



Robert "Bob" A. Van Bergen

JUN 15, 1948 - DEC 2, 2022



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Robert "Bob" A. Van Bergen

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Robert Alan (Bob) Van Bergen June 15, 1948 - December 02, 2022

Robert A. Van Bergen, of North Ridgeville, Ohio passed away on Friday, December 2, 2022. In his final days, he fought a fierce battle with Acute Myeloid Leukemia before finally succumbing.

Bob grew up in the Cleveland area, and in addition to being a loyal Browns and Indians fan, he was privileged to attend several professional championship sporting events. A favorite honor was throwing out the first pitch at a Cubs game in 2000.

Lifelong friends from John Marshall High School remained in close touch over the years. Graduating with a B.A. in business (& monkey business!) from Kent State University (1970), Bob cherished his Sigma Chi Fraternity and remained an active alum as a Lifelong Loyal Sigma Chi.

Bob spent fifty years in the hospitality industry; beginning at age 16 as a dishwasher at The Sheraton Hotel in downtown Cleveland. Spanning twenty-two physical moves during his career, he had a true talent as a Hotel/Resort General Manager (C.H.A.) for building cohesive teams. As a hotelier, Bob was particularly proud to serve as the Grand Opening GM for The Oxford Hotel, Sheraton Tacoma Hotel, Radisson Toledo, The Club at Hammock Beach, and Reunion Club & Resort. With each of the many properties that Bob managed, countless lifelong friendships have endured. Over 25 years as a member of SKAL International, Bob mentored and interned many aspiring hospitality school students. Under his leadership as President of Orlando SKAL in 2007, the Orlando SKAL Club won International Club of the Year award in Antalya, Turkey.

Bob recalled some of his favorite memories: playing sports with his sons; spending time with his 3 grandchildren; cruises with his wife, Mary; golfing; gambling; his and Mary's awesome African Safari, to name only a few.



Obituary

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Bob is survived by his wife of 29 years, Mary; sons Scott and Matt (Sara); stepson John Phifer; 3 cherished Grandchildren – Sydney, Shea, & Bowen; sisters Carol Van Bergen and Mary Sharp (Jeff); Gayle Van Bergen – widow of brother Richard (dec.); former wife & mother to their two sons, Robin Van Bergen (Tom Carson); and so many extended family members who supported Bob during his lifetime and final weeks.

Private services for Bob will be Saturday, 12/10/2022 at Bogner Family Funeral Home, North Ridgeville, Ohio, and will be livestreamed on the funeral home Facebook page . In lieu of flowers, the family has suggested donation's in Bob's honor to:

The Zeta Lambda Foundation (to support the Kent Sigma Chi Chapter that he loved and ensure that future generations benefit in the ways that Bob did). Donate through the foundation's website (www.zetalambdafoundation.com) or check (mentioning Bob's name) to Michael Davis, Treasurer, Zeta Lambda Foundation, 6131 Baneberry Dr, Westerville, OH 43082.

OR

The PEO Ohio Scholarships-Fund 2 (for assistance to qualifying recipients) Check (mentioning Bob's name) payable to Ohio State Chapter PEO Sisterhood & mailed to Beth Cox, Exec. Asst., 7600 Tyler's Valley Dr., West Chester, OH 45069.



Tribute Wall

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Nick Bogner shared a video to the **Service** album.



December 15 at 7:02 AM



Anonymous sent an Emerald Garden Basket to the Van Bergen family.



December 10 at 9:21 AM



Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Van Bergen family.



December 10 at 2:23 AM



Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Van Bergen family.



December 8 at 6:43 AM



Scott Dahl posted:

Bob was a true friend and exceptional hotelier. He left Springfield, IL a better place than when he arrived in the capital city. I am thankful our paths crossed many times. Condolences, scott d

December 7 at 2:40 PM



Anonymous sent a Treasured Lilies Spray to the Van Bergen family.



