



## **SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: BILL KREISMAN**

**By Larry Wolfe**

**William “Bill” Kreisman was born in Kansas City, Kansas 72 years ago, but on the softball field, he’s still “Billy the Kid.” Bill plays with the same enthusiasm, exuberance and competitive spirit of someone about sixty years younger. To say he enjoys the game is a gross understatement. In fact, he loves the game and the competition. From the time he won his fourth grade marble championship until today, his competitive drive and will to win stand out.**

**Bill’s family moved to the Great Northwest when Bill was about two years old, so even though he was born in Kansas, he considers Washington State as his home. As a youngster he lived in Tacoma and Eatonville, and then graduated from Sumner High School. He later took college courses at Gonzaga University (now, but not then, known for its outstanding basketball program), the University of Puget Sound and Western Washington University.**

**Bill served in the Armed Forces during the Korean War, serving over two years in Korea. Prior to his deployment to Korea, he completed basic training at Ft. Ord in California and then graduated from Ordnance School at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. (The Aberdeen Proving Ground traces its origin back to World War I, and is still in use today as the Army’s prime location for testing new weapons and equipment.)**

**Most of Bill’s working career was spent with two companies: the Tradewell Grocery Store chain and the Boeing Company. Bill worked primarily in distribution and shipping at both of those companies.**

**When it was time to retire in 1994, Bill headed for [Sunbird](#), Arizona where his brother and mother had retired earlier. Bill had not previously played much slow pitch softball, but he noticed some “old guys” playing at the old field on Riggs Road and contacted Jack Lander, who was then running the Sun Lakes Senior Softball**

**League. Bill was invited to try out in the “Monday League,” and according to Bill’s recollection, he hit three homers and a double that first day and was soon promoted to the “Tuesday-Thursday League,” where the more competitive players played. And that was the beginning of a long, and still ongoing, love affair with the game.**

**Since that time, Bill has participated in the Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association league every year and has also played on the Age Group teams that play teams from other areas and participate in major tournaments. Bill’s favorite position is pitcher and he’s one of the best in the league. He also wields a magic wand for a bat as is evidenced by the fact that he was one of only six players to hit .600 or better during this past season. A highlight of Bill’s Sun Lakes’ playing career was being named the league’s Most Valuable Player two years ago. In addition, earlier this year he pitched the Arizona 75’s traveling team to tournament championships in Fountain Hills and Sun City. Bill has also enjoyed serving as a team manager in the Sun Lakes league for the past few years.**

**Outside of softball, Bill’s main interests are landscaping and yard work and playing backgammon. Bill remembers when he put in a waterfall in his yard, but was surprised when the “landscaping police” from the HOA showed up because he hadn’t obtained a permit. After complying with all the legalities, Bill’s water feature earned him an award as “Yard of the Month!”**

**But it’s at backgammon that Bill really excels. Although the game of backgammon, or similar predecessors, has been around for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, the game enjoyed a renaissance of sorts in the late 1970s. That’s when Bill discovered the game and became hooked. He progressed to the point that he became proficient enough to enter various tournaments and even win some of them. But while most of us put away our backgammon boards along with our platform shoes, gold medallions and leisure suits, Bill’s interest in the game continued. Today Bill plays an internet version of the game whereby he plays against players all over the world. And his proficiency continues... In fact, he’s had to change “screen ID names” seven times because when potential opponents see his name, they don’t want to play him!**

**Kind of like when players at the Field of Dreams see Bill heading for the pitcher’s mound.....**