



## *AHAA Announcement*

It is with sadness that the Auto Haulers of America announces the passing of Founding Board member and long-time friend, Bill Fralic. Bill passed away Thursday, December 13 at his home in suburban Atlanta. He was 56.

Bill Fralic was a gifted athlete and excelled in many sports. But he made his name in football. Bill was a dominant high school and college football player in his native Pennsylvania. He was the first offensive lineman to finish twice in the top 10 of Heisman Trophy voting and earned first-team All-America honors three times at the University of Pittsburgh in the early 1980's. He was so revered at Pitt that the school retired his No. 79 jersey at halftime of his final home game. Bill was also part of the inaugural class of Pitt's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2017, inducted alongside his former teammate, Hall of Fame quarterback Dan Marino.

In the NFL draft of 1985, Bill was the second overall draft pick and was chosen by the Atlanta Falcons. Although Bill moved from tackle to guard in the NFL, he continued to dominate the sport, and was a leading force for the Falcons in his eight seasons in Atlanta, earning All-Pro honors twice and making the Pro Bowl four times. He played one season with the Lions in 1993 before retiring. In a press release earlier this week, Falcons owner Arthur Blank said, "On behalf of the Atlanta Falcons we would like to extend our condolences to all the family and friends of Bill Fralic. Bill was a cornerstone of the Falcons for eight seasons, while earning four Pro Bowl nods and two All-Pro selections. He was a beloved Falcon, and we will always be grateful for the impact he made here in Atlanta."

Bill believed in reaching his goals by doing things the right way, without shortcuts, both on and off the field. Before he retired from the NFL, Bill was contemplating life after football and came upon an opportunity to start an insurance agency that specialized in commercial transportation. Building upon those same values and principles in his football career, Bill assembled a top-tier management team whose work ethic and track record for excellence matched his own. Recognizing that he knew very little about insurance, Bill hired Mike Staines and Ken Walker and the three of them formed Bill Fralic Insurance Services in 1989. The company has since become an industry leader in specialized commercial truck insurance, representing the most competitive insurance carriers while delivering exceptional value to their customers. Bill made Ken and Mike partners in the firm some years later and next August will mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the agency.

In 2010, Bill teamed up with Cottrell Trailers and Axis, the brokerage arm of Allied Systems, to organize a small gathering of auto haulers to come to Atlanta for a conference and golf event at his club. This gathering was the impetus for what would eventually become the Auto Hauler Association of America. Bill was driven but cautious. Many hours were spent discussing the merits and challenges that existed in putting this together. Eventually, Bill reached out to a good friend of his, Bill Schroeder, who quarterbacked an impromptu meeting in Atlanta with a few clients and friends in the industry, and together the decision was made to move forward. Many of these attendees would go on to become Founding Members of the Association. AHAA now represents 120 companies in the auto hauler industry with a combined truck total of more than 10,000 power units. AHAA members represent more than 65% of the industry's auto hauling capacity and the organization continues to build upon the founding principles that Bill Fralic espoused: Honesty, Integrity and Commitment.

“Bill Fralic was not only an all-time player at the University of Pittsburgh, but also an all-time human being,” Pitt coach Pat Narduzzi said this week. “His generosity, support and concern for others was unmatched. For as hulking a figure as he was, Billy was even larger in his kindness and passion for others. He leaves a wonderful legacy that goes well beyond football at Pitt, Penn Hills and all of Western Pennsylvania.”

Bill Fralic was born in Pittsburgh and grew up in Penn Hills, Pennsylvania. He was in the news there as recently as the week before he died. Penn Hills High School, Bill's alma mater, was traveling to Hershey for the state championship game on December 7. The team was preparing to make the entire round trip in one day due to budget constraints. However Bill generously picked up the hotel tab for the entire team, so they could arrive a day ahead of time, rest and prepare for the game. That night, Penn Hills defeated Manheim Central 36-31, to win the Class 5A state championship.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bill's wife Susan, his family and his many friends, teammates and business colleagues.

Visitation will be held Friday, December 21, from 3 – 8 pm, at the English Funeral Home in Oakmont, Pennsylvania.

<https://www.englishfuneralhome.com/notices/William-P-Fralic>