



## Robert Carey Piper

January 14, 1939 - August 27, 2023

Robert C. "Bob" Piper spent his entire life following provocative paths and taking interesting journeys. On August 27, 2023, he finally embarked on his next, biggest journey, of which we will never be able to imagine the breadth of that odyssey.

Bob was born January 14, 1939, in an orphanage in Kansas City. He was adopted as an infant by Milton and Velma Piper and brought to Bartlesville to be raised by his loving adoptive parents. Bob was a student at Garfield School. He rode a Harley-Davidson when he was a teenager, which resulted in him never allowing his kids to ride motorcycles. Bob graduated with the College High class of 1957. Before graduation he married Sue Singleterry, and he and Sue progressed to Norman to attend the University of Oklahoma. They had three children: Mike, Scott and Betsye, and returned to Bartlesville in 1960. Bob went to work for the family business, Piper Furniture Company, and began developing his gregarious nature, for which he became famous, while he worked as a salesman on the showroom floor.

Bob inherited a love of the outdoors from his father and was an enthusiastic hunter and fisherman. Many frozen mornings were spent in a duck blind at the former Bartlesville Sportsman Club in Ochelata. Later he developed an interest in scuba diving and was president of the Triton Scuba Diving Club. From the depths of Grand Lake, he decided the heavens would be his next

goal and he obtained his private pilot license. It is more than a little ironic that he used to rent a Piper Cub from the old Dewey airstrip south of that town and put a Piper behind the stick of a Piper. He flew a troop of Bartlesville anglers to Zapata, TX every February to escape the frost of Bartlesville and pursue Mexican bass while fishing for them beneath the Rio Grande sun. He liked the novelty of showing off a sunburn to his snow-fleshed peers back in Bartlesville during the middle of winter. He was the sponsor of a race car when micro-midgets used to be raced along the oval track next to Tuxedo Boulevard. He was very active in the Junior Chamber of Commerce and was one of a host of people that were responsible for coordinating the construction of the Sooner Junior Miniature Golf Course at Sooner Park. He was a co-sponsor for the semipro Bartlesville Quick-Kicks football team. As a pilot he assisted in the Bartlesville chapter of the Civil Air Patrol. Bob was very active with Bartlesville Civil Defense, which made him a proto-storm chaser. His embrace of CB radio at that time made him a valuable asset in the early days of local storm chasing. He was later involved with Civil Defense in coordinating disaster relief and conversion of old fallout shelters into storage facilities for emergency supplies, relying on the availability of a lot of military surplus commodities to stock those facilities. He was a component of the Oglesby Volunteer Fire Department after he moved to the country, south of town. He is still remembered there today. He faithfully made the trip into town every week to attend meetings of the Rotary Club, which he enjoyed immensely.

In 1984 Bob married Ann Seefluth and they made their home on a small stretch of Green Country between the Johnstone Bottoms and Hogshooter. He became an independent oil producer at that time, and pumped saltwater on the side. Bob and Ann spent time in the Arkansas Ozarks learning the craft of log cabin building. He became very interested in historical reenactment which conveyed him into the position of president of the American Living History Association of Dewey. He and Annie hit the road, where they transformed themselves into 18th century traders for a major portion of most

any given year in the 1990s, running a trade tent, selling history-oriented wares, and traveling through most of the country while plying their trade at historical reenactment events. At the same time, they had an independent business dealing in herbs and spices which they grew on their own property outside of Bartlesville. A regular tomato plantation arose from the beds behind their house in the spring and summer. He became a proponent of herbal healing. Bob was one of the merchants in the original Bartlesville Farmer's Market when it used to be situated on Johnstone, between Second Street and Frank Phillips. He maintained a presence at the Farmer's Market until just a few years ago. Who knows how many of his tomatoes were purchased by customers as a result of those days at the Farmer's Market?

Bob was laid low by a stroke in 2007 which robbed him of his most treasured quality, the gift of speech. In the end, Bob must be recognized as a charismatic, magnetic personality. His innate intelligence was more than equal to the modest stature he accomplished in life. He is survived by his wife Ann of the home, son Mike of Bartlesville, and daughter Betsye of Tulsa. Grandchildren are scattered from Oklahoma, to Texas, and to Costa Rica, and he also had two great-grandchildren.

To paraphrase another writer, there Bob goes. One of God's own prototypes. A high-powered mutant of some kind never even considered for mass production. We'll not see another of his caliber anytime soon. We will all wonder what the nature of his next big adventure will reveal to him.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Robert Carey Piper*

October 23, 2023 at 04:40 AM



“ *Robert Carey Piper*

October 06, 2023 at 03:15 PM



“ *Just want you guys to know what a great guy Bob was ....Like a parent like figure to me always. So glad our paths crossed many times.*

**Lance Russell** - August 31, 2023 at 10:04 PM



“ *Jeanne Foreman Shepherd lit a candle in memory of Robert Carey Piper*



**Jeanne Foreman Shepherd** - August 29, 2023 at 10:18 AM



“ *Mary May lit a candle in memory of Robert Carey Piper*



**Mary May** - August 28, 2023 at 03:04 PM