



Robert Isbister

September 24, 1940 - May 31, 2025

Robert Lee Isbister, age 84, passed away at Trinity Health - Ann Arbor Hospital May 31, 2025.

Bob was born September 24, 1940, in Detroit, Michigan, was preceded in death by his parents Russell and Clara Isbister (Wild), and brother, Jim Isbister (Jenifer). He was a proud alumni of Plymouth High School and Western Michigan University.

Bob met his loving wife of nearly 59 years, Susan (Slack), while they were students at Western Michigan. They enjoyed spending many summers at Oak Beach, Michigan, their retirement years wintering in Indian Shores, Florida, and taking vacations with their WMU friends.

Bob was an accountant/financial controller for a number of material handling companies in the Detroit area. He was the founding member of the Buryl Hill Inc. Tuesday afternoon golf league at the Farmington Hills Golf Club (formerly San Marino). Playing golf all over the country at some of the finest resort courses available was an adventure he shared with dear friends.

When Bob wasn't chasing the little white ball around the course, he spent a large part of his recreation time in the pool. A U.S. Masters swimmer for many years, he competed for both State and National Championships during his competitive years. As he slowed down after competing, he still found the early morning swims in the area and the friends he made along the way worth waking up for.

Bob and Sue's son, Steven, along with wife Charlotte (Hillier) and their son

Ryan were a special joy to visit, first in Nashville and now San Diego. Bob passed down his love of Detroit sports to his family. He and Steve spent many years attending Opening Day at Tiger Stadium. Bob was in attendance for World Series games in 1968, 1984, 2006, and 2012. He volunteered at many professional golf events and Super Bowl XL. Bob served in the United States Coast Guard Reserve after his time at Western Michigan. Keeping his mind sharp by working on the daily Sudoku in the newspaper while enjoying televised sports was an oft repeated activity. A recent tradition of golfing Christmas Eve morning with his son, grandson, and daughter-in-law, was a special joy. Bob was a handy person who could fix or install just about anything. He will be remembered by all who knew him as a kind, loving, humble, and humorous family man.

Contributions to the First Tee of Greater Detroit (firstteegreaterdetroit.org) in lieu of flowers.

Visitation will take place on Saturday, June 14, 2025, at 10 AM until the memorial service honoring Bob at 12 NOON at Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, 46401 Ann Arbor Road West (between Sheldon and Beck) Plymouth. To share a memory, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 14. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Memorial Service

JUN 14. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Tribute Wall

MF

“ I’m happy to announce that the Buryl Hill golf league, which Bob ran for over 40 years, has raised the funds necessary to have a memorial bench installed at the Farmington Hills Golf Club.

Mark Fitch - June 13, 2025 at 05:36 PM

GC

“ When I started teaching at Fisher Elementary School in South Redford, I met Bob who quickly became a friend of everybody. Years later being tech savvy, he was recruited to work in our computer lab. The students loved his patience, kindness, and helpfulness.
Gail Clark

Gail Patrice Clark - June 13, 2025 at 01:33 PM

SE

“ "Need a breath, take a breath." One of Bob's words of advise when I was learning how to swim. At age 32, I met Bob and a group of swimmers at the Livonia YMCA. Bob in particular helped me to begin to master basic techniques for swimming. But more important was his sharing enthusiasm for the sport and for life. Bob's Barn Bash; Friday morning breakfast after swim workout; the swimmer's end of the outdoor season golf outing; and introducing me to swimming in open water at Trout Lake. Good memories of a good man. He will be missed.

Steve Erickson - June 12, 2025 at 09:10 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Robert Isbister.



June 12, 2025 at 12:09 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Robert Isbister.



June 11, 2025 at 01:58 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert Isbister.

June 11, 2025 at 01:58 PM



“ A grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert Isbister.

June 10, 2025 at 01:47 PM

FC

“ FAST Swim and Triathlon Club purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Robert Isbister.



FAST Swim and Triathlon Club - June 09, 2025 at 09:51 AM

FC

“ FAST Swim and Triathlon Club planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Isbister.

FAST Swim and Triathlon Club - June 09, 2025 at 09:51 AM

MO

“ Uncle Bob gave me my first set of golf clubs - his old set of Sam Sneads with the patented "reminder grip". We were both lefties which meant that I no longer had to use my dad's right handed clubs upside down and backwards! Whether it was playing golf, going to a baseball game or any other activity, spending time with Uncle Bob was a pleasure. He was easy going - always offering encouragement with a gentle laugh and a smile. I still have those clubs he gave me nearly 50 years ago with the reminder grips- which will always remind me of you, Uncle Bob. Keep swinging, fellow lefty.

