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2019

Robert 'Bob' Wade Van Arkel March 5, 1960 - April 21, 2019



Robert "Bob" Van Arkel, 59, of Newton, died on Sunday, April 21, 2019. A funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m., Friday, April 26, at the Newton Church of the Way. The family will greet friends from 4 to 7 p.m., Thursday, April 25, at the Wallace Family Funeral Home and Crematory. In lieu of flowers, memorials in Bob's name (checks made payable to Kim Van Arkel) may be left at the church the day of the service or at the funeral home. Memorials will be used for Newton Parks and Public Safety projects.

Robert Wade Van Arkel, the son of Bill and Dorothy Van Arkel, was born on March 5, 1960, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was raised in Newton and graduated from Newton High School in 1978. He earned a Building Trades degree from DMACC. He grew up on a farm and retained a love for country living his entire life.

Bob was married to Kim Oskam on June 25, 1982, and they were blessed with two sons, Ryan and Adam. He dedicated his life to serving others by working as a firefighter/paramedic for the Newton Fire Department for 28 years. Bob also owned and operated Van Arkel Construction and took great pride in all of his projects, eventually building his own home.

Bob made his acreage his home by planting trees, selling firewood bundles, cultivating sweet corn, and operating everyone's favorite local pumpkin patch. These ventures earned him the nickname "Farmer Bob." Bob's personality was infectious. His passion for everything he did made you believe anything was possible. He never did any job halfway; anyone who knew him respected and admired his meticulous attention to detail.

As a firefighter, Bob's coworkers became a second family and he proudly filled the role of leader, mentor, and friend. Bob did not stop by being a friend to just his colleagues, he adopted their children as his own and delighted in spending time with them. His own retirement party even featured elaborate activities of his own design just for the children.

Above all, Bob was a loving and dedicated husband, father, brother, and son. He was a devoted Christian and was a member of The Church of the Way. The only thing he loved more than chocolate and Florida sunshine was his "honey darlin'" Kim. He was so proud of his sons and loved helping them with projects and sharing his skills. Bob was a true family man and passionately loved and cared for others. He was known for giving great advice and always speaking his mind.

Bob loved sunsets, they reminded him of the beauty of God's creation. Even though the sun set too early on his life, he taught everyone around him to live every moment to the fullest.

Those left to remember Bob are his wife, Kim Van Arkel of Newton; sons, Ryan (Liz) Van Arkel of Des Moines and Adam (Emily) Van Arkel of Grinnell; his sister, Rhonda (Scott) Morrill of Altoona; uncle, Ed (Andi) Van Zee of Newton; his mother-in-law, Bette Oskam of Newton; and his siblings-in-law, Bernie (Renee) Oskam, Belinda (Gary) Birkenholtz, Jim (Brenda) Oskam, and Missy (Randy) Graff, all of Newton; and his many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and father-in-law, Tony Oskam.

Every time you see a beautiful sunset be reminded that Bob is with us.

Van Arkel Robert