



Robert Alpheus McIlhenny

Hollis Funeral Home Syracuse, New York

November 7, 1960 - December 30, 2024

Robert A. McIlhenny Sr. passed unexpectedly on December 29th, 2024 at Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse, New York. He was 64 years old at his time of passing, but those who have had the pleasure of knowing him know he was wise beyond those years but still young at heart. He lives on through his four beloved children, Robert McIlhenny Jr., Renee Davis, Jacklyn Erney, Shannon McIlhenny, and his seven grandchildren. He also leaves behind eight of his siblings, and over fifty nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents, John and Suzanne McIlhenny, and two of his brothers, Jack and Geoffrey McIlhenny.

Bob grew up in North Wales, PA as one of the youngest of 11 children. He was a member of Saint Rose of Lima Church. He attended West Point Elementary, then Pennbrook Junior High. During high school, he attended Lansdale Catholic where he, alongside his brother Phil, was on the championship football team in 1978-79. His siblings lovingly recall him always excelling at sports. Following school, he endeavored on a 40 year career of being a talented Heavy Equipment Operator. As a man who loved learning how things work, he also enjoyed his time as an instructor, teaching others to be operators all around the country. Before retirement, he was the operator of a large crane in New York City (which, as a kid at heart, he thought was the coolest.)

Bob's story shows how hard-working, dedicated, and resilient he was all on its own. But those weren't all the traits the people closest to him valued the most. A man that commanded attention in every room he walked into just by being able to make every single person laugh. Someone who you could call whether you needed help or just someone to listen, but no matter the reason, he would make time to be there for you. Using his signature quote "don't sweat the small stuff", you would always feel a little bit lighter after having his help.

Following his retirement, he made the most of enjoying his time. Always the outdoorsmen, you would rarely find him inside. When it snowed, he would be out cruising the trails on his snowmobile and saying hello to anyone he met along the way. During the Summer, he spent many days out on Lake Ontario in his boat with a fishing rod in hand, feeling at peace with the slow rock of the lake. When it was time to come back to shore, he would take advantage of the drive home with the windows down and the radio playing, enjoying scenery and driving down roads he didn't know just to learn where they would take him. He was described as a free bird, and that came through in the way he found joy in every day.

There is a lesson for all of us in the way Bob lived. Find joy, beauty, happiness, and friendship everywhere you are, but always remember there is more to be seen if you only go out and look for

it. Next time you take a sip of coffee that is just right or hear a song on the radio that makes you feel alive, think of him. He adored his friends and family, and he will be sitting there next to you, enjoying the ride too.

“Pack my bag and let’s get movin’

‘Cause I’m bound to drift a while

Though I’m gone, gone

You don’t have to worry, no

Long as I can see the light”

Events There are no events scheduled.

Click on the link below for photos and tributes.

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/34361490/robert-alpheus-mcilhenny>