



## W. Briggs Goddard

April 3, 1956 - March 14, 2021

William Briggs Goddard (April 3, 1956—March 14, 2021)

William Briggs Goddard died unexpectedly in his sleep at home in Tallahassee, Florida on March 14. He was 64, just three weeks shy of his birthday.

His many friends and co-workers express a shared sentiment, that “Briggs was a calm, gentle soul with a quirky sense of humor”. His button collection was emblematic of his unique sense of humor. He wore a different button every day with sayings, such as, “I can tell people are judgmental just by looking at them” or “Infinity.... will it ever end?”

Born April 3, 1956, in Russellville, Kentucky, Briggs was the youngest of three children of Russell and Jean Goddard. After his older siblings left home for college and careers, Briggs moved with his parents to Bowling Green, Kentucky, about 30 miles away. Briggs, who then was about 12, finished public school there, graduating from Warren County Central High School in 1974.

He joined the Air Force in 1975, serving first at Nellis AFB near Las Vegas, later at Homestead ARB in southern Florida, and finally in the Philippines at Clark Air Base near Manilla. After his discharge, Briggs made a cross-country

trip on his motorcycle to Tallahassee, where his sister was then living.

Briggs enrolled in Florida State University, earning a degree in media production. In the first years of his career, Briggs worked for WFSU-TV in Tallahassee for today's FLORIDA Channel. During legislative sessions, he operated cameras for public television's extensive stream of live coverage of public affairs.

He also crewed on WFSU's long-running "Florida Crossroads," an award-winning, documentary series that looks at people, places, and events shaping Florida.

After leaving WFSU, Briggs plunged into his freelance career. Much of his work involved crew-ing on live coverage of sports events, often of Florida State University games. He also crewed on numerous NFL games.

Briggs worked frequently on news crews covering national and regional political affairs, inter-views, and other news events. His work often involved news documentaries and special events. One such event was the 50th anniversary in 1994 of the D-Day invasion of Europe by Allied troops. This event had personal significance for him: his father, Russell Goddard, landed on Utah Beach during the second hour of the invasion on D-Day, June 6, 1944. His experience of the solemn anniversary ceremony at Normandy strongly bonded father and son. On another major assignment, Briggs accompanied Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to Somalia in August 2009 to document the humanitarian plight of refugees.

Briggs is survived by his sister, Jana Goddard (Wes Todd) of Thomaston, Maine, their children, Wiley and Chris Todd, and their grandson, William Todd; and by his older brother, Ken Green (Ellen) of St. Paul, Minnesota, and their children, Nora and Jesse, and grandson Max Rahe.

Briggs enjoyed being with friends, family, his cats, sharing music and movie trivia, attending live concerts, cruising on his motorcycle, and relaxing in his pool. His favorite song was Leonard Skynyrd's "Free Bird". Briggs, we hope you are now a free bird.

A Memorial Service for Briggs, with Full Military Honors, will be held on Friday, April 9, 2020 at 2:00 PM at the Tallahassee National Cemetery.

This service will be livestreamed with the links provided on this tribute page.

Gifts in Briggs' memory may be made to Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary at <http://www.goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org/donate.html>

The family would enjoy reading comments you leave about Briggs on this tribute page, so please feel free to share your memories.

The family is being assisted by James Sircy and Jackie Fulford at Young Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory, Tallahassee, FL.

850.610.4444 [YoungFulford.com](http://YoungFulford.com)

# Previous Events

## Full Military Honors Service

APR 9. 2:00 PM (ET)

Tallahassee National Cemetary  
5015 Apalachee Parkway  
Tallahassee, FL 32311

# Tribute Wall



“ *Young Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of W. Briggs Goddard*



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**Young ~ Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory** - April 06, 2021 at 01:22 PM



“ *Young Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory created a Webcast in memory of W. Briggs Goddard*



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**Young ~ Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory** - April 06, 2021 at 01:19 PM



“ *W. Briggs Goddard*

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October 22, 2023 at 10:27 PM



“ *W. Briggs Goddard*

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October 09, 2023 at 11:25 AM



“ *W. Briggs Goddard*

September 22, 2022 at 01:34 PM



“ *Thanks to everyone who left a memory here or shared a memory with us in Tallahassee. Briggs was my younger brother, and while we kept in touch regularly, I did not know him that well as a grown man because we lived so far from one another. These memories from his friends, neighbors, and colleagues are so appreciated—I have come to know my brother so much better because of what you have all shared. We have all lost a wonderful man.*  
—Ken Green

