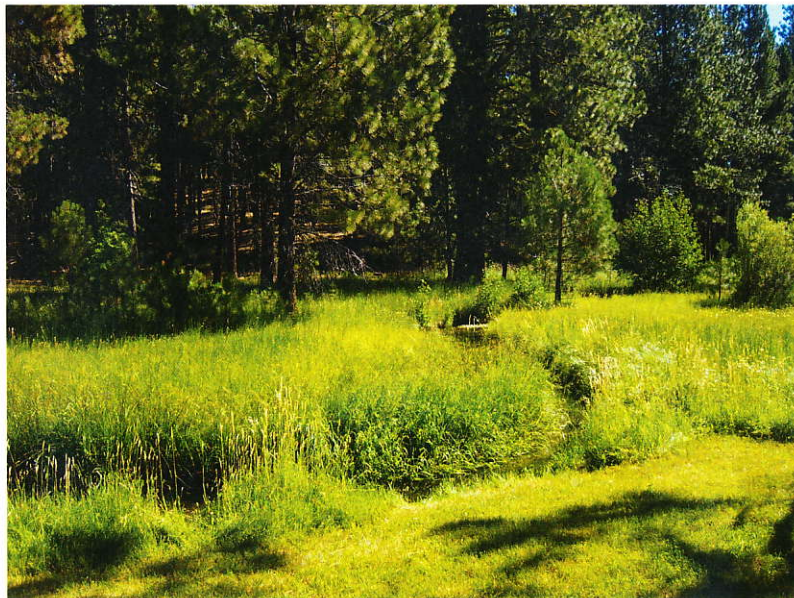




At Rest, Hat Creek, California



Bill Finnegan  
1941 – 2010





“And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count.  
It's the life in your years.”  
~ Abraham Lincoln ~

## **Bill Finnegan**

**(William John Patrick Finnegan)**

A resident of Walnut Creek, (formerly of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Rosa) age 69, Bill died December 21, 2010, after a seven year journey with the rare bone marrow disease Primary Amyloidosis.

Bill was born in San Francisco and proud to call himself a “native” San Franciscan. He was a practicing attorney in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties and a member of the California State Bar Association. He graduated from USF in 1963, earned his JD from the San Francisco Law School in 1974, and a Master's Degree (LLMT) in Taxation from McGeorge School of Law in 1984.

Bill was a long time board member of the St. Joseph's – St. Patrick's Seminary Alumni Association where he enjoyed the camaraderie of his fellow seminarians.

### **A Man Of Service And Nature**

He was a past president and treasurer of the St. Joan of Arc Conference of St. Vincent de Paul in the San Ramon Valley where he worked with his fellow St. Vincentians to serve and support the needy throughout the years. Bill's service included ministering to individuals and families in need, annual food drives, annual clothing drives, volunteering in soup kitchens and food banks.

A lover of nature and the great outdoors Bill was an avid hiker and camper. He was a member of the East Bay Regional Parks District – Parks Partners for ten years where he served as a volunteer spending weekends building new hiking trails and renovating existing trails. His work also included planting acorns each year on various East Bay hills and subsequent nurturing of the seedlings until they were well established. His favorite hikes included the wildflower blooms each spring and the sightings of hawks, deer and other wildlife. He loved his camping trips and was happiest doing anything in nature.



An avid cyclist with a custom bike Bill liked to ride from Walnut Creek to Sunol and back until his disease prevented it. In keeping with his dedication to service to others Bill used his love of cycling to participate in the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team 'n Training Century Ride cycling 109 miles to raise funds for the LLS. Little did he know at that time that he would develop the rarest disease on the LLS list of blood and marrow diseases. In addition to his century ride he also raised funds for LLS by participating in their "Man of the Year" events.

After his diagnosis and treatment of Primary Amyloidosis in 2003 Bill became an active participant in the Northern California Amyloidosis Support Group founded by his wife. As a member of the group he shared his personal story, advised new patients and caregivers, and offered support to all in need.

### **A Family Man**

Bill adored his children, Sean and Colleen Finnegan, bragging about their accomplishments from their first ballet recital and first soccer game to graduations from college and medical school. He continued to boast about their adult careers, one as writer and videographer and the other as an HIV physician, to anyone who would listen. He cherished the time he spent with them and enjoyed their visits and phone calls each week. The birth of his twin granddaughters, Lucy and Lyra Johnson, five years ago filled him with joy. Dena's children were fortunate to have Bill as a part of their life for so many years, trying his patience and challenging his authority, yet benefitting from his wisdom and strong values.

### **Wine Enthusiast:**

Thomas Jefferson wrote:

"By making this wine vine known to the public, I have rendered my country as great a service as if I had enabled it to pay back the national debt."