December 7 at 11:19 AM



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BS

Bob Sullivan posted:

This is a memory from undergrad days at the Sigma Chi house. The cook, Margaret, was easily offended and the brothers would enjoy finding ways to test her patience. One day she'd had enough and told Bob, as our president, she was leaving. She said, "Robert, call me a cab." And with a straight face Bob said, "Margaret, you're a cab!" At which point Margaret screamed and ran out the door. Bob smoothed things over and she did come back. Good times in undergrad days. My sympathies to Bob's family. Bob Sullivan

December 6 at 8:30 PM

TB

Teri Babcock posted:

I'm a cousin to Robin and remember Bob when Scott and Matt were just little guys as the loving, caring father that continued throughout his life. My family had an opportunity many years later to stay at his hotel in the Keys. He was so gracious and kind to us during our stay there in spite of being very busy with his job. We appreciated visiting with him again at Matt's wedding. We are so sorry for his family's loss and know he will be greatly missed. Rich and Teri Babcock

December 5 at 5:23 PM

GV

Greg Vanbergen posted:

Aunt Mary, Scott, Matt, John and family - our prayers are with you all. So glad that we got to see and spend some time with Uncle Bob this October when we visited Cleveland -- and that he was his usual chatty and funny self! We will always remember the Bride & Groom ball caps that we took on our honeymoon (and of course a cigar, too!) Uncle Bob was always so friendly and interested in what we and Taylor & Katie were doing. I hope that he and my Dad are sharing jokes and stories together. Love Greg and Jennifer VanBergen

December 5 at 2:58 PM



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RJ

Ronnie Johnson posted:

My story concerning Bob is not a funny story but one that talks about how he affected my life as Wild Dunes Resort's entertainer and future friend. In many cases, upper levels of management much less GMs don't or won't deal with entertainment. It's usually left to the F&B director or some other staff member to handle and deal with. My experience with Bob was not like the norm as I always felt I could discuss matters of concern with him and he truly would have my back if he felt it was warranted and he always had a warm hello! Not only was he that kind of fair-minded man but also an employee's GM to say he would get right in there with you. I remember although being the entertainer I was still an employee of the resort and therefore ask to help clean the new flooring in the new Inn built during Bob's tenure at Wild Dunes. Upon arriving, and not crazy about feeling obligated to do so, I saw Bob right there with us getting on his hands and knees also to "getter er done"! That resounded big in my mind and made me admire even more the commitment and integrity he showed us all who were lucky enough to work with him! We continued to be friends with Bob and sweet sweet Mary long after he left Wild Dunes and he even invited me to come to one of the other properties he oversaw after WD and perform, putting me up and looking after me and my wife Kim while there. But not all work while there! We also all got together with Mary who was always sweet and kind to Kim and me, had dinner, shared time at their home along with John's company, and just enjoyed laughing visiting, and of course cigars! Probably what bonded my and Bob's friendship, hard not to appreciate a fellow cigar lover! Although we didn't see Bob and Mary that often we continued to share messages and post on FB to keep up with each other. I was really surprised when I got a message from Mary not that long ago that they were going to pay a quick visit to Charleston and hoped to see us while here. We couldn't make it work when they planned to have dinner with several other friends here but they came walking into my performance which I was not expecting the day before and was surprised and so great to see them walk in!! Mary visited with Kim and Bob sat quietly close to where I was playing and enjoyed a cigar I'd given him while there. He seemed peaceful and reflective when I think back and although he shared what he was going through I did not feel he was anywhere near being called home as he looked good and healthy. I shared with them a story of my sister who had gone through a similar situation and that had been some 8-10 years earlier and was doing fine, by the grace of God. I did not doubt that Bob's would be any different he seemed so well. I had no idea that would be my last time seeing him and the fact he wanted to come to see me. Bob forgive me for not taking the day off and spending it with you or hugging you longer when you left or telling you how much I appreciate and love the man you are and how kind you have always been to me, a resort singer/musician. I will forever be grateful to have had you in my life and for the kindness, you showed me. I know I will see you another day my sweet friend and....I'll bring the matches! Smoke 'Em if you got 'em 🍷 Ronnie Johnson

December 4 at 12:39 PM



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SC

Suzanne Chambers posted:

I first started working with Bob at Reunion Resort. He had such a heart of compassion for others, and to take care of others. He would stand up for what he believed in and would fight to support others. It was a pleasure to have worked with Bob. My heartfelt condolences to the family. Sincere thoughts and prayers, Suzanne Chambers.