Mark Olson - June 08, 2025 at 06:26 PM

RO

“ I met Bob when I was about 10 or 12 years old. I think I first learned how to tie a necktie as I was preparing for Bob and Sue’s wedding – a skill that came in handy during my own wedding a few years later. Looking back at old photos, I am reminded that Bob and Sue were in attendance at our wedding along with little Stevie. Of the things I could mention about Bob, a most memorable aspect -- consistent throughout many years -- was Bob’s quick and gentle smile. Like the way he approved of my necktie. I remember a more recent summer when Bob and Sue were in San Diego looking after their grandson at a time when Steve and Charlotte were out of town. Vera and I invited them to come out to our beach cottage for a cookout one evening (just like Steve and Charlotte do every year). A few minutes before Sue and Bob were about to get in their car to head home, little five-year-old Ryan showed up and said “Look, I’m a corndog!” (to be a corndog, you jump in the ocean then roll in the sand – a trick our daughter taught him). I recall that Aunt Sue did not approve, but Bob just smiled and shook his head. Keep on smiling Uncle Bob. I’ll think of you on Sundays, when I put on my tie.

Rick Olson - June 07, 2025 at 03:27 PM

SG

“ I knew Bob from swimming at both the Schoolcraft and Livonia YMCA pools. He always said that doing the butterfly stroke works out the kinks in your back so I learned to swim butterfly. I'm sure there's a lap pool in heaven! I will miss Bob as he was always kind and so good natured. My husband, Ken, and I are keeping Sue, Steven, Charlotte, and Ryan in our prayers.

Susan Gutowski - June 07, 2025 at 07:44 AM

CH

“ I knew Bob for only a short time while playing in the Tuesday afternoon Buryl golf league. A very nice gentle man he seemed to be. You could tell he loved and had a passion for the game of golf. May his soul RIP!

Chuck Hill - June 06, 2025 at 03:42 AM

MW

“ I knew Bob from the Buryl Hill Golf League. He was a great leader, who loved to play golf and will be missed by our entire league. Bob never had a bad thing to say about anyone. RIP my friend, gone but never forgotten!

Marc White - June 05, 2025 at 07:16 PM

BS

“ We will miss our times we have spent with Bob and Sue. love ,Bob and Rosie

Bob&Rosie Sillars - June 05, 2025 at 07:06 PM

GB

“ I knew Bob for just over 40 years, a short time compared to some of his other golf buddy's. I started with the Buryl Hill Golf League back at San Marino and Bob was the Commissioner and continued as such to the end. He was the kindest soul you would ever have the pleasure to meet. He was a pleasure to associate with on the course or just having lunch. Whenever he called my office the girls would put him straight through, no matter how busy, they knew his voice, "it's Bob from Golf". I will truly miss Bob's smile and good nature. Godspeed Comiss!

Gerald Budd - June 05, 2025 at 05:54 PM

BD

“ I will always remember Mr. Isbister as a friendly and caring man. He welcomed me and my buddies into his golf league and genuinely showed interest in our lives outside of the golf league. What a great individual. Rest in peace Bobby !!

Brad Dennis - June 05, 2025 at 05:17 PM

GR

“ Bob was a tremendous individual. A very good listener and communication. A kind person who will be missed. Enjoyed the many years that I was able to spend time with Bob at McD, after his swim at Lifetime Fitness!!

Glenn Ratkewicz - June 05, 2025 at 03:27 PM

BM

“ Bob was a special man. We had coffee at McDonalds frequently and he always had a smile. I don't think he ever met a stranger. Always kind I was honored to visit him at St. Joe's and see him May 30th. He was quick to smile. I'll remember him fondly. My condolences to the family.

Bob Miller - June 05, 2025 at 02:36 PM

JW

“ Bob had an adventurist nature. I was a pilot and member of club that had a small plane (Cessna 172). It was sometimes hard to get people to fly with but Bob would go with me on day trips to golf courses all over the state. one trip was to an landing strip surrounded by a 10ft fence to keep deer out and we had to climb it get to the course. We landed at grass strips with cows grazing nearby. One time 3 deer were crossing just before we touched down. Small planes do not do well in turbulent air but Bob could handle any weather condition I went into. I miss those trips.

Jim Willey

Jim Willey - June 05, 2025 at 01:34 PM



“ Bob was a great guy. Whether at work, golfing, swimming, or sharing a beer, Bob always had a great sense of humor and everyone was just a bit happier to have him there. He will be sorely missed. RIP, my friend.

Steve McCormick - June 05, 2025 at 01:12 PM

PL

“ Condolences to all of Bob family. I'm just coming back from afternoon hours to early morning, where I met Bob a Lifetime Fitness friend. It felt so empty knowing I will not be seeing him there anymore. I'm going to miss him, especially telling me around 4 4:30am, did you forget to warm the water up joking. As he stands there with his head down waiting for his body to adjust to the really cold water. I'll yell across the pool, WAKEUP!! He would just nod his head with a big smile, and say my wife tell me Aim crazy for getting up this early to come in here. Always was kind and humble. RIP



Phyllis Lakes - June 05, 2025 at 01:11 PM