

I believe in fun. My grandpa taught me that.

I don't know exactly what the first memory I have with my grandpa is, because I have so many memories with him. My grandparents live 45 minutes away in a small city in Minnesota called "Jasper." Jasper's population is no more than 700 people, and most of them have lived there for longer than I've been alive. When I was younger, my mother would bring my sister and I to Jasper every couple of weeks to say hello to my grandparents. My grandma would come down every Thursday night when my mom worked late and she would watch the tv show "Wipeout" with me before making homemade mac and cheese. Because of this, I developed a close relationship with my grandma and we enjoyed the time we spent together. Despite the amount of time I spent with my grandma, I only saw my grandpa at most every month or so for special occasions or when my mom wanted us to go to Jasper.

Even though I didn't get to see him often, my grandpa was one of my favorite people. Every time I would go to my grandparents' house, I would bring all of my Nerf guns that he had gotten me and we would have Nerf battles. I would win every time, and looking back now I realize that it's because he let me win. He was a soldier who had served his country in Vietnam, and while that may not translate directly to being good with Nerf guns, it wouldn't have been hard for anyone more than 11 years old to beat me in a Nerf battle. When we finished having Nerf battles and my grandma got home from church, she would scold both of us for making such a mess and my grandpa and I would clean up together. After we finished our Nerf battles and my grandma made dinner, I would grab one of the pillows she had on her couch and start a pillow fight with my grandpa. I would always grab the same two pillows because they were the best, and we would laugh while we played. Once again, my grandma would scold us with a loving grin while telling us not to mess up her decorations.

When I was 10, my grandpa promised that at some point he would take me to a shooting range to shoot a real gun for the first time. Every birthday after that, I asked when we would be able to go and always got the same response. He would say "Well, whenever we have time, just ask." When I was 14, I realized that we would most likely never be able to go together. I think my grandpa realized that too, because it was around that time that he showed me some of the guns he had in his room. Of course I had known they were there, but I also knew how dangerous they were if I wasn't careful and so I avoided them until that day. He showed me a revolver, a few handguns, even a rifle he had used in Vietnam. He made sure they were all unloaded before giving them to me, and when I was slowly spinning around pretending to be a soldier and accidentally aimed an unloaded pistol at him, and he started yelling. "Never aim a gun at a person, even if it's unloaded." A few minutes later, he went back to telling me stories about his time in Vietnam.

You know, to be honest I think he was probably supposed to have died a while ago, and was just too stubborn. He had diabetes, cancer, and had been shot at least one time that I know of. Despite all of that, he soldiered on through life with Grandma supporting him.

I will always remember the good times we had when I was a kid. I will always remember the annual parade in Jasper when he would drive me in his military jeep and let me throw candy out to the watchers. I will always remember the silly Nerf battles and pillow fights we had when I was younger. I will always remember the lessons he taught me about safety, and protecting those around me. I will always remember that it was my grandpa that taught me that fun and happiness are essential to life. I love you, Grandpa, and I miss you.

Written by Alex Staebell

In Loving Memory Of

Bob Bell



Memorial Mass of Christian Burial

Saturday, December 21, 2024 - 10:30 AM
St. Leo Catholic Church - Pipestone, Minnesota

Officiating - Msgr. Gerald Kosse

Eucharistic Minister - Jennifer Thamert

Lectors - Margaret Hitzemann, Patrick Brandt

Eulogist - Denny Hitzemann **Petitions** - Anya Staebell

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9 II Timothy 2:8-13 John 14:1-6

Organist - Stella Lingen

Cantor - Jim Baustian "Ave Maria"

Congregational Hymns

"Softly and Tenderly" "Shepherd Me, O God"

"Alleluia" "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

"In The Garden" "Song of Farewell"

"Song of the Angels" "Soon and Very Soon"

Urn Bearer - Marcy Thormodsgard

Honorary Urn Bearers

Mike Fideler Kevin Fideler David Fideler

Gary Arfmann Mark Arfmann Bruce Reynolds

Steven Tauer Joe Brandt Patrick Brandt

David Brandt Michael Brandt Kenneth Deuschle

Andrew Peterson

Military Honors

Oscar Iverson American Legion Post 133

Jasper, Minnesota

Michael Boock American Legion Post 6

Pipestone, Minnesota

Inurnment

St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery - Jasper, Minnesota





Remembering
THE LIFE OF
Robert Stephen Bell

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Robert "Bob" Stephen Bell, age 81, who tragically lost his life in a motor vehicle collision on November 14th 2024.

Robert was born on February 26, 1943, to Samona (Sodemann) and Ory Bell in Luverne Minnesota, joining his four older sisters, Jean Reynolds, Joan Arfmann, Patricia Butzman, and Dorothy Fideler. He attended grade school in Luverne until his father's death at which point his mother moved to Jasper, Minnesota and purchased Windy Rae's Cafe. This is where he developed his lifelong love of cooking.

After moving to Jasper, he attended school until he entered the United States Army on December 13, 1960. He served his country bravely. He was stationed in Alaska and then completed three tours in Vietnam as well as being deployed to Germany. He was Honorably discharged on June 19, 1972.

Upon his discharge from the Army he returned home where he met the future Mrs. Maureen (Brandt) Bell in Ihlen, Minnesota. They were married on July 7, 1973. They welcomed their daughter, Kimberly in 1979.

He joined the Army National Guard in 1977 and worked as a unit administrator for the Luverne guard unit through 1983. He worked at various jobs before deciding to become a long distance truck driver, eventually buying his own tractor and becoming an independent owner operator. He had many stories to tell about his adventures driving truck, and could tell you the exit number of any good truckstop. He enjoyed this work until he retired in 2005.

He became a grandfather in 2004 when his granddaughter, Anya was born, and again in 2007 when his grandson, Alex arrived. He embraced being a grandfather, unless you asked him to give one of the grand-babies a bottle. He loved to have fun with his grandkids and could often be found having Nerf gun battles or pillow fights with the kids. He enjoyed giving them rides in his Army jeep, allowing them to throw candy during parades.

He took full advantage of his retirement with twice a day coffee sessions at the mini mall. He made friends wherever he went and always had a joke to share, although most of them were not suitable to be repeated in front of children. He never met a card game he didn't like, and it took a lot to outbid him as he could bluff his way through any game. He became a savior for the house plants that Maureen would often try to kill. He said he could often hear the plants whispering to him, "Bobby, give me water". Teasing his wife was one of his lifelong favorite activities. He loved to go to auctions, collecting "treasures". His family will remember his auction days fondly over the coming years as we dig out the two garages full of these "treasures". He supported Maureen tirelessly through her cancer surgery and following treatments. They spent a lot of time watching Twins games and swinging in the backyard during this time. In his later years some of his favorite activities included sitting in the backyard on his swing, watching his grand dog, Nala chase squirrels.

He battled bladder cancer for many years, and was undergoing treatment at the time of his death. He received most of his medical care through the VA. He had nothing but praise for the nurses and other members of his care team.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his four sisters. He is survived by his wife, Maureen; daughter, Kimberly (Jeremy); granddaughter, Anya; and grandson, Alex; as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins and close friends.

In lieu of gifts, please consider donating to a cause supporting veterans in Robert's name.

Oorah!!

Day is done,
gone the sun,
From the hills, from the lake,
From the sky.
All is well,
safely rest,
GOD is nigh.