December 4 at 6:11 PM

MW

Mark Wurz posted:

In 1995 the Cleveland Indians and the Cubs were in the 7th game of the World Series, Top of the 9th. The Tribe was clinging to a 1 run lead. 3 outs and we win the Series. I am sitting on the edge of my chair in Seattle and the phone rings. It was Bob, He says you watching? I say damn right. Jose Mesa gave up the lead and the Indias lost the Series. We did not say a word. Bob was I think in Florida me i Seattle. We just watched it together from several thousand miles apart. I will miss him.

December 4 at 3:21 PM

AN

Ann Norton posted:

Bob was my second client when I started my training & consulting firm 25 years ago. He became a cherished colleague and friend over the years. He brought me in to help him at dozens of hotels and resorts around the US and the Bahamas. He was a joy to watch in action. Bob was terrific at spotting and developing talent on his management teams. Many people have him to thank for their career success in the hospitality field. What I enjoyed most was watching Bob bake special treats for his housekeeping and laundry employees in addition to just talking with them to show his appreciation. He had a natural kindness for everyone he met and he treated everyone the same no matter their position. I hope he's enjoying a good cigar on a fabulous cruise ship somewhere out there!

December 4 at 1:29 PM



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MB

Mary Van Bergen posted:

He was, and always will be, the love of my life. My warm hugs wrapped around all of you who are visiting this site. "I'll Stand By You", sung by The Pretenders is a fav we danced to. Dance now in heaven, my beloved Bob.

December 4 at 12:39 PM

JL

Jon Lazarus December 8 at 2:28 PM

I met Bob Van Bergen at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, Illinois and had the pleasure in working with him for several years and that developed into over a 20 year friendship! Bob was not a boss, Bob was a leader! He knew that he worked for all of the associates in the hotel and not the other way around and that is what made a leader! He knew everyone by name and he would say hello to everyone and ask about them and their family and he truly cared about everyone at the hotel! I have worked with a ton of individuals over my life and I would say Bob was the best person that I have worked for. Bob and I bonded when it came to a couple of items.... The first being humor and the second being sports and moving forward I will miss laughing with him and talking sports. (I still do not forgive him when it comes to the Indians for losing to the Cubs in the 2016 as I am a St. Louis Cardinals fan 😊) When Bob, Mary and John moved to Springfield they joined a family at the Crowne Plaza and we were very happy to have three new family members to the team. To put it very simply "Bob was one of the good ones" and thank you to the entire family for loaning BVB to us! My thoughts and prayers go out to the entire Van Bergen family and I will miss BVB! Jon Lazarus

FB

Frank Borwell December 6 at 5:35 PM

I have plenty of fond memories of Bob during my years at Kent. He was a fine human being, and will be missed big time. In Hoc. Frank Borwell Class of '71

DP

Debbie And Bill Pain December 5 at 8:12 AM

Dear Mary, We love you. Our hearts break for you and John.

MW

Mark Wurz December 4 at 3:08 PM

I met Bob 61 years ago in Jr High School. We advanced to Sr. High. Then on to Kent State. We both joined Sigma Chi, We went our separate ways after College but always stayed in touch. Later in life Bob and Mary and my wife and I vacationed together several times. We communicated continuously. I will miss my Brother and Friend. R.I.P . In Hoc

KS

Kathy Siford December 4 at 2:51 PM

Mary, my heart reaches out to you with warm hugs and much love. Bob was my favorite GM through over 34 years in hotel sales. And it was so wonderful seeing you both last year when you were in Toledo. 🙏❤️



Media

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December 15 at 7:02 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Robert "Bob" by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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