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12-31-18 1-3-2019

Robert E. Christensen



Robert E. Christensen, 84, of Grinnell died on Sunday, December 30, 2018, at his home following a short illness. Those who knew him called him "Bob."

Mass of the Resurrection has been scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Saturday, January 5, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Grinnell with Fr. Ron Hodges officiating. Organist will be Marilyn Kriegel accompanied by the St. Mary's Choir. Honorary pallbearers will be his grandchildren, Stephen, Michel, James, Rachel, and Brian Head, and Andrew and John Clark. Burial will be in Sacred Heart Cemetery in Grundy Center, Iowa.

Visitation with the family present will begin prior to the service at 9:00 a.m. at the church with a Rosary to be said at 10:00 a.m.

Bob was born in Austin, Minnesota, September 7, 1934, to Fannie Viola (Kyle) and Roger Edwin Christensen. He grew up on his parents' farm in Brownsdale, Minn., with his sister, Marian. After high school he was recruited by Weston Noble to play piccolo at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Following his time at Decorah, he joined the Navy to play piccolo, flute and saxophone in the Sixth Fleet Band from which he was honorably discharged four years later as Musician 2nd Class, Non-commissioned Petty Officer. He then took a job as a haberdasher at Hanny's Menswear in Rochester, Minn.

Bob and Margaret Anna Thielen were married on June 24, 1961, at Our Lady of Good Council Catholic Church in Fonda, Iowa. During their fifty-seven years of marriage, various business ventures and opportunities took them from their first home in Rochester to St Paul, Minn., Derby, Kan., Edmond, Okla., Athens, Ohio, Portsmouth, Ohio, Bella Vista, Ark., and finally Grinnell, Iowa.

Bob made his mark in Grinnell when he joined forces with his wife Margaret Anna Christensen and niece Dr. Marjorie Renfrow to open Renfrow Senior Care. He was known as "The Voice."

He returned to playing piccolo, flute and saxophone after their move to Arkansas. He played in the Bella Vista Community Band and was a founding member of the JM Band. Bob loved sports, especially golf and the "squeaky-shoe" game (aka basketball). He was an active father: Brownie Scout leader, Girl Scout Leader of the Year and personal golf coach. He was proud of his family and celebrated all of their accomplishments. He was especially proud of the clinic in Grinnell.

He is survived by his wife Margaret Anna Christensen; niece Dr. Marjorie Renfrow; his sister Marian Tonding; his three daughters, Marthe' (John Groves), Katrina (Roger Head), and Andrea (Paul Clark); and seven grandchildren: Stephen and Kristen Head, Michel, James, Rachel and Brian Head; Andrew and Alexandra Clark and John Clark. He was joyfully anticipating his first great-grandchild in March 2019.

We will continue to live as he expected and will remember him with love. May he rest in peace.

Memorials may be sent to: ALS Association Texas Chapter (1213 Hermann Dr. #525, Houston, TX 77004) in memory of Robert E. Christensen in support of Paul Clark, his son-in-law, who suffers from ALS.