



William James Howard

June 7, 1947 - September 13, 2025

William James "Will" Howard, of Easton, MD, went to be with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Saturday, September 13th.

A true renaissance man, Will lived life to the fullest. Born June 7, 1947 in Easton, MD, son of the late Charles and Cecile Howard. His brother Charles Patrick Howard the 2nd predeceased him.

Will graduated from Country School, Saints Peter & Paul High School, and University of Maryland, College Park. While attending university Will worked part time as a reporter for the Associated Press. In 1969 he was the only journalist covering the occupation of the Skinner Building by Students for a Democratic Society; the story was covered worldwide. After college he worked as a film photographer for WBAL-TV, police reporter, and columnist for the Baltimore News American. He was honored to be a guest narrator for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra on 2 occasions.

In the 1980's and '90's, Will opened The Chambers, Barrister's Retreat, Cecile's, and Legal Spirits restaurants in Easton. He operated family-owned Chesapeake Bowling Lanes, now operated by his son James Howard in its 67th year. Will started Visitors TV Network, one of the largest hotel video networks of its time. Will, Mayor Murphy, and other partners have been credited with saving Easton's historic Avalon theater by purchasing the

building in 1986. Will hosted and produced 40 video programs for Avalon Foundation's MCTV – they can still be viewed online at ThatManAboutTown.com.

Will was elected Judge of Talbot County Orphans' Court in 2010 serving for 10 years. He was a founding director of CASA of Talbot County and the Talbot Paramedic Foundation; president of Talbot Hospice; chairman of Mid-Atlantic Maritime Festival, Easton Air Shows, George Murphy Community Pool, Talbot Heart Association, Talbot County Cancer Society; President's Circle Waterfowl Festival, Co-founder of Operation Christmas Spirit, Maryland's Most Beautiful Person Talbot County 1995, Business Man of the Year 1995. He was on the board of directors for Comtex News Network, Hadron, Talbot Humane, Habitat for Humanity, Talbot Historical Society, and Chase Bank. Will was the recipient of 8 commendations from 6 Maryland Governors. He was nominated for a Pulitzer in 1997 for a seven-part Star Democrat series about inadequate housing in Talbot County. He loved to pilot his Cessna "Blue Bird" and hot air balloon "Discovery." In 1976 he married the love of his life, Dorothy Wright of Denton MD. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, daughters Healy Ikonomou, Katherine Howard, Tracy Howard, son James Howard and his grandchildren Stella & Loukas Ikonomou. In lieu of flowers please donate any memorial contributions to the Talbot Paramedic Foundation. www.talbotparamedic.org

A visitation will be held at Fellows, Helfenbein, and Newnam Funeral Home in Easton, MD on September 23rd, 2025 from 4 PM to 6 PM.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

SEP **23**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home
200 S. Harrison Street
EASTON
EASTON, MD 21601

Tribute Wall

JS

“ June BRINGMAN Shortall lit a candle in
memory of William James Howard



June BRINGMAN Shortall - October 18, 2025 at 05:18 AM

“ I was lucky enough to grow up alongside Will Howard in Easton, and from those early days we remained friends throughout our lives. Will was always an inspiration to me—not just for the long list of things he accomplished, but for the way he carried himself, with boundless energy, humor, and a generosity of spirit that never dimmed. Every time I came back to town and spent time with Will and his family, I left uplifted by his stories and by the countless ways he poured himself into this community.

His fingerprints are still everywhere in Easton—in the restaurants he founded, in the bowling lanes his family sustained, and in the Avalon Theatre, which he helped rescue from decline. Truly, without Will’s personal commitment, creativity, and passion, the Avalon might never have become the jewel it is today—a landmark for the arts and a centerpiece of the town’s heritage. It has always puzzled me that a plaque has never been placed in his honor, because his role in preserving that building was singular.

But Will was never one to seek credit. For him, public service wasn’t a sideline—it was a way of life. From the judge’s bench in Talbot County Orphans’ Court to the many boards, charities, and foundations he nurtured, he gave his leadership and his heart. Hospice care, CASA, the Talbot Paramedic Foundation, Operation Christmas Spirit, the Heart Association, cancer support, humane work, historic preservation—the list is as broad as it is deep. His energy was contagious, his leadership inspiring. He was recognized by many governors, even nominated for a Pulitzer, yet he wore all of it lightly, always turning the focus back to his work and the people it served.

For all his accomplishments, Will was also a man who loved adventure and joy. He piloted his own Cessna, floated in hot air balloons, and even narrated symphonies. He seemed unafraid of trying anything new, of learning, of leading, of giving. And at the center of it all was his beloved Dorothy and their family—the love and pride of his life. His children and grandchildren carry forward his

light, just as the community carries forward his vision.

Will leaves us with so much: a town enriched by his vision, a family strengthened by his devotion, and friends like me who were inspired by his humor, kindness, and faith. His life is a reminder that service and joy can go hand in hand, and that one life, lived fully, can change a community forever.

