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Robert 'Bob' Burnham

6-13-2024

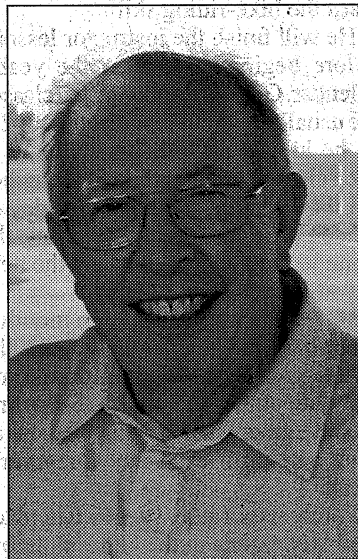
Robert "Bob" Burnham, 93, of Grinnell, Iowa, passed away June 7, 2024, at UnityPoint Grinnell Regional Medical Center.

A memorial service will be held on Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. at Grinnell Friends Church in Grinnell with visitation being held prior to the service, starting at 9:30 a.m.

A luncheon will be held immediately following the service in the fellowship hall.

There will be a private family burial.

Memorials may be designated to Grinnell Friends Church or Quaker Heights mailed in c/o Smith Funeral Home, PO Box 368, Grinnell, IA 50112.



Bob was born on May 2, 1931, in Kellogg, Iowa, to William and Velma (Stanley) Burnham, weighing in at around 2 pounds. He graduated from Grinnell High School with the class of 1950.

On October 20, 1951, Bob married Marilyn Sparks at her parents' home in Lynnville. The couple lived in Knoxville and Newton prior to returning to Grinnell in 1955. The couple had three children together; Bruce, Steve and Kathy.

Bob worked many different jobs before finding his passion. He started his journey sweeping floors at the Jacket Factory, after school and packing jackets in the summer. After he was married, he worked at York Lumber Yard working 55 hours a week earning only \$45.00. For a short time, he worked for Smith's Funeral home driving the ambulance and hearse and embalming. He worked at the Coast-to-Coast hardware store then on to the Jewel-Tea company until he contracted polio. After recovering he went to work for Tyre Construction where he was put in charge of a building project after he studied a book on using a square for steps and framing. In his spare time, he built two houses. He then went to work at McCain's Kitchen making kitchen cabinets, laying floors and designing kitchens. On the side he taped and textured walls and went on to work for a contractor using those skills. He became half owner of the Planing Mill and later bought out his partner to expand into upholstery, furniture stripping and refinishing and renamed the business to Bob's Custom Woodworking and Upholstery. After many years at his shop, he went on to work for the Grinnell-Newburg Community School District as Maintenance Supervisor, but realized he missed his love of working with wood so returned to the shop.

Bob loved the Lord deeply and had a humble servant's heart. He was very active in the church where he started and led the Christian Service Brigade, taught the boys Sunday school class, served on numerous church committees and could often be found quietly repairing things around the building.

Bob was married to Velma (Yoder) on October 4, 2008, and resided in Grinnell where they enjoyed many adventures together.

Bob will be remembered for his great storytelling, sense of humor and as a master craftsman. He enjoyed woodworking, fishing, boating, and camping at two of his favorite campgrounds, Rathbun Lake and Lake Red Rock.

Bob is survived by his children, Bruce (Robin) Burnham of Kingsley, Iowa, and Kathy (Lowell) Vanderploeg of Grinnell, Iowa; ten grandchildren; 22 great grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren; and his sister Doris (Edgar) Willer of Pella, Iowa.

He is preceded in death by his first wife, Marilyn; his second wife, Velma; his son, Steve; his sister, Gladys; and daughter-in-law, Connie Morrison.