



## Robert Arnold Hardley

April 6, 1930 - February 27, 2025

Robert (Bob) Arnold Hardley peacefully passed away into the loving arms of Jesus at the age of 94 on February 27, 2025, at Life of Riley, Maples, Traverse City, Michigan, with his loving family by his side. Bob was born on April 6, 1930, in Waterford, Michigan, to W. Arnold and Virginia Gaynor Hardley, both of whom preceded him in death. He lived a remarkable life of faith, adventure, service and unwavering dedication to his family and community. Bob was the devoted husband of Doris (Dory) Hardley, his beloved wife of 73 years. Their marriage was a testament to love, commitment, and partnership, built on countless cherished memories, laughter, and mutual respect.

In addition to his wife, Bob is survived by his children: Kenn (Sue Ellen) Hardley, Karen (Sky, deceased) Townsend, Kim (Marilyn) Hardley, and Kurt (Teeka) Hardley.

He was preceded in death by his son, Kevin Hardley.

Bob was a proud grandfather to nine grandchildren: Kyle (Lindsay) Hardley, Kaleb (Lyndsie) Hardley, Kade Hardley, Cody Hardley, Travis (Lindsey) Hardley, Joshua (Christal) Keller, Derrick (Jessica) Keller, Ashley (fiancé Jonathan Winterrowd) Keller, and Danielle Hardley.

He was also blessed with 26 great grandchildren, as well as one great, great grandchild, with another due soon.

Bob was preceded in death by five brothers: Gary, Mick, Ted, Ron, and Phil Hardley, and his sister, Janet Bullard.

He is survived by his brother Aaron, (Barb) Hardley of Osseo, MN, and brother-in-law Duane (Mary Lynn) Sheldon of Phoenix, AZ.

#### A Life of Dedication and Service

Bob graduated from Mesick High School in 1949, where he lettered in football, basketball, and baseball. He later pursued higher education at the Grand Rapids School of Bible and Music and Ball State University. Bob served his country as an MP, SP4, in the Michigan Army National Guard. An avid athlete and official, Bob was a longtime Michigan High School basketball referee and played baseball, fast-pitch softball, and hockey in the Traverse City area. His passion for community service was evident in the countless hours he devoted to volunteering. Bob was a dedicated volunteer at the National Cherry Festival for over 40 years, and actively served at Bayview Church, Interlochen Center for the Arts, and the Mesick Historical Society.

#### Founder of deCycles and Impact on Youth

In 1970, Bob founded deCycles, Inc., a Christian, faith-based high adventure program for high school and college students, based in Hartford City, Indiana. Through deCycles, he led countless numbers of youth on treks including whitewater rafting, canoeing, snow skiing, and long distance bicycle trips. These bicycle journeys took hundreds of students across most of the continental United States and several Canadian Provinces. One of these bike trips included a special invitation to the White House and Rose Garden with President Gerald Ford and wife Bette. The longest trip was 4300 miles over 6 weeks, averaging over 120 miles per day. Bob's dedication to empowering young people through adventure and faith earned him the Sagamore of the Wabash, Indiana's highest civilian honor, awarded by Governor Otis Bowen, in 1976. His work with deCycles left a lasting legacy, as the program continues to this day, led by a former alumnus, Norm Houze, in Bloomington, Indiana.

#### A Career of Leadership

Bob's professional career reflected his dedication to leadership and service. He moved his family to Indiana while working as a District Executive for the Boy Scouts of America. He later became the General Manager of radio station

WWHC in Hartford City, Indiana, before retiring as the Director of the Management Services at the Indiana Toll Road.

#### Final Years and Gratitude

Bob's final years were spent with Dory at the Village at Bay Ridge Senior Community and later at Life of Riley, Maples, Traverse City, Michigan. His family deeply appreciates the love and care he received from Life of Riley, PACE North, and Heartland Hospice. They also wish to thank the pastoral staff of Bayview Church for their many visits and prayers over the last few years.

Bob and Dory's favorite song, "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound," was a cherished melody in their lives. Bob often played it on his piano, filling their home with its timeless beauty and deep meaning.

#### Celebration of Life

A celebration of Bob's life will be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at Bayview Church, 720 Wayne Street, Traverse City, Michigan. Visitation will begin at 10:00 am with the service to commence at 11:00.

Arrangements provided by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 21. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Bayview Church  
720 Wayne Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684

## Celebration of Life

MAY 21. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Bayview Church  
720 Wayne Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684

# Tribute Wall

CR

“ *Sending prayers for you all at this time of loss. Bob was such a wonderful soul and has been and will always be one of my favorite people that I have been blessed to enter my life. I can just see him in the joyous arms of our Father!* ”

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**Caren Rivera** - April 28, 2025 at 12:44 PM

IS

“ *What a wonderful human being.* ”

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**Ilona F. Smerekanich** - April 06, 2025 at 08:15 PM

KH

“ *My sincere sympathy to all of the Hardley family in the loss of Bob. Hartford City was blessed to have you all for some special years.* ”

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**Karen Hickman** - March 13, 2025 at 02:43 PM

CV

*So sorry Kurt for your loss. Sending prayers to you and Teeka and Danielle and the rest of your family as you mourn such an important person in your life.*

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**Chai Voris** - March 14, 2025 at 12:23 PM

TD

“ *Dory and Family,*  
*My thoughts and prayers are with you all. I'm beyond blessed to have been able to be a part of your lives even if it was only for a short while. Thank you for making my days of going to work so much brighter knowing I'd see your love shine like none I've ever seen. Take care and God bless all of you* ❤️  
*Your loving caregiver,*  
*Teresa* ❤️

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**Teresa Dalian** - March 13, 2025 at 01:01 AM

KR

“ *Karen and Family*

*Keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.*  
*Sending much love* ❤️ 🙏

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**Kevin and Liz Rollins** - March 12, 2025 at 05:52 PM