C. T. Lancit - September 25, 2025 at 03:45 PM

NJ

“*I first met Will when he worked as a reporter for the News American newspaper in Baltimore - six decades ago. At that time, I worked in the Public Information Division of the Baltimore City police department. Right away I realized Will was a professional whose word meant something -- rare in that profession. We developed a close personal (familial) relationship that lasted until his passing. Many weekends and holidays were spent at the Howard home by me and my family. I was honored by Will and Dorothy to be named Katie's Godfather. In life you are blessed to meet people that make you a better person. Will and Dorothy are those people. His charity to others less fortunate and boundless energy for projects he involved himself in are a testament to a life truly well lived. I have never met a finer person. Go with God my friend.*

Bryn Joyce

NANCY D. JOYCE - September 21, 2025 at 12:30 PM

TM

“ Will is the oldest friend I have - 76 years. We grew up on Harrison Street as young next door neighbors and have spent a life of deep friendship, wild stories, fun pranks, school and girlfriend memories and much more. Life in a small town of Easton was the best life as young boys. Will was always there for me and I for him with advice, knowledge and love about almost everything that two close friends could encounter throughout life. It saddens me deeply that Will has passed. He's irreplaceable! My love and sympathies go out to Dorothy, Healy, Katey, Tracy, and Jamie - you had the best Dad! Tim McCabe

Tim McCabe - September 21, 2025 at 10:35 AM

RB

“ Roseann And Bob lit a candle in memory of William James Howard



Roseann and Bob - September 21, 2025 at 09:22 AM

RO

Sending our sincere sympathy and love to Dorothy and her family. Will gave us the gift of friendship. It has been an honor to know him. --- Roseann and Bob

Roseann - September 21, 2025 at 09:25 AM

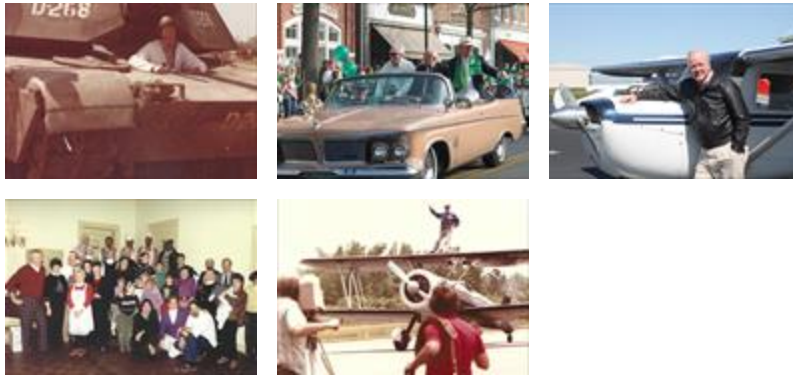
MM

“ Will was very generous and kind lending our family and specifically our son Sean Moran his airplane when Sean was training to get all of his flying credentials. Sean is now flying for United Airlines. Thank you Will and family for your incredible generosity and support! It takes a village!
In addition we also can't thank you enough for keeping the Easton bowling alley going all these many years. Our family had always enjoyed it and now our grandkids are thoroughly enjoying it! Easton wouldn't be the same without the bowling alley. Meg and Tim Moran

Meg Moran - September 20, 2025 at 12:18 PM

TH

“ 7 files added to the album Will Howard



Tracy Howard - September 19, 2025 at 10:47 AM

CW

“ Connie & Don Webster lit a candle in memory of William James Howard



Connie & Don Webster - September 18, 2025 at 05:25 PM

PF

“ Peg & Matthew Fitzgerald lit a candle in memory of William James Howard



Peg & Matthew Fitzgerald - September 18, 2025 at 11:43 AM

LM

“ Lynn McGinnis lit a candle in memory of William James Howard



Lynn McGinnis - September 17, 2025 at 02:31 PM

PL

“ Will was a wonderful person. He added dignity and elegance with his many projects for the Town of Easton. All of which enhanced our culture. Without Will at the helm of saving the Avalon we would have lost one of our greatest treasures. His roots run deep and true and his legacy will live on. It is with the greatest admiration for a gentle, good man I offer my deepest sympathy to his family and friends.

Pat Reddish Lawton - September 17, 2025 at 10:22 AM

SH

“ Susie H. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William James Howard.

Susie H. - September 17, 2025 at 07:57 AM

SG

“ *Sally Gay lit a candle in memory of William James Howard*



Sally Gay - September 17, 2025 at 07:52 AM

SH

“ *Dorothy and I worked together at the Oxford Lab (NOAA) for 30 years. I have never known a more compassionate, kind and caring individual. In addition, my husband worked with Will during his teen years at the old Cherry's Department Store. They were such a wonderful couple. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Dorothy and her family.*

Charles and Susie Hines

Susie Hines - September 17, 2025 at 07:52 AM

DP

“ *Doug Pierson lit a candle in memory of William James Howard*



Doug Pierson - September 17, 2025 at 07:40 AM

PF

“ If you have ever attended an event at the Avalon Theatre, attended the MidAtlantic Festival or the Air Show, or so many other things in our community - or have called for a paramedic - you have benefited from some of the many things on which Will worked. He retired from the Orphans' Court as its Chief Judge after a decade of service there. Will also had a sense of humor. I was working the night shift at WEMD years ago. I received a phone call from someone from the FCC telling me that our signal had drifted from its assigned area and that unless it was corrected immediately, they would shut us down. I woke up the morning DJ who was also the station engineer, who had to come in, only to discover there was nothing wrong with our signal. You can guess who the FCC caller really was. Years later, however, when I first ran for House of Delegates, Will discovered that I had never asked for donations for local races and knew nothing about political fund raising. Naturally he put on a fund raiser at his house. A great guy - I will miss him. Prayers for Dorothy and the family.



Phil Foster - September 17, 2025 at 01:40 AM

TF

“ The Yanni Ikonomou Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William James Howard.

The Yanni Ikonomou Family - September 16, 2025 at 12:26 PM



“ *The Yanni Ikonomou Family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of William James Howard.*



The Yanni Ikonomou Family - September 16, 2025 at 12:26 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of William James Howard.*



September 16, 2025 at 06:30 AM