



Robert Grant Maldegen

May 3, 1928 - December 26, 2023

Robert Grant (Bob) Maldegen passed away on December 26th, 2023. Bob is survived by his wife, Helene, his six daughters, Kathlyn Maldegen; Jann (Horacio) Lardo; Susan (Daniel) Schnee; Joellyn (Peter) Gurczynski; Robyn (Mark) Youngjohn; and Kristin Derenthal. He is celebrated by 17 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren, with one more on the way. Bob was known to his family as “the man, the myth, the legend” and “the gentle giant.”

Bob was born on May 3, 1928 to Hazel Darrow and Johannes (John) Maldegen. Bob grew up in Detroit helping his parents in their garden and greenhouse, raising flowers and vegetables that he helped them sell at Eastern Market downtown. They also raised goats for milk and cheese.

Spirit of Excellence

Bob’s life was characterized by his spirit of excellence. He set his standards high and reached for his goals with a combination of persistence and hard work.

As a young man, Bob attended Michigan State University on a football scholarship. While there, he discovered his talent for wrestling, making the 1948 Olympic wrestling team at 19 years old as a heavyweight. Bob studied horticulture at MSU and graduated with a B.S. in 1949.

Following college, Bob was hired as a 4-H agent for Monroe County, MI. In 1950, Bob married Barbara Mains. Together they embarked on their next life chapter raising a family which included daughters Kathy, Jann, and Susan in Allen Park and Inkster, MI.

Bob began his career selling insurance with Mains Insurance. In the late 1960s, Bob purchased the Mains Insurance Agency with Ray Chase, and Fairlane Associates, Inc. was born. As CEO and co-owner, Bob headed the commercial lines department. He was known for his skill building relationships with clients and other sales associates and his honesty in conducting business. The agency grew in success to employ 30 individuals under Bob's management.

A legacy of love

On November 17, 1966 Bob married Helene (Lee) Bogden Rogula and together they created a legacy of love. Bob and Lee prioritized their relationship creating a strong foundation with open communication and genuine affection. This foundation allowed them to blend and integrate their "yours, mine, and ours" family. Of all their accomplishments, Bob and Lee were most proud of having successfully blended their families.

Following their marriage, Bob joined Lee and her daughter Jody in their Dearborn home. In 1970 and 1971, Bob and Lee added two more daughters, Robyn and Kristin, to the family. The extended family enjoyed spending time with Bob and Lee at their Walloon Lake home and on family ski trips to Nubs Nob. Along the way, the family grew. There was always room for more; including friends who became "adopted" members of the family.

A life well lived

Bob adopted Rotary's motto "service before self" as a life philosophy. He was actively involved in the funding and execution of many service-oriented projects through Rotary and church during his life.

Bob was an active member of Rotary for 60 years. He served as President of the Dearborn Rotary Club and later in life became an active member of the Petoskey Rotary Club. Bob's favorite Rotary programs were the student exchange program through Rotary International and the Paul Harris Fellowship. Bob and his family hosted 8 international exchange students, and he helped countless other students as a mentor. Bob became a Paul Harris Fellow and supported others to become Paul Harris Fellows. The money

raised through this program supported the reduction of polio across the world through vaccination.

Bob and Lee retired to Petoskey, MI in 1990. As new full-time residents, they became active members of First Presbyterian Church of Petoskey where they served as ushers and assisted with maintenance and gardening projects. Bob also reconnected with former classmates from Redford High School and Michigan State “up north.” Bob enjoyed pursuing his passion -- skiing -- and could often be found at Nubs Nob. In the summer, Bob enjoyed sunset cruises around Walloon Lake. For the past 6 years Bob and Lee have resided in Cedarbrook, a senior living facility in Plymouth, Michigan, where they have made many new friends and also reconnected with colleagues and friends from their days in Dearborn.

Bob’s wife, Helene and their family request that any charitable donations be sent to Angela Hospice - <https://www.angelahospice.org/donate/> . This is one way to remember Bob’s legacy of love and honor his “service before self” life philosophy. Your prayers are also welcome.

A celebration of life service will be held at 11 AM on Saturday, June 8th at Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church, 1340 West Long Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

JUN 8. 11:00 AM (ET)

Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church
1340 West Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302

Tribute Wall

Jl

“ Jeff Swinson, Lake Forest, IL planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Grant Maldegen.

Jeff Swinson, Lake Forest, IL - June 06, 2024 at 10:09 AM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Robert Grant Maldegen.



June 06, 2024 at 10:09 AM

SB

“ Lee - I so enjoyed getting to know you both -- Bob was a gentle giant and was always kind and smiling.. You live in Plymouth and we moved here from Plymouth 35 years ago now. My love to you - Shirley Brown

Shirley Brown - January 03, 2024 at 10:37 PM

TN

“ Bob, ever a consummate gentleman, had a wonderful, big heart. He was a fabulous Rotarian and gave much of his time, talent and money. Lee came to many events and was also a strong supporter of the club. They were wonderful to know and a heartbreak to lose when they moved away. We kept him on as an Honorary Rotarian in case they could come to visit. I shall miss his gentle kindness and his big heart. My sincere condolences to Lee and the rest of his family. It was as though God told him "Well Done, your work is over and I am calling you home." RIP my friend. Terry and Betsy Newton

Terry Newton - January 03, 2024 at 03:45 PM

DL

Lee, my sincere condolences to you and your family on the loss of Bob. He was such a gentleman and I loved sharing a table and conversations with him at Rotary and other functions. His presence on this earth was felt and he will be missed.

Dianne Litzenburger - January 04, 2024 at 09:57 AM

FS

Lee - my sincere sympathy to you and Bob's children. As one of Bob's relations in Grand Rapids, he took me under his wing when I moved to Dearborn to attend UM. He helped me find a place to stay after having lived in his home for a number of weeks, he gave me the use of his car for my honeymoon, and was a wonderful friend. We lost track of each other over the years, but my wife Linda and I will always remember his warm smile and generous spirit. He was truly a special man....
Fred Sytsma, January 31, 2024

Fred Sytsma - January 31, 2024 at 07:48 PM