Ken Green - April 28, 2021 at 08:14 PM



“ *I was so surprised and sad to hear about Briggs. We grew up together one block apart in Briggs Addition until he moved after the seventh grade and his death brought back so many great memories. Eating peaches from the tree in his yard, playing basketball, on his goal, listening to his dad's corny jokes (that is where his sense of humor came from), walking to elementary school with his German Shepherd Caesar. We hung out all the time with the neighborhood kids, spent the night at each other's house, and went to church and Cub Scouts together. After he moved and we got older we lost contact, but when he got out of the military and moved to Florida he began coming by my parents' house every Christmas and he always attended our high school reunions. It has been wonderful to read all of these tributes and learn that my old childhood friend remained the same fun-loving free bird. Jana and Kenny, please know that all of us in Kentucky are thinking of you guys.*

*Steve Gilliam*

Steve Gilliam - April 17, 2021 at 08:05 AM

SH

“ I got to know Briggs through work at WFSU and Florida Public Broadcasting in the '80s and '90s, and was so surprised and sorry to hear of his sudden passing. He was one of the nicest guys -and after all these years would find me with a phone call once or twice a year, if our paths hadn't crossed recently in town. He will be missed. Gone too soon.

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**Susanne Hunt** - April 09, 2021 at 05:40 PM

CC

“ I had known Briggs for over 30 years from the beginning of his cameraman career when he worked with George, John, Mike, Corky, Terry, Larry and all of the crew.

*I remember when I was showing him homes to buy. When he saw the pool home on Watts drive, he said - this is IT! Because I am going to spend my summers in that pool. And I believe that is exactly what he did!*

*Will miss him and his daily buttons. He must have a thousand of them...*

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**Cindy Cooper** - April 09, 2021 at 01:42 PM

RO

“ As a still sports photographer, Briggs and I regularly crossed paths working various events. Once formally introduced, we routinely got together for lunch as well as occasionally traveling to out of town concerts. Our last show together was the Rolling Stones in Jacksonville.

*I looked forward to seeing the button du jour every time we got together. In addition to musical tastes, we shared an appreciation for comedian Steven Wright whose sense of humor seemed to parallel Briggs' taste in buttons. "Hey Steven, how do you like your new sky light? I love it, but the upstairs neighbors are sure mad." Our lunches always made the day better. Shared lunchtime stories included some of his Philippines Air Force experiences as well as reconnecting with long time Kentucky friends.*

*Briggs was a generous and kind soul. He made it clear that his home was available if i wanted to stop by for a swim. I'll miss my friend. My condolences to his family. I can assure his siblings that Briggs was thinking of you and delighted in sharing Tallahassee's weather with you during the long winter months in Minnesota and Maine. RIP.*

*Ross Obley*

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**Ross Obley** - April 09, 2021 at 12:46 PM

CC

“ I met Briggs while working as the receptionist at Sachs Media when he was one of our freelance videographers. He would always take time to stop and talk with me and we began to meet with different friends at music events around town. I was amused by his quirky buttons that he wore. Through the years I always loved seeing him because of his sweet spirit and interesting, funny stories. We kept in touch by text or sometimes lengthy phone calls filled with laughter. Before Covid hit I went over to his house fairly often to hang out with him and swim in his lovely pool. I treasure our friendship and I will miss him dearly. He was one of the kindest men I have ever met! I was shocked and saddened to hear of his death and I send all my love and condolences to his family. ~ Connie Copeland

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**Connie Copeland** - April 09, 2021 at 10:55 AM

AM

“ Even though I am a 1st cousin of Briggs, because of our age difference I really didn't get to know the “adult” Briggs. I am thankful-but sad-to find out more about him through his friends who were with him through his life. So thankful he had so many loving friends and truly regret that I missed knowing this special cousin. 🥹🌸❤️

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**Ann Goddard Miller** - April 09, 2021 at 08:06 AM

CH

I did not know Briggs personally but I was friends and in class with Jana! From reading about Briggs he was a great one to know and I am sure he will be missed by many! Prayers for all! Carol Holman Hendrick

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**Carol Holan Hendrick** - April 09, 2021 at 09:12 AM

MG

“Free Bird” is one of favorites along with all of Skynards songs. RIP Briggs.

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**Mike Goddard** - April 08, 2021 at 09:51 PM