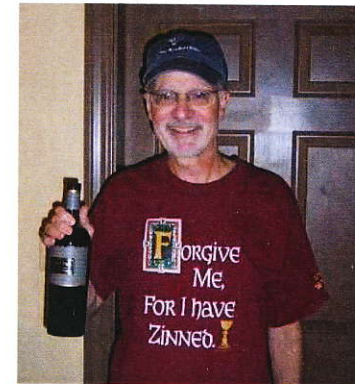
Benjamin Franklin wrote:

"Wine makes daily living easier, less hurried, with fewer tensions and more tolerance."

Bill Finnegan said:

"Let's open a bottle of wine."

A very big wine enthusiast, Bill truly enjoyed sharing his love of wine with friends and family. A trip to the wine country for tasting was always an eagerly anticipated event and sharing good wine and good food with family and friends one of his favorite things to do.



Bill is survived by his wife and best friend of 26 years, Dena Heath and his children, Colleen Finnegan, MD (Josh Johnson, MD); his twin granddaughters, Lucy and Lyra Johnson, and his son, Sean Finnegan, all of Portland, OR. He also leaves behind his brother, Rev. Robert Finnegan of San Mateo, CA. Dena's children, Eugene Wheeler (Lisa) of Rocklin, CA, Nathan Wheeler (Olga), of Burbank, CA, and grandchildren, Cole Wheeler, Gabriella Wheeler, Evelyn Wheeler, Amy Sieracki, and Lucas, Zachary and Nicholas Giltner. He will be greatly missed by all who loved him.

The family would like to thank the fine BMT staff at Stanford Hospital who worked so hard to take him through high dose chemotherapy and a difficult autologous stem cell transplant in 2003, all of the wonderful staff at Kaiser Hospital in Walnut Creek who cared for him often and so well, the Kaiser Home Health nurses who cared for him for three years, the dedicated staff at DaVita Dialysis clinic in Walnut Creek, and the St. Vincentians who ministered to him weekly in his last year.



In lieu of flowers the family prefers donations in Bill's honor to his favorite charities:

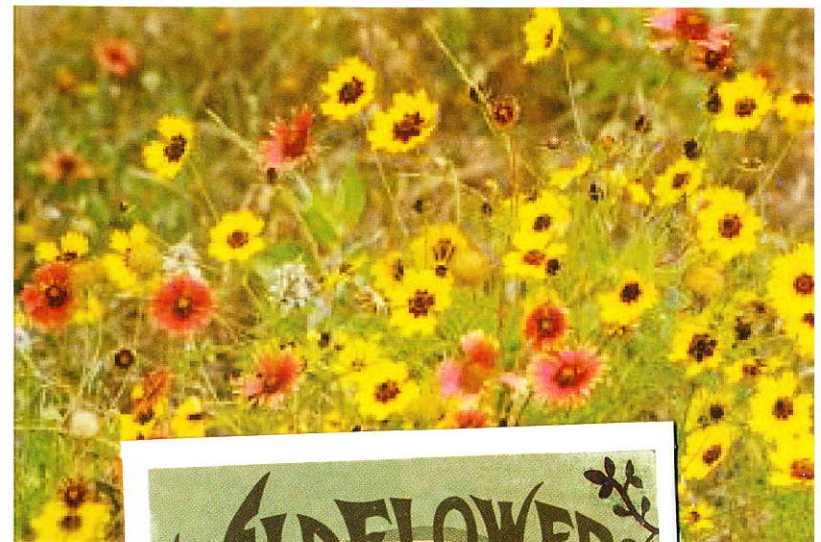
Amyloidosis Foundation, Inc.  
7151 N. Main St. Suite 2  
Clarkston, MI 48346  
[www.amyloidosis.org](http://www.amyloidosis.org)

WILDCOAST  
925 Seacoast  
Imperial Beach, CA 91932  
[www.WILDCOAST.org](http://www.WILDCOAST.org)

**Primary Amyloidosis:**

Primary Amyloidosis is a plasma cell disorder which originates in the bone marrow and is usually treated with chemotherapy though it is not a cancer. It is the most common type of amyloidosis in the United States, with estimates of up to 2000 cases diagnosed each year. The deposits in this type of the disease are made up of immunoglobulin light chain proteins which may be deposited in any bodily tissues or organs. The disease results when enough amyloid protein builds up in one or more organs to cause the organ(s) to malfunction. The heart, kidneys, nervous system and gastrointestinal tract are most often affected. Normally, bone marrow makes protective antibodies, which are proteins that protect against infection and disease. After they have served their function, these antibodies are broken down and recycled in the body. With amyloidosis, cells in the bone marrow produce antibodies that cannot be broken down. These antibodies then begin to build up in the bloodstream. Ultimately, they leave the bloodstream and can deposit in the tissues or organs as amyloids.

*On behalf of our family we extend our heartfelt thanks for your kindness, prayers, support, healing thoughts and energy, and for your presence here. We are blessed by your love.*



**"Don't Judge Each Day By The Harvest You Reap  
But By The Seeds You Plant."  
~ Robert Louis Stevenson ~**