

Bill Jolly 50 Fun Facts:

(And some things you may not have known.)

1. Bill was born 29 minutes before the 4th of July, on July 3rd at 11:31pm. He's a Cancer.
2. Bill doesn't smoke, drink or do drugs. (Never has.)
3. Bill's 1st instrument was the drums, which he took up in the 1st grade.
4. Bill has been booed off stage 3 times; Once in Jr. High, once in H.S., once in college. "They were all very humbling, but very necessary experiences."
5. Bill was one of the 15 founding members selected to The National Recording Arts and Sciences Philadelphia Branch Board of Governors. (NARAS votes on the Grammy Awards winners.)
6. Bill was a dish washer, a day camp counselor, and a Keebler Cookie salesman before doing music full time.
7. Bill has performed for (4) Presidents; Ronald Reagan, Geo. Bush Sr., Bill Clinton and Geo. W. Bush.
8. Bill was the "fat kid" in class and was very unpopular during his Elementary School years. He did however, play Santa Claus in the Xmas play for 6 straight years.
9. While attending Overbrook H.S., Bill was a member of the National Honor Society, was School President and delivered the commencement graduation speech. He was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame in 2004. Other illustrious alums are Wilt Chamberlain and Will Smith.
10. Bill taught himself how to play piano when his piano player left the band and no other piano player would join his group.
11. Bill flunked only 1 class during his school years. That class was Piano 101 during college.
12. Although he won the Distinguished Alumni Award from West Chester University in 1998, Bill never passed the school's audition for the jazz band's pianist slot during his 4 years of college.
13. Bill has had 2 national feature articles in Keyboard Magazine.
14. Bill was slated to become the musical director for a late night Hollywood TV show hosted by basketball player John Salley. The show got bumped by Magic Johnson's, "Magic Hour."
15. Bill's most memorable music moment was when he played "In a Sentimental Mood" with the late Grover Washington, Jr. at Carnegie Hall in N.Y. I remember thinking in the middle of the duet, as I began to take my spotlight solo, "WOW, I can't believe I'm actually playing a grand piano at Carnegie Hall!" Bill

and Grover also played that tune during ceremonies for Julius Erving and Kareem Abdul Jabbar's retirement at the Spectrum in Philadelphia.

16. Bill won 365 nights and 1 million air miles as Hyatt's global winner of "the Big Welcome" promotion.

17. Bill played on his 1st record while in Jr. High School. The record was Gloria Neal and her Ladies of Song's, "A Totally Committed Life." Bill played the drums and still has that 45 with his name on it.

18. Before the infamous Mike Tyson rape case, Mike was asked to do a promo spot while dancing around contestant Desiree Washington. (This was the only shot of the 2 of them together.) The music they danced to was written by Bill, who was the musical director for the Miss Black America Pageant at that time.

19. While in H.S., Bill met and spent the day with Michael Jackson and his father, Joe playing piano and going over new songs.

20. Bill's 1st picture in the paper was published in Akron, Ohio at the age of 9. Bill was on vacation at his grandmother's house and coerced the local marching band into letting him bang the cymbals. He later (ironically) played the cymbals in his college marching band.

21. Bill's 1st solo was in Jr. High School, playing the song "Shaft" on the drums. 20 years later, Bill sang and performed "Shaft" on keyboards in front of Isaac Hayes during a tribute by the International Association of African American Music, for which Bill was Musical Director. Isaac hugged Bill and said, "This was the 1st time I've heard my music without my having to play it...and I enjoyed it!"

22. Bill's 1st acting gig was playing the Jewish lead character "Tevya" in "Fiddler on The Roof."

23. Bill became a music reporter for an Emmy Award Winning TV show called "Timeout." He was known as the "Piano Man."

24. Bill's 1st article was published in the 6th grade by the Philadelphia Inquirer. He wrote a humorous poem about controversial baseball player Dick Allen that his 6th grade teacher sent in to the newspaper, who, in turn, printed it on the front page of the sports section.

25. Bill learned to sing when the singer in his band quit before a big audition.

26. Bill filled in vocally for Stevie Wonder during the rehearsals for "We Are the World" for Bill Clinton's Inauguration at the Capital in Washington, DC.

27. Bill's 1st award was a trophy he received in the 6th grade as the school's best basketball player. He later received Gompers Elementary's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2003.

28. Bill enjoys raking leaves and the fall is his favorite time of year.

29. Bill's pet peeves: Lateness, not following through and negative people.
30. Bill can play and reproduce any song that he can "hear" in his head instantly.
31. Bill was on the Dean's List during half of his college semesters.
32. Bill plays the piano, vibes, drums and bass guitar fluently. He would sub for which ever instrument was missing during his H.S. jazz band rehearsals.
33. Bill's musical idols are Stevie Wonder, Quincy Jones, Maurice White (of E,W&F), Joe Sample, George Benson and Paul McCartney.
34. Bill swims, plays tennis, basketball, bowls, enjoys long walks and loves to watch football.
35. Bill rises @ 4:30am every morning.
36. Bill performs for Senior Citizen Centers an average of 3 times a month.
37. Bill's late mother Rowena was Bill's accountant and was the treasurer of Be Jolly Music, Inc.
38. Bill's dad is a gospel singer and former head of the Phila. Housing Authority. Bill played his 1st professional gig with his dad's group, "The Pearly Gates of Chester, Pa."
39. Bill's mentor in the music business was his H.S. music teacher, Dr. George Allen.
40. Bill was picked to play percussion with the Phila. Orchestra while in H.S. and in his later years, got to write a musical arrangement that the Philly Pops Orchestra performed.
41. Bill wrote "Neighbors in the New World" which the Convention and Visitors Bureau calls "Philly's Theme Song."
42. Bill was a former Elementary School, Jr. High School and High School music teacher.
43. "Behind The Scarf," Bill's 1st CD, was recorded from start to finish in a week and a half.
44. If he weren't a musician, Bill would have become a professional baseball player.
45. Bill's 1st TV theme song was 6ABC's "AM Philadelphia."
46. Bill was once approached by a candy company about having a piece of candy named after him.
47. Bill wakes up every day in a good mood and is rarely grumpy or unhappy.
48. Bill's 1st performance onstage was in kindergarten, dancing to Chubby Checker's "Twist." Bill directed Chubby's performance of "The Twist" with him for the RnB Awards in 2007.
49. Bill Jolly's Hard Drive was started in Nov. of 2004 as the house band for Gamble and Huff's TSOP restaurant in Atlantic City, performing 7 nights a week.
50. Bill always wanted to be a lawyer but dislikes reading. He negotiates many of his friend's contracts.