



Robert Lee Hilligoss

January 3, 1942 - November 13, 2023

Robert Lee Hilligoss, 81, died at 3:51 a.m. Monday, November 13, 2023 at his home in Godfrey. Born January 3, 1942 in Tuscola, IL, he was the son of Robert S. and Letha (Cook) Hilligoss. Mr. Hilligoss graduated from Mattoon High School and Eastern Illinois University. He was a social studies teacher for Westfield High School from 1964-1965. From there he taught at Divernon High School from 1966-1972 and then Rochester High School from 1972-1977. He then returned to Divernon High School and taught from 1990-2011. Along with teaching social studies, he was a basketball coach at each school. From 1977-2000 he owned and operated Browns Chicken and Shoe Factory in Alton. After retiring from teaching, he worked as a docent at The Lincoln Museum from 2010-2015. He had currently been working for Smart Choice Auto as a driver. On Friday evenings he enjoyed dancing at the VFW Hall and on Saturday's he danced at the Grafton Winery. He married the former Madonna Sue Barr on February 26, 1965 in Springfield, IL. She preceded him in death on August 11, 2017. He is survived by two sons, Kevin Hilligoss (Michelle) of Alton and Ryan Hilligoss of Cortland, IL, four grandchildren, Graham, Aurora, Audrey, and Annalynn as well as a step-grandchild, Brittany Pace (Corey). He is also survived by a brother, Rick Hilligoss of Bethalto and a sister, Ruth Hilligoss of Moro, brother and sister-in-law, Forrest and Glenda Wikoff of Decatur, his dancing partner and girlfriend, Donna "Donna 2" Monroe of Godfrey, a niece, Erin Hilligoss of Moro, two nephews, Joel Hilligoss of Ft. Worth, TX, and Travis Hilligoss of Moro, as well as several cousins and

extended family who he was very close with. Along with his parents and wife, he was preceded in death by a son, Sean Hilligoss and a brother, Ronald Hilligoss. Visitation will be from 10:00 a.m. until time of funeral service at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, November 18, 2023 at Gent Funeral Home in Alton. Jay McCurdy will officiate. Memorials may be made to the American Diabetes Association. Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **18**. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home Inc
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002
(618) 466-5544
<https://www.gentfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral

NOV **18**. 1:00 PM (CT)

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2409 State Street
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Tribute Wall

SK

“ Ryan and family,

I want you to know how sad I was to learn of the passing of your Dad and the Grandfather of your children. Bob and I grew up in the Mattoon area and attended Mattoon High School together. I was only a couple of years older. Although we hadn't seen each other in years, we reconnected and it was just like it was yesterday.

Bob had such an outgoing personality and liked all people. People liked to be around him too. He seemed to always look for the good in someone rather than the negative. I never knew anyone who didn't like him.

Bob had many varied interests including classic cars. He shared stories of his T Bird and I of my Model A Ford. We both made a career of teaching and coaching and shared quite a few stories.

One story that remains at the top of the list is a personal basketball story. Bob was a sophomore when I was a senior in school. The sophomore team was scrimmaging the varsity. I was guarding Bob as he drove down the right side of the court and he pulled up and hit a jump shot over me. Bob named me the MHS STOPPER and I called him the MHS SHOOTER. What a laugh we had over the years!

Bob had a way to instill laughter in people. He knew how to forward an email joke to his male friends and attempt to seek a response. He just knew how to agitate with humor without hurting anyone's feelings.

Another memory of Bob was that he loved to talk and tell stories regardless of where he was. Bob was slowly losing his hearing and would talk louder. The last time we were in a restaurant, every customer was aware of the story he was telling. LOL. When in college he worked at the Burger King. When he would go back and visit Mattoon and the Burger King, he love to mimic and call out the number of whose order was up. He was just full of life.

This world was a better place with the likes of Bob Hilligoss. He was genuine man of stature and contributed so much to the “betterment “ of this old world. He met so many people on his life’s journey. I am proud to say that I was fortunate to have been his friend. I can just see him dancing his way up to the gates of Heaven. Bob will be missed. My deepest sympathy.

