

Welcome

Thank you all for taking the time to help us honor Dad's life. Today we gather to celebrate his legacy. This is a sad occasion in that it ends this chapter of Dad's life with us, yet he renews his life with Mom and shares eternal life with our LORD. For this, our faith lifts our spirit.

For those who do not know me, my name is Rob, "I'm Bill's son."

Those words will be significant when I share later. Today we want you reflect positively and enjoy this collage of dad's life.

To help us understand the significance of life let me introduce a good friend, Mr. Raymond Aviles, who will share some scripture and wisdom from GOD's word. Then Chelsea and Ryan, Bill's grandchildren, will share some thoughts on "Poppie's" life. Friends will share some scripture and finally, Cari and I will share our remembrance of Dad and we will close in prayer. We hope the photos we shared will help us focus on happier times. After the celebration concludes we invite you to Mom and Dad's home to share food, fellowship and memories; I see many treasured friends. Again, we thank you for your precious gift of time to honor Dad's life.

Mr. Aviles will you come forward to lead us.

Dad's Tribute

Bill Roberts was born in Los Angeles to Eleanor and Verdell Roberts on June 21, 1934. He was educated in public school and graduated from Manuel Arts High School. While at Manuel he participated in sports and built some lasting relationships, many which continued for a lifetime. He gained great satisfaction in connecting with the past and celebrating with good friends. He also enjoyed the reunions, and wonderful fellowship.

Mom and dad brought us into the world through a marriage that lasted 42 years. They made Torrance our home for 14 years. Then in 1971, we moved to Hacienda Heights where they established our hometown and many friendships with all of you. Dad opened his own business Vocational Rehabilitation Associates and was active in political and legislative activity related to workers compensation reform, as well as rehabilitation for people with disabilities. He had the opportunity to testify before Congressional sub-committees; in a small way making a lasting difference for the underserved in this country.

Mom really enjoyed a tidy house, but dad was a bit different. The garage and office was his domain. The office was never organized

and the garage never sheltered a running car. However, we had room for seventeen file cabinets, two tool chests, countless power tools, and multiple flashlights. In addition, for 35 years he had a 32 Ford coupe that never saw the road. Mom had a place for everything; dad had everything, everywhere that is until Mom would push it out in to the garage or back to the office. Then Dad would claim Mom was cluttering him, he would protest and then give in. Many of you, who spent a lot time on Golden Rose, know this as well.

The memories of the football games Dad and I shared are priceless. Well I should say "WE" shared. During my middle school and early high school years, Dad took us to all the big football games in Southern California. Weekly went to Veteran's stadium, East Los Angeles College, the Coliseum, the Rose Bowl, Cerritos College, the Big "A", Eddie West Field, FOHI, Orange Coast College, Santa Ana Bowl, RCC, Glover Field, Mt.SAC, Citrus and many others to see classic high school football games. He would take all of my friends that wanted to go. We would pile in to the Dodge Colt to see traditional battles between Banning & Carson, Servite & Mater Dei, Edison & Fountain Valley, Los Altos & West Covina, Riverside Poly & Fontana, Amat & St Paul and of course Dan's '82 City Championship at Marshall. We saw the first USFL game in the Coliseum with a \$40

million dollar quarterback, Steve Young. We watched Army-Navy in the Rose Bowl, there are simply too many to recall. He also took me to meet men like John Scolinos and Jim Blewett. What Dad did not know is he was cultivating a football coach!

Dad delighted in my accomplishments and he would share with all that would listen. He had attire for all my stops. Wilson, Mt.SAC, Los Altos; he had all the colors. Regardless of my role, dad was there in full regalia as my #1 fan. In my high school years, when he was on the road, he would find a way to catch a red eye just so he could make it for game time. When I was coaching and we won the 1997 Community College National Championship at Mt.SAC, he was the first one down on the field, pushing his way through the security, he was not to be denied that big congratulatory hug! He was very proud of me and my sister, Cari and our entire family; he simply enjoyed being Dad and "Big Billy" to many. He was a great father; my 21 years of experience serving kids give me tremendous appreciation for my parents.