LO

“ There are few people you meet in this life who can call a true friend. Briggs was one of them. In fact, he was my best friend. For 20 years or more, I have known him to be a kind, gentle and thoughtful soul with the best intentions always in mind. He always remembered a birthday and he always had a way of making one laugh with his buttons or his wickedly good sense of humor. He was always eager to share his clever observations and funny texts, maybe a Steven Wright quote, or some hilarious YouTube video. As a true friend, he always made the effort to stay in touch. And he always did, even when I failed to respond. Briggs did not really drink much, but when he had a beer, he often drank some pretty suspectly bad beer, but they always had a quirky cool name or bottle, which he somehow thought made them taste better. He was a quirky goof ball in every sense of the word, but oh, what a loveable goof ball. He was always there and offer help to a friend in need, especially when life threw you curves. As his many friends will attest, we never had to wonder what was going on when it came to Fridays. He was the social director, and knew what live band was playing where, and a good place where friends could meet. When confronted with a sea of humanity at some crowded venue, it was Briggs I was calling on my phone, to have a friend to find and hang with. True to his character, he always answered. And always there with a smile and ready to have a good time. The Blues Club, the Moon, Food Truck Thursday, Midtown, Downtown Get down or Cascades Park will never be quite the same without his presence. We shared many common interests, from music, to hot tubs, to society views, to FSU football and well beyond. Not sure if he or I disliked Donald Trump more, but we sure had an avenue to vent with each other. Somehow, I just thought he would always be there, because he always was. Recently he was cracking me up on the phone quoting a few of his famous buttons. For some reason that day, I wrote them down on the back of an envelope. Thank goodness I did, and now maybe know why...  
The world according to Briggs.....;  
“I would kill for a noble peace prize”.  
“Smoking pot can lead to hmmm.....I forgot....”

*"You say potato, I say vodka"*

*"What's another word for thesaurus? "*

*"Trust me you can dance - Vodka"*

*"My boss told me to have a good day – so I went home"*

*To say I will miss him, does no justice and almost rings hollow. A soul as good as his, simply can't be replaced. But we will never forget and there will never be another like him. Miss you brother, and hope you are feeling the wind on your face on your motorcycle, and your ears are forever full of music.*

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**Larry Olney** - April 08, 2021 at 08:53 PM

KD

“ Gonna miss you old friend!



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**Kevin Deyo** - April 08, 2021 at 12:11 PM

LS

“ I met Briggs in the 80's in Tallahassee through a group of artist friends. At that time I lived alone and Hurricane Kate was barreling down on Tallahassee. Briggs offered shelter at his house and we had a grand time -listening to music, playing games, and sharing stories. Over the years, our paths would cross through different groups of friends, and I loved hearing about his adventures, seeing his latest quirky button, and enjoying that great grin! He was a kind and joyful soul and I will miss his positive spirit. God speed Briggs and my deepest condolences to his family. He was one of the good guys!

*Fondly, Linda Schrader*

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**Linda B Schrader** - April 08, 2021 at 11:36 AM

LR

“ A great reunion of friends took place in 2014 (see photo). One night my girlfriend and I went to Backwoods Bistro to listen to some music.. We went right up front near the band when I spotted Briggs and another good friend George Small sitting together at a table up front near the band. I was delighted to see these 2 dear friends! They knew each other because they were in the same profession as videographers.

I met Briggs back in the late 80's as I was hiring camera operators for an educational project we were developing at the FAMU/FSU College of Engineering here in Tallahassee. Briggs was recommended to me by another one of my employees, Donna Burdick, who knew Briggs through school. Briggs brought his humor, presence, and fun-loving personality to our project and crew and we all became fast friends. A bunch of us would go to concerts, festivals, and NO Jazz Fest over the years. We were like a pod of dolphins, all swimming together and having fun!

Briggs, you never missed calling or sending a card to me on my birthday....I miss you, my friend.



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Lydia D Riedell - April 08, 2021 at 08:35 AM

RM

“ Thank you Briggs for the great, funny, and sweet memories. Even if time passed we always picked up where we left off. Loved your sweet smile and kind heart. Your pin collection should go in a museum! You made an impact everywhere you went. Your friendship will be missed by many. God's speed my friend.

*Robin Munroe*

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**Robin Munroe** - April 07, 2021 at 11:27 AM

PA

“ Bradfordville Blues Club memories of fun times over the years with Briggs,  
Amen, Briggs, Amen

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**Peggy Adair** - April 07, 2021 at 10:10 AM

PA

“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



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**Peggy Adair** - April 07, 2021 at 10:09 AM

LF

“ So very sorry to hear about Briggs. He was a longtime friend. I had not seen him lately but was actually just thinking about him (as I was putting on a St. Patrick's Day pin!). My sincere condolences to the family. He will be missed.

*Libby Freer*

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**Libby Freer** - March 23, 2021 at 09:45 AM

DW

“ *Jana, Ken, Wes, Clara and family,*

*I met Briggs in 1977 while serving at Homestead AFB, FL in the USAF. We were roommates and quickly became good friends even after he transferred to Clark AFB, Philippines and I to Memmingen, Germany.*

*After we both left the USAF, Briggs moved to Tallahassee, FL, to attend Florida State University and invited me to come share his house and go to school which I did for over a year.*

*We had been close friends all this time and throughout the years realized we had been best friends for a long time even over long distances.*

*I miss him beyond what words can convey as he was the one true friend everyone should hope to have in their lifetime. My prayer is that you all may take solace in knowing Briggs had many friends all over and he was a friend to all.*

*My sincere condolences for your loss,*

*David (Neill) Watson*

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**David N Watson** - March 19, 2021 at 10:38 PM