



Dr. Robert (Bob) E. Steele Jr.

January 8, 1937 - April 19, 2020

Dr. Robert (Bob) E. Steele Jr., passed peacefully at his son Tom's family home April 19, 2020 after a lengthy and brave battle with pancreatic cancer. He was born January 8, 1937 in Kansas City, Missouri. Robert grew up in Nevada, Missouri where he graduated valedictorian from Nevada high school in 1955. He enjoyed managing his own dance band for four years while in high school. He matriculated to the University of Missouri where he was a proud member of Beta Theta Pi and graduated valedictorian in 1959 with a degree in chemistry and served as president of 14 organizations. In 1963, Robert graduated cum laude from Harvard Medical School. He next completed a Harvard internship where his research done during this time later received a national award for best basic research of the year. Following his internship he married Emily Stephens where their adventure began while he served two years in the Navy in Taiwan and Vietnam. He completed an orthopedic residency in 1971 in which he served as Chief Resident at Massachusetts General Hospital.

The family, which now included three children moved to Corvallis, Oregon in May of 1971 where he joined the staff of Good Samaritan Hospital until retirement in 2006. Dr. Steele founded the joint replacement institute where he performed the second total hip replacement in the state of Oregon and the first total knee replacement. He served on many committees including the board of directors, the long range planning committee, and served as medical

staff president.

Bob, as he was almost exclusively known in the Corvallis community had many fond associations over the nearly 50 years in which he resided. Bob enjoyed being a founding member of the Corvallis Episcopal churches men's breakfast group, of playing clarinet in the Corvallis Community Band's summer concerts for 35 years, and as loyal member of the Tuesday night Squirrel's group and the Thursday beanery bunch where he was very proud to have attended all 20 of the annual bicycle and ski trips. Bob was an environmentalist who loved bicycling, skiing, and white water rafting.

Bob was an avid cyclist who rode to and from the Hospital rain or shine for 35 years but for the infrequent Corvallis snow days. He was a very devoted and loving father who made family dinner a ritual. He always rode his bike home in time for dinner only to return to the hospital to do his rounds and to attend to his many responsibilities after the family meal. During his nearly 56 year marriage his greatest passion was the advocacy of, the devotion to, and the support of Emily's art career and that of the Corvallis Arts Center.

He is survived by his son Ed, his daughter-in-law Amy; his son Tom, his daughter-in-law Kelli; his daughter Linda, his son-in-law Christian; his grandchildren: John, Grace, Savannah, Brian, Henry, Jayden, Christian, Lily, Colton, and Logan; and many loving extended family and friends. Due to the current isolation requirements a funeral service will be held at the Church of The Good Samaritan on a future date yet to be determined. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Arts Center Foundation Steele Family Fund at 700 SW Madison, Corvallis, OR 97330.

McHenry Funeral Home assisted with arrangements.

Tribute Wall



“ *Doctor Bob Steele was a truly fine and good person. He was kind and friendly and understanding. He shall be missed but I believe his spirit will go on for always. Our condolences to his family. Marie Clark and Bobbie Gann*

Mari Clarke - May 14, 2020 at 10:57 PM



“ *Our warmest thoughts go out to the family and friends of Bob Steele.*

An artist reception at The Arts Center wasn't complete without Bob and Emily there to meet the artists and check-in with everyone. Their many deep connections within the arts community were bolstered by their generous hospitality and enjoyment of good conversation and laughter.

Our greatest joy was hosting Emily and Bob, and members of the Steele family, for a special reception and viewing of Emily's sculpture collection in the main gallery last year. Bob was able to see Emily light up and glow as she told the grandkids about how she formed the glass, and fit it onto steel frames. Being able to bring back the dynamic artist wife Bob revered, and witness their unyielding love for those moments, will forever be a part of The Arts Center history.

We are grateful to Bob, Emily, and the entire Steele Family for their lasting support for the future of the arts for many generations to come.

Cynthia Spencer-Hadlock, on behalf of the Board and Staff at The Arts Center

Cynthia Spencer - May 01, 2020 at 06:03 PM

DD

“ I had the pleasure of meeting Bob after Emily attended a ceramics class I taught through the Corvallis Art Center. Bob and Emi went on to be great and generous supporters of the Art Center and the Arts in general in Corvallis.

I fondly remember white water rafting in winter with Bob--he loved water that was running high, fast and cold. Our children were close in age and I hold many happy memories of working on their coast house, sharing pot-lucks and appreciating the simple pleasures of life.

One time I injured my back while working in my pottery studio. I called Bob (bless him he always took my calls). After his day of work he came by my house and brought a fifth of whiskey and told me to stay down. His bedside manner was inspirational.

Bob was a wonderful, kind and good man. My life and many others were enriched by his presence. His was a life well lived.

Our best thoughts are with the family, Dale and Peggy Donovan

Dale Donovan - April 23, 2020 at 01:51 PM

DG

“ Tom and Family,

I was so saddened to learn of Bob's death. It was an honor to have known him, to have worked with him in surgery, and to have shared many a 'cuppa' at the Beanery (with my dad). Bob was too kind and gentle to have been a surgeon, I always thought. His manner was always tender and his kindness and grace always apparent. My deepest sympathies to you all. Godspeed. David Grube

David Grube - April 21, 2020 at 09:59 AM