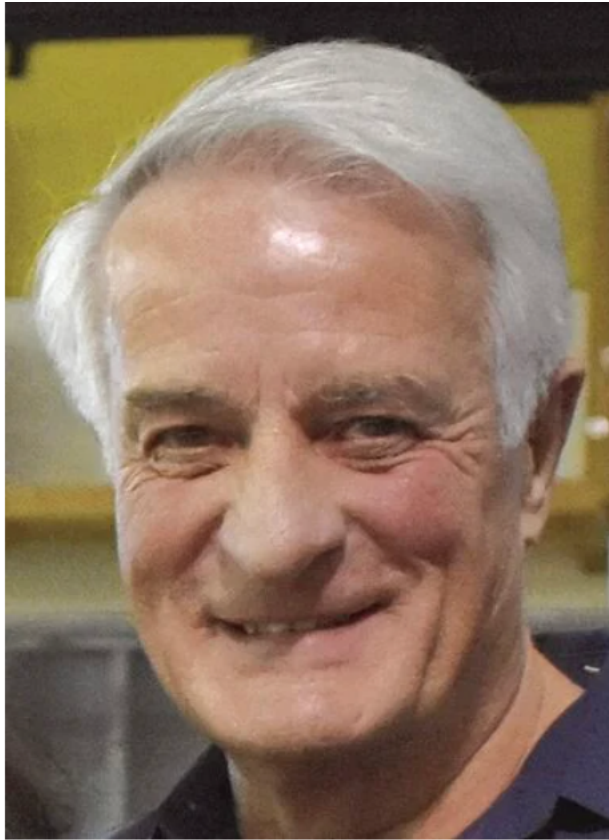




Robert A. Hamel

Robert A. “Bob” Hamel of Laconia, lived a life dedicated to service and absent of idleness. He coached his son’s sports team, rode his Honda Goldwing with his wife to 45 states and cherished two grandsons. He served in the Air Force and immersed himself in the community where he was born and raised. He could repair anything that needed fixing, drank Moxie and had a secret talent for ice skating. Bob died June 12, at Spaulding Hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was 72.

Bob was born in Laconia to Armand and Gemma Hamel on April 28, 1951. While studying at Laconia Vocational Technical College, Bob earned spending money as a custodian at then Lakes Region General Hospital. At work one day, Bob met an X-ray technician student named Kaye Kilgore. He liked to joke that he literally swept her off her feet. They married in 1971.

Bob lived in Laconia all his life except for the four years he spent as an Air Force missile systems analyst in Kansas. In their final year stationed in Kansas, Kaye gave birth to their only child, Todd.

Bob returned to Laconia and settled into the childhood home his grandfather had built on Gillette Street. He worked 35 years as a Sears repair technician. He coached Todd in T-ball, Babe Ruth

baseball and youth basketball. He refereed local basketball games and loved to watch the Celtics, Bruins, Patriots and Red Sox with Todd.

Bob began more than four decades of community service that made him a pillar in Laconia. He started with the Jaycees. He helped start Laconia's Christmas Village tradition, building temporary houses and an ice rink every December. He would take the ice himself on an ancient, worn-out pair of skates.

He served on, and at one point led, the Laconia Parks and Recreation board for 10 years. He worked as a Laconia part-time police officer for a decade. He spearheaded the refurbishment of the Colonial Theatre and the restoration of Laconia High School athletic fields and the Huot Career and Technical Center. He filled a vacancy on the city council in 2005 and was elected for nine two-year terms. He encountered no strangers in Laconia.

Bob still found time for the people and activities he loved. Bob and Kaye rode to motorcycle rallies — "Wing Dings," in honor of their preferred Goldwing — in Tennessee, Wisconsin, Montana, Pennsylvania, New York and elsewhere. He cherished the time he spent at the Bolduc family farm, boiling sap for syrup and tending to buffalos and burros with his close friends Ernie and Armand. He picked and delivered lobster meat and earned the nickname Wizard for his ability to fix everything at Skipper's Bay Lobster Meat with his brother-in-law Kent.

Bob took immense pride in Todd and his wife, Jade, especially their military careers. Jade, an army nurse, recently retired as a lieutenant colonel. Todd is an army colonel who continues to serve at the Pentagon. Both sacrificed for their country during tours across the globe.

Bob was a doting grandfather to DeVante and Nathan; a beloved uncle to Adam and Zachary; and a brother to Ron. Kaye's brother, Kent, and Ron's wife, Shirley, both believed they hit the in-law lottery. Kaye's parents, Merton and Beulah, took him in as a son. He was close with his nieces Tina and Sonya and Sonya's husband, Steve.