



Robert Clay Sturgill

NOV 21, 1936 - MAY 24, 2025



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Loudoun
FUNERAL CHAPEL & CREMATORY
LEESBURG, VIRGINIA

Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Obituary | Page 3 |
| Events | Page 5 |
| Tribute Wall | Page 6 |



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It is with heavy hearts that we announce the peaceful passing of our father, Robert (Bob) Clay Sturgill, a fifty-year resident of Leesburg, VA who went to be with the Lord on May 23rd, 2025 at the age of 88. Bob was adored by his family, friends, community, and will be missed.

Bob was born and raised in Norton, Virginia and was the youngest of five children. The tales of his youth (which could have made a great Netflix series) may or may not have led to being "asked" to leave a few high schools yet he graduated Norton High School in 1954 and joined the United States Air Force. This event forever changed his life and developed into a lifelong passion for aviation and air traffic safety.

Upon leaving the service in 1961, he began his career as an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration. Bob was legendary in the Air Traffic Control community. As a founding member and Vice President of the former Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO), he made significant contributions by encouraging the FAA to update the radar and communications systems which we still use today.

Bob had stepped down from that position prior to the 1981 air traffic controller strike and - at great personal risk - encouraged the controller community not to participate in a strike. In 1982 he formed a group name the Concerned Air Traffic Controllers who travelled the country meeting with air traffic controllers to discourage them from joining the strike that PATCO had organized.

His passion and professionalism as an air traffic controller for 31 years was evident to all who knew him. Bob made friends easily. He was quick to laugh, was an epic storyteller, and had a gift of putting those around him at ease. When he called you "friend" that meant for life, and he was blessed to have so many.



Obituary

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Bob's personal life could easily be defined by his love of golf and surrounded himself with those who loved it. An avid player (he rarely told you his real handicap) he played almost every day. Most, if not all, of his lifelong friendships were formed on the course. He would play anywhere, with anybody, in any condition, and would famously join in on any first tee Nassau bet (see handicap note above).

Bob is survived by his loving wife Irene Sturgill of fifty years. Bob leaves behind four children. Daughter Catherine Sturgill, son Clay Sturgill (wife Julie), son Ryan Sturgill (wife Lauren) and favorite child, daughter Renee Grace (husband Pat). The grandchildren whom he will watch over are Amanda, Sam, Max, William (Will), Kelly, Bobby and John (Johnny).

Bob will always be remembered for the love, the laughter and the respect that he provided all of his family. Bob requested that his remembrance service be a lighthearted "party" to be held in his honor at Raspberry Falls Country Club grill room on July 9th, 2025 between the hours of 4pm and 7pm.

His family requests in lieu of flowers we would appreciate your kind thoughts and prayers as you recall a fond memory of Bob. Those attending his celebration of life are free to come prepared with a light-hearted story or two. May you Rest in Peace, Dad. You gave us your love, devotion and a wonderful example. You will always be remembered for the blessing you were in our lives.



Events


Robert Clay Sturgill

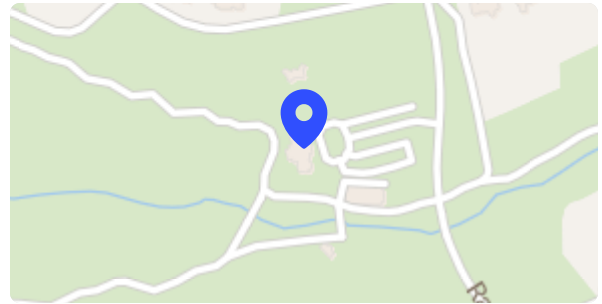
NOV 21, 1936 - MAY 24, 2025

Remembrance Gathering

 **Wednesday**, July 9, 2025

 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET

 **Raspberry Falls Golf and Hunt Club**
41601 Raspberry Dr., Leesburg VA 20176





Tribute Wall

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WG

William Graves posted:

Cathie and I were saddened with the news of the passing of Bob and Irene, having known them both from our time in Leesburg from 1975 til we left in 1985. I worked with Bob for many years as an Air Traffic Controller at the Leesburg Center. He was great to work with and we shared many happy moments outside of work and with our families. Condolences from us here in New Zealand. Bill and Cathie Graves

July 5 at 8:44 PM

KA

Kaydee posted:

Great Uncle Bobby lives on through all the lives he has touched. And what an amazing older brother to my Nana! The Sturgill love of God is strong...thusly reaching epochs into the future. May such a life lived to the fullest, be celebrated far beyond one's brief Earthly existence. Love, Kaydee Pickle (Wertz)

May 29 at 8:25 PM



Tribute Wall

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E. Joe Kelly posted:

It's with great sadness I learned of the passing of my old friend Bob Sturgill. After his retirement from FAA Bob and I worked together with the Kelly Insurance group for twenty years and they were fun times. Bob had a wonderful ability to socialize with any group or individual and formed a warm friendship quickly with his friendly outgoing nature. I enjoyed working with Bob, he was an early morning business person, the afternoon was always reserved for golf. He convinced me in my late years that I could be a golfer and took it upon himself to teach me to play and providing me with my first set of clubs. He was an excellent golf coach and he succeeded in passing on the love of golf, he taught me the rules and the edicts of the game and the respect for fellow players. He did not make me a great golfer but more important he taught me to love the sport which I do to this day. My sincere sympathy to Irene and all the family for their loss and may the Good Lord provide him with a Heavenly Fairway. Joe Kelly

May 29 at 7:56 AM



Carol Hall-Veit June 8 at 7:29 AM

Bob was wonderful to work with. Sense of humor and everyone at Kelly loved him.



Estelle Suk May 30 at 3:00 PM

Dear Irene , Cathie, Clay , Ryan and Renee , grandchildren & great grandchildren so sorry to hear that Bob had passed ., Hang on to all the wonderful past memories. Prayers and strength to all during these stressful times. Estelle Suk



Clay Sturgill May 30 at 2:50 PM

Joe! We should have mentioned the impact your friendship with dad had on his life. He adored you and we are so thankful for the friend you were to him!



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Robert by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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