Steve Kimery, a lifetime friend.

Steve Kimery - November 21, 2023 at 06:16 PM

BM

i was one of Bob's friends I knew him trough Jackson and jackson was his neighbor bob would always come to my bowling matches for Alton middle school Bob was a funny guy a we all will miss him i hope to see him again some day fro Blake Martin

Blake martin - March 05, 2024 at 11:33 AM

RR

“ *I have to keep looking at Bob's obit because I can't wrap my head around the fact that he won't be dancing (except in heaven). Bob was the 1st person I met at the VFW and he was a delight. I feel blessed to have known him.*

Roxanne Russell - November 17, 2023 at 12:25 PM

RR

“ *Roxanne & Don Russell purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Robert Lee Hilligoss.*



Roxanne & Don Russell - November 17, 2023 at 12:20 PM

RR

“ Roxanne & Don Russell planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Lee Hilligoss.

Roxanne & Don Russell - November 17, 2023 at 12:20 PM

ML

“ Bob, the Professor, will be missed on the dance floor. Always had so much fun doing the bump with him! My prayers go out to Donna and his family. Good guy gone too soon! 😞

Mary Loy - November 16, 2023 at 05:35 PM

TK

“ Bob and I were fraternity brothers at EIU but, most of all, we were good friends. We have lived far apart for many years but I have always felt a hard-to-explain attachment to this good man who made me laugh so hard, so often. He touched many lives and will be missed. My condolences to the Hilligoss family.

Tom Kitsos

Tom Kitsos - November 16, 2023 at 04:30 PM

TH

“ He was my junior year history teacher (1973) at Rochester. Really enjoyed his class and his great sense of humor. RIP, Mr. Hilligoss.

Ted Harvatin - November 16, 2023 at 06:53 AM

BW

“ Bob will be greatly missed at the VFW. Loved watching him dance and his light-up shoes. RIP Bob

Becky Willmore - November 15, 2023 at 10:50 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Hilligoss.*



November 15, 2023 at 06:24 PM



“ *I am so sorry to hear that Bobby passed. I hadn't seen or talked to him for a long time, very sorry! John R.Hilligoss*

John Hilligoss - November 15, 2023 at 05:37 PM



“ *Dear Ryan and Family.
I am sorry to hear about your loss. Sending you all my condolences.*

Justin Cantor - November 15, 2023 at 05:08 PM



“ *What can I say, best cousin in ken and evas family. Love you Bobby hope to see you in heaven.*

Donald e Hilligoss - November 15, 2023 at 04:45 PM



“ *Will miss seeing Bob on the dance floor at VFW and Grafton Winery.... what a great guy, he would light up the room! prayers for the family and Donna. Kim & Rick*

Kim - November 15, 2023 at 02:32 PM

PM

“ I met Coach while Coaching in Morrisonville back in the late 90's... He was one of the most knowledgeable and inspiring coaches that I have ever been around... My prayers to his family... and know that your Dad was a **WORLD CHANGER!!**

Paul Millburg - November 15, 2023 at 01:05 PM

TC

“ So sorry For your loss. Bob was one heck of a nice guy. I don't think he had an enemy in the world. I remember when we first moved to Divernon in 1970. We had only been there about a week when he came to the door and asked me to come out for the football team. I will never forget that. I was the new kid in town and really appreciated him asking me to be on the team. Will miss him.

Tom Cooper - November 15, 2023 at 12:24 PM

DH

“ when he worked at the Quick-n-ez in springfield on toronto road his name there was the iceman he was so funny and im so glad i got to know him

DAVID N HARRIS - November 14, 2023 at 06:53 PM

RB

“ One of our favorite fun dancers. Bob lit up any room and loved his life. (TRAGG BAND-Lyle & Robin; Steve & Pattie & Jim) RIP, BOB You are missed!

ROBIN G BATSON - November 14, 2023 at 04:46 PM