



WILLIAM “WILDCAT” MORRIS (Class of 1945)

Bill Morris' primary interest at LVHS was football. “If I had been deprived of football, I would not have finished high school, college, or gone to law school”, Morris once said. LVHS was the 1944 Nevada State Championship team was undefeated, un-scored upon, never tied, and no team ever made two consecutive first downs against it. Morris was named the game's MVP.

After graduating from LVHS, Bill went to University of Nevada, Reno on a football scholarship. He quickly gained the nickname “Las Vegas Wildcat”, which was eventually shortened to “Wildcat”, because he incessantly bragged about his LVHS team's exploits. His nickname stuck for the rest of his life.

Morris was born in Enid, Oklahoma in 1927 and passed away in July, 1998. He resided in Clark County for 59 years and left an indelible mark on the community. Bill “Wildcat” Morris was memorialized by the Nevada State Senate on May 12, 1999.

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/70th/bills/SCR/SCR45.html>

Wildcat Morris was best known as one of UNLV's top boosters, and was a founding member and long-time President of the school's University Rebels Club. He was inducted into both the Nevada-Reno and UNLV Halls of Fame. His work on the UNLV Booster's Club was instrumental in acquiring funding, lobbying lawmakers, and recruiting students, teachers, coaches, and administrators for UNLV programs. He also served on the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada.

After graduating with a degree in Physical Education and serving in the Korean War, Wildcat Morris worked for Senator Pat McCarran and Senator Alan Bible in Washington D.C.

During this time he also earned a law degree from American University. American University was where he also met his future wife, Vivienne Mae Potter. Bill and Vivienne had four children and nine grandchildren.

Morris practiced law in Southern Nevada for more than 40 years. During that period, he demonstrated his diverse abilities as a Municipal Judge and a Special Deputy Attorney General.

Unselfishly giving of himself and his time, Bill endeared himself to many as a noteworthy civic leader by establishing various athletic organizations, serving as President of several such organizations, and raising money for scholarships and numerous local charities in Las Vegas.

He served on the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority Board of Directors. He devoted many of his efforts toward the building of Sam Boyd Stadium, the Thomas & Mack Center, and the Paul McDermott Physical Education Complex.

Bill was part owner of the Holiday Casino on the Las Vegas Strip, which was later sold to Harrah's. He then purchased the Landmark Hotel-Casino across the street from the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Among the multiple honors awarded to Morris were the Distinguished Nevadan at the 1978 graduation ceremonies at UNLV, and the Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award from the National Council of Christians and Jews in 1983. He also received the Glen "Jake" Lawlor Award for outstanding support of athletics at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Morris started the annual "Las Vegas High School Alumni Party" in his backyard in 1978. It continued there until it got too large, so then it was moved to the Landmark Hotel until it closed, and was then held at various locations, including the LV Golf Club, the Riviera, and the California Club in 1998, a month before he died.

These biographies are based on research and could contain discrepancies.

If there are any excerpts you feel should be changed please feel free to contact me at Dave@lvhsaa.com

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