



Ret. Lt. Col. Robert "Bob" Gene Wolfe

January 21, 1939 - August 11, 2019

Ret. Lt. Col. Robert Wolfe, age 80 of Goreville, passed away, Sunday, August 11, 2019 in the Veteran's Affairs Medical Center, Marion.

Robert Gene Wolfe entered the universe on January 21, 1939, the first of 4 children. They grew up on a farm in Carbondale, Illinois. He loved living on the farm and would often say that it was the best place for a kid to grow up. That's not to say life was easy. There was work to be done by everyone. By the age of five Bob's father tied him to the tractor seat so he wouldn't fall off. Near this same time, his dad also gave him his first hunting gun; when Bob went on his first hunt, he proudly came home with some rabbits.

At age 17, Bob enrolled at Southern Illinois University to earn an agriculture degree. Meanwhile, he met the love of his life while doing what most young men do, cruising in his dad's car. In 1959 Bob and Sue tied the knot. By then Bob had discovered that chemistry, required in Agriculture, was not to his liking and he changed course. He enrolled in the ROTC program and upon graduation entered active duty Air Force. Later on, he earned a Master's Degree at Indiana University courtesy of the Air Force. He would go on to serve the next 20 years in the military, including flying 145 missions over Laos in the Vietnam War. In 1963, his first child Michael arrived, followed by a daughter, Krista, in 1964. With his wife and two children, Bob moved around a fair amount over the next 20 years, culminating in an assignment to Scott Air

Force Base where they planted roots. Upon his retirement in 1980, Bob embraced the life of a military retiree and decided to embark on an entrepreneurial path. He threw himself into business and created a construction company that still thrives today.

What kind of man was Bob? He was a country boy at heart. He loved nature, hunting and the great outdoors. He lived his life to the fullest. He loved Cardinal baseball. He was an avid reader. In his later years he mainly read western books because he liked that the good guy always won. He loved to ride around on his zero turn Bad Boy mower. It was just him and the grass, and he found peace in that simple task. Seeing him with a bloodied hand or torn pants was the norm. He was not a passenger in life, never holding back or playing it safe. He was a risk taker and his family might (definitely would) say he was reckless. Sue was a pro at removing stains and sewing holes.

Once Bob tried to throw a large rock from a second story deck to a garden below, and did such a good job he went with it and landed on his head. Proving that his head was indeed hard, he walked away unhurt. He wasn't big on voicing his feelings—instead, he showed his love with actions. He would stock his pantry with a visitor's favorite foods, or have flowers in the room for his daughter when she came to visit. If you gave him a shirt, belt or hat, he would remember to wear it the next time he saw you. He was a serious man but had retained a mischievous side. Charlie Brown and the Peanuts gang always got a chuckle out of him.

In his younger years he often took the family to camp, boat and water ski. He took the most outrageous, end over end falls. He'd nearly drown and then just laugh. If you're going to ski, you're going to fall. Bob didn't believe in playing it safe. Safe is no fun. He loved guns and knives and enjoyed sharing that love with his grandchildren as they grew up. He loved buying toys for the grandsons that he would have loved as a boy. Seeing the people he loved

really happy was one of his favorite things.

He and Sue traveled in a motor home for several years. He particularly enjoyed a trip to Canada where he witnessed moose and grizzly bear, and a mountain lion. In many ways he was a simple man who enjoyed simple things, and being a part of nature was one of them.

In recent years Bob had several health issues, the most serious being congestive heart failure. In January Bob learned he had pulmonary hypertension, likely a result of exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. Doctors gave him 6-8 months to live. Bob wasn't big on expiration dates -- not on his cereal, not on his medication, and certainly not on his life. He was a proud man, often a stubborn man, but he knew the doctors were right. He felt it. Ever the planner, Bob diligently worked to get his best friend and wife into a safe and secure home. They found a duplex that met her needs, and he stayed alive refusing to leave before completing that one final mission. Within days of his final accomplishment, Bob let go. It was time to go, and he knew it. He died peacefully, holding the hand of his love, Sue.

Bob did what few people do on this earth. He left it all on the table. He worked hard, he played hard and he loved hard. He leaves behind too many friends to mention and a legacy that any man would be proud of. If Bob were here now he'd sign off with his signature double-gun finger snap and that mischievous grin.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents Harold and Louise Wolfe.

He is survived by his wife, Sue; children, Michael and Krista and grandsons, Nathan, Kyle, Jacob and Jordan, and extended family.

Funeral Services will be Saturday, August 17 at 2:00 pm in Crain Pleasant

Grove-Murdale Funeral Home. Interment will follow in Pleasant Grove Memorial Park. Full Military Honors will be accorded.

Visitation will be from 11:00 am until the hour of service at the funeral home.

Memorials can be made to the Shriners Hospitals for Children-St. Louis and will be accepted at the funeral home.

Cemetery Details

Pleasant Grove Memorial Park

31 Memorial Dr.
Murphysboro, IL 62966
(618) 687-1145
crain@crainsonline.com

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 17. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home - Old 13
31 Memorial Dr.
Murphysboro, IL 62966
(618) 687-2500
crain@crainsonline.com

Service

AUG 17. 2:00 PM (CT)

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home - Old 13
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Tribute Wall



“ *Ret. Lt. Col. Robert "Bob" Gene Wolfe*

October 23, 2023 at 06:26 AM



“ *Friend of Bob's at Nav School in 1960 and many years after. Al Harris.*

Al Harris - February 13, 2023 at 08:18 AM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Ret. Lt. Col. Robert "Bob" Gene Wolfe.*

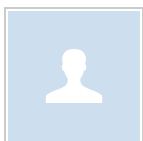


August 18, 2019 at 01:36 AM



“ *Condolences to the Wolf family. Bob was a visionary in O'Fallon real estate development, and a good friend of my father.*

Scott Sherbut - August 17, 2019 at 10:49 AM



“ *With Distinction was purchased for the family of Ret. Lt. Col. Robert "Bob" Gene Wolfe.*



August 16, 2019 at 02:02 PM

AH

“ *A man among men. The love and pride he felt for his family were only surpassed by the love and pride his family felt for him. I hope he knew.*

anyone who knew him - August 14, 2019 at 04:03 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Ret. Lt. Col. Robert "Bob" Gene Wolfe.*



August 14, 2019 at 12:19 AM

GB

“ *Sorry for your loss. Bob was a good guy.*

Gary Boblett - August 13, 2019 at 10:03 AM