



Robert Garven Bruce

January 28, 1927 - April 5, 2024

Robert Garven Bruce, died early Friday, April 5th after a brief stay at hospice. He was a resident of Estero, FL where he lived with his loving wife Rosemary Scheetz Bruce. He was 97.

Bob was born in 1927 in Louisville, KY to Garvin Bruce, and Elizabeth (Bozsa) Bruce. He grew up in East St Louis, IL and Evanston IN with his brothers Charlie and George. At age 17, during WWII he volunteered to join the army and served for 3 ½ years mostly in Germany, as a staff sergeant attached to the First armored Division.

He graduated Princeton (Indiana) High School and the Art Academy of Cincinnati.

In 1953 he joined the Fort Myers News-Press in the Advertising Department when the department had just 9 employees. He worked there until 1985 including 16 years as the Director of Advertising and past president of the Florida Newspaper Advertising Executive Association. After leaving the News-Press, he continued to work in commercial real estate.

Bob was an avid golfer, sailor, fisherman and harbored a love for rural life. In the early 70's he bought a 30-acre property in Estero with aging buildings that became his project for years, eventually refurbishing a tarpaper shack into a

family home. “Quail Run Farm” was the site of school and family parties and the annual gathering site for the News-Press advertising department for many years.

He also spent many hours on the water; he learned to scuba when that technology was new, but also took the family on snorkeling trips to the Keys to lobster dive, and sailed out of Ft Myers Yacht Basin. One memorable trip included sailing around Central America and through the Panama Canal. He would fish whenever he could and was always ready with “fish tale” about the one that got away.

At the Fort Myers News-Press, he was hired by Dewey Murphy and became a good friend to the former publisher Chet Perry. He transitioned through the Gannett years, working with Al Neuharth in the early days of promoting USA Today. He often said it was his suggestion to put USA today outside hotel rooms as a form of promotion. No one is quite sure whose suggestion it was to put alligators in the glass terrarium in the New Press lobby, but Bob maybe had a hand in that, too!

The News-Press is also where he first met Rosemary in 1983, leading to a love of 40 years. With her, he enjoyed travelling. He was able to return to Europe to see a re-built post-war Germany, he marveled at the natural beauty of the Canadian Rockies, and treasured the memory of catching a salmon in Alaska.

Bob was always active in civic work and a tireless promoter of Ft. Myers and SW Florida. He was a member of the Rotary Club in Ft. Myers, and was a past Director. He worked to bring the Kansas City Royals to the area for Spring training. His other memberships spanning the 1950's to the 1990's included: Ft Myers Chamber of Commerce Director, Vocational School Advisory committee, Director of Edison Pageant of Light, Safety Committee of

SW Florida, Bi-Racial Committee, KC Royals Committee, Democratic precinct committeeman, Edison Community College Advisory board, Traveling Goodwill Ambassador for Ft. Myers, and Director of City of Ft. Myers Golf Club. Charitable work included being a CCD instructor, United Way Budget Committee, Christian Businessman's committee, Director of Koreshan Unity, and work on behalf of the March of Dimes, Muscular dystrophy association, Salvation Army Fund, Drug abuse Council and United Way.

In addition to Rosemary, he is also survived by 4 children from prior marriages to Anne Clark (d) and Nancy Schumacher Bruce: Elizabeth Bruce Westman, Cynthia Bruce, Timothy Bruce and Stephanie Robin (George) Bruce. He is predeceased by his eldest son, Robert Bruce and daughter Katherine Bruce.

He has 8 grandchildren: Robert, Brittnye, Ashley, Nicholas, Elizabeth, Solomon Francis, Sophia, Holden, and 6 great-grandchildren.

He will be lovingly remembered by other extended family and friends: Debra Fulghum Bruce, Allison Hatch Bruce, Chuck Scheetz, Billy Dionisio and Ryan Bruce.

The family is grateful to all the caregivers who provided care to Bob during his last two years living at Gull Pointe/Gulf Coast Memory Care, and for his final days at Joanne's House at Hope Hospice.

There will be Mass at 11:30 am Saturday, April 13th at St Leo the Great Catholic Church, 28300 Beaumont Rd, Bonita Springs, FL, followed by a reception where family and friends are invited to share memories of Bob.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hope Hospice.

Online condolences may be offered by visiting www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home, Family Owned Since 1978.

Previous Events

Mass of Christian Burial

APR 13. 11:30 AM (ET)

St. Leo the Great Catholic Church
28300 Beaumont Road
Bonita Springs, FL 34134

Tribute Wall

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“ I knew Bob for many years when I worked at The News-Press. I was just a cub reporter when I started and became Promotion/PR Director after many years. We served on The News-Press Operating Committee together (the seven highest ranking department heads). I always remembered Bob as a creative, compassionate individual. I never saw him lose his cool, even when times were tough. To sell more advertising space, I remember that Bob was the one who came up with the idea of having special sections that focused on a specific industry. At its zenith, he was shepherding 53 special sections per year! After his News-Press days, my husband Phil bought some investment property that Bob suggested we buy. The last time I saw Bob was at Joe Workman's funeral a few years ago. He hadn't changed a bit! I wish his family happy memories of this extraordinary man. I know I will remember Bob always.

Susan Bennett

Susan t Bennett - April 13, 2024 at 11:16 AM