When I left coaching and became principal, he was a fixture at Los Altos High School. The fall meant staking a claim in the northeast corner of the end zone, carrying his folding chair to his front row seat,

dressed from head to toe in red, white and blue. He was in his comfort zone; grandkids, son and Friday night lights and greeting all the coaches as they entered the stadium. A friend sent me an email on last Monday that read *"Often I noticed your dad's attention diverted from the football game to watching your boys play on the sidelines...He always smiled & laughed and seemed to take an unusual amount of joy watching them."* Yes, that was Dad! On Saturday mornings, my wife Maria would always question the Friday food intake, for Will and Matt, **half-time resulted in a trip to the snack stand for candy and post game meant a trip for ice cream; all courtesy of Poppie!. These are especially moving memories.**

Above all, Dad was a proud parent. Whenever I introduced Dad he took great joy in announcing himself as "I'm Rob's dad" I suppose this is the ultimate compliment, one that says I'm proud of you son, but it always embarrassed me so because we are what our parents helped us become; for my sister and I, we are servants in public schools. Mom and Dad gave us direction, supervised their children, modeled expected behavior and loved in abundance. For Dad, his wife and family were his priority; he had causes throughout his life, no real hobbies, just certain tastes for things like totes, zip lock bags and loud colored clothing. He possessed good habits of mind - liked facts

and detested anything but the truth. He had little time for a sales pitch, but possessed a kind heart for the needy as well as charitable organizations. He enjoyed public speaking and general conversation, always rich in vocabulary; he insisted it roll fluently in educated terms. He always substantiated his claims with multiple documents and volumes of copies. I believe his Kinko's account needed an addendum. But always a responsible parent!

Dad thoroughly enjoyed another life as well. Life in Lake Arrowhead was cultivated by Grandpa Chase's dream; build a house in the mountains for retreat with family – 48 years later the legacy lives in with a fourth generation. I recall as a youngster, Dad forgoing the TV at night for a gaze at the heavens. I could not understand then, but do now, the escape the stars provide from the hectic life of flatlanders. There are so many memories of the Lake, but the 4th of July holidays are most vivid. We had many of friend share life on the lake, Mom's spare ribs, and baked beans, the day culminating with fireworks shot from the barge in the middle of the lake; simple traditional routines punctuated with the annual dock picture – very simple, yet exciting and indelible. Dad taught many of our friends to water ski and we got our money out of the “Green machine”, our boat. Countless hours going round the lake, now engrained in our memory.

As Dad grew older, his cause and passion became larger than Lake recreation. He worked alongside a minority of folks who confronted the small time politics of water rights; a topic now on the agenda of many communities across the country. Dad's persistent activities through PLAN exposed myths and led a majority of residents to understand the reality of an over-use challenge as well as sweetheart deals negotiated for the benefit of the very privileged. He relished the drama and maintained a taste for challenging inequities with a penchant for confrontation based on brutal facts. He developed friends from these battles; established late in his life that would endure until the very end. These folks are amongst us today; good people, with earnest will, and steadfast ethics!

My dad thrived on being in control. He liked things done a certain way and though following his direction might make a three-hour project out of a ten-minute chore; his way never failed the quality check. If he planted flowers he had to prepare the soil, this meant 30 bags of fertilizer and tilling every inch of the planter. However, those impatiens grew longer and fuller than any. He was diligent in his care for others, more so than his own. He studied and learned the new the ropes of health care, then negotiated his way through a myriad of health care bureaucracy. He challenged and championed Mamma's

liver transplants, persuading America's best liver transplant surgeon for a chance. He was there for Grandma and Auntie as well; loyalty was definitely the center of his character.

Dad had some strange peculiarities as well. Prior to Mamma's death, Dad refused to use coupons. After Mom died, Dad would make a special trip to our house just for a coupon for *Bed, Bath and Beyond*. However, now I think he used this simply as an excuse to come and see Will, Matthew and Emma Jewel; one more reason to stop by with fruit cups, cashews, Capri Suns, cookies for the kids. There was a great ritual in seeing him pull-up in that Black, Lincoln Navigator. The kids would drop everything and run for Poppie, knowing his presence brought with it the promise of treats for his grandchildren. Then he would just sit, or more often stand, and watch the kids on their scooters, big wheels and bikes. Whizzing around with the neighborhood children embroiled in nothing other than childhood frolic.

Dad enjoyed his grandchildren. Emma says she will remember Poppie for his "food, cookies and Halloween goodies. He always had his phone holder around his neck and I liked the trips to the donut shop." Matthew said he liked "4th of July the best and watching

fireworks on the boat with Poppie. Also when Pop would come to the house and watch TV with us sleeping with his mouth wide-open.”

William said his favorite time was Arrowhead when he'd wake-up early and talk with Papa in his room. “I also liked when Papa would watch us fish. I'll always remember his orange shirt and yellow shorts too.”

I appreciate you for allowing me to share my rambling thoughts on my dad, your brother, and friend. When he had his heart attack, I prayed he would be alive when I arrived at PIH. When he survived and later it became apparent there would be no miracles I asked that I be with him when he died; I was blessed twice. I appreciate all that allowed me to break from my normal life to share dad's death. So do not be sad, our Dad and Mom are united again the way it should be. I love you dad, I cherish your fatherhood and we pray for the repose of your soul.

- Rob Roberts - son