

## Robert John Colliton MD

April 21, 2020

Robert John Colliton, MD, 89, died suddenly on April 21, 2020. Born in Fargo, ND, and growing up in the small town of Kent, MN, he embodied the Midwest values of hard work, generosity, and steady support for his family and neighbors. Bob attended Breckenridge High School in Minnesota, where he was a lineman on the 1947 state championship football team. He was an amazing speller, and the class valedictorian. Bob's stories of what he did to get by, despite many obstacles, were an inspiration and example of perseverance and his all-American "can-do" outlook. Bob's father died when he was 12, leaving his mother to care for 3 boys. Bob and his brothers had to bale hay for 1 cent/bale, and work construction jobs to make ends meet, but his mother instilled the value of education, and was determined to have her sons attend college. He attended what is now known as North Dakota State University. Midway through college, not finding work in Fargo, Bob answered an ad to work in a fire tower, and made his way to Idaho, where for 9 weeks he was responsible, night and day, for reporting the compass bearing of lightning strikes and fires. After college, he enlisted in the Navy, and attended OCS in Newport, RI, where he trained as a cryptologist, and met the love of his life, Anna. They married in 1959. Bob served on the battleship, USS New Jersey during the Korean War. Upon his return, 2 years of medical school at The University of North Dakota were followed by 2 years at the University of Kansas Medical School. Bob completed his residency in anesthesiology at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, and went on to work at St. Francis for 30 years,

where he developed friendships that lasted his whole life. Bob enjoyed his work, and his confident, soft-spoken manner undoubtedly reassured his patients.

Bob's greatest joys were spending time with his family. Bob spent many summers in Falmouth, Cape Cod, where "Papa Bob" would stand guard at the driveway, watching his grandchildren ride their bikes, and treat them to Smitty's ice cream. "Uncle Bob" made hundreds of trips to Anna's hometown, Bristol, RI, where he enjoyed Portuguese food, the lively banter of Anne's family, and was regarded as the family doctor for the whole Bristol gang. Bob had a special connection with his brother Patrick. Trips to Perham, MN where together they golfed, fished for wall-eyed pike, and sat lake-side watching the antics of their children and grandchildren were a highlight of the last few years. Bob loved to read, and always had a stack of books, magazines and newspapers by his chair. American history was his favorite subject, but he also devoured stories on finance, politics, and science. Bob liked to watch sports, especially with his family, and knew the stats of all of his favorite teams, especially the Red Sox. It was always tough to beat him at card games, especially the game of Setback. He was a smart, generous, and kind man with a warm smile who will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Bob is predeceased by his loving wife of 47 years, Anna (George) Colliton. They lived in Vernon, CT where they raised 4 children, Kenneth Colliton, Charles Colliton, Carole Doar, all now residing in West Hartford, and daughter Kathleen Gozdan of Warminster, PA. Bob is also survived by his brother, Patrick Colliton of Fargo, ND, along with 12 grandchildren, 4 son/daughter-in-laws, and many beloved nieces and nephews. Bob is predeceased by his brother James Colliton. A memorial service and celebration of Robert's life will be held at a later date.

# Tribute Wall

PC

“ I will always remember the kindness Uncle Bob showed when his brother, my dad, Jim was ill. I'm very sorry for the loss of your father.  
*Patty Colliton-Buckmier*

---

**Patricia Colliton-Buckmier** - May 11, 2020 at 06:39 PM

JK

“ Chuck & Ken, I'm so sorry to hear of your father's passing. I still remember the day in 1986 when your dad visited my Mom at the hospital, prior to her bypass surgery. He promised her everything would be fine and she felt such comfort at that moment. That visit meant so much to my Mom.

*Be safe, John Kurmaskie (Johnny K)*

---

**John Kurmaskie** - May 01, 2020 at 01:05 PM

RS

“ Dr. Colliding was a friend and wonderful supporter of Sacred Heart Church in Vernon Ct. He also supported me as pastor of Sacred Heart until  
*It's closing in 2017. He always cared about the parish. He was pleasant and caring and would often have a funny story to tell. He also was a great help to many older folks as he taught drivers review classes for older folks. Bob, May you Rest In Peace and may your family be blessed.*  
*Fr. Stan*

---

**Rev. Stanley Szczapa** - May 01, 2020 at 11:51 AM



“ Ken, Charlie, Carole and Kate, I was sorry to hear the news. Uncle Bob was a special person and will be greatly missed. I will keep him in my prayers and I know he is finally reunited with your mom and they both will watch over all of you.  
So very sorry for your loss.

*Love, Margaret Rose*

---

**Peg Luciano** - April 28, 2020 at 12:07 PM



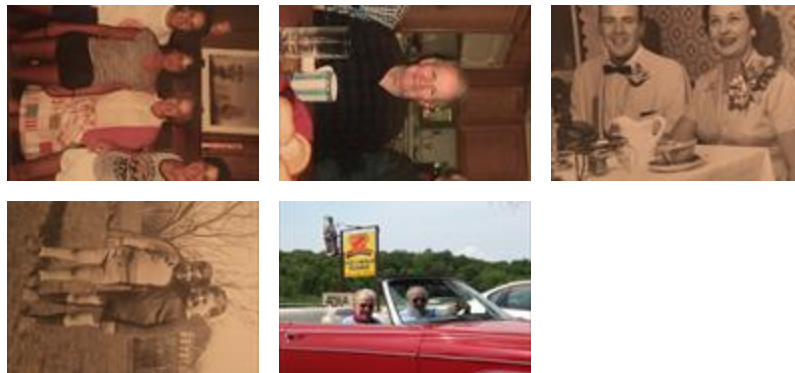
“ On behalf of President and Head of School, Christian Cashman, I offer my deepest sympathy on the passing of Robert Colliton. Bob along with his grandchildren Ana, Christina and Andrew, is a valued member of the Northwest Catholic community, so we mourn his loss along with all who love him. Please know that Bob and his entire family will be remembered in a special way at our next school-wide Mass. We are very sorry for your loss. ~ Jane Leary, Director of Constituent Relations, Northwest Catholic High School.

---

**Jane Leary** - April 28, 2020 at 09:51 AM



“ 6 files added to the album Robert Colliton photo memories



---

**Carole Doar** - April 26, 2020 at 09:46 PM

CS

*Thank you so much for sending the beautiful tribute & the special photos. We all so enjoyed your visits to Little Pine, & especially watching our two dads spending time together. Much love, prayers & hugs to you all. ❤️ Cousin Cathy*

**Cathryn Colliton Spaeth** - April 28, 2020 at 05:29 PM

KG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Kate Gozdan** - April 26, 2020 at 11:42 AM

CD

“ 1 file added to the album Robert Colliton photo memories



**Carole Doar** - April 24, 2020 at 08:49 PM

KC

*What a beautiful photo of 2 amazing people!*

**Kathy Cikowski** - April 26, 2020 at 11:48 AM

SF

*I will never forget my wonderful friend, Bob. He helped me so much.*

**Sandy Friedel** - April 27, 2020 at 07:09 AM

SF

*Yes, this was serious Bob. Loved by many.*

---

**Sandy Friedel** - April 27, 2020 at 07:33 AM

JS

*My condolences on the passing of your Grandfather. He seemed to have been a tremendous Human being. My Prayers are with you and your family.*

*Deacon Sutherland*

---

**Jeffrey Sutherland** - April 28, 2020 at 10:23 AM