

Bob Grimaldi Obituary

Robert (Bob) Grimaldi left this life on Sunday, March 11, 2018, surrounded by family and friends after a multi-year battle against bladder cancer.

Bob was born in Farmington, Maine, on March 18, 1936, to Alexander and Dorothy Grimaldi. He enlisted in the U.S. Army at the age of 17. At the end of his enlistment, he enlisted again, this time in the U.S. Air Force where he remained until 1975. Bob ended his military career with the rank of chief warrant officer.

Bob began a second career when he entered the civil service in 1977, serving with the U.S. Air Force until his second retirement in 1998. During this period, he was assigned to several Air Force installations, foreign and domestic, including West Germany, Vietnam, California, Washington, northern Italy (his favorite) and finally Montana.

Bob was married on Sept. 22, 1956, to Jean Grossman in Mellborne, Pennsylvania. He and Jean raised five children. Jean passed away in 2011.

Bob found Montana, the North Fork in particular, while stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base near Spokane in 1966. He was invited to fish for bull trout up the North Fork and sightsee in Glacier National Park. Bob fell in love with the area and began a search to find property upon which to build his retirement home. In 1972, Polebridge became that place.

Between 1972 and retirement in 1998, Bob and Jean slowly improved their Polebridge property, worked on it during many summers and finally moved permanently to it in 1998. They lived there year-round until 2015 when health issues forced a move to Columbia Falls.

Bob and Jean were well known to have the best kept landscaped property in the North Fork. This included a two-acre hand-built river rock fence system, many native tree and shrub species, and a well-manicured lawn. They took pride in their home.

In 2006, Bob, being concerned with the deteriorating air quality conditions affecting water and air, proposed and conceived what is now known as the NFRCHS — North Fork Road Coalition for Health and Safety. Through his many tireless efforts and letter writing campaigns, Bob was able to prod Flathead County into improving the air quality along the North Fork road by treatment with dust abatement applications. This process continues to this day.

Bob's foresight into the future of the effects of recreational activity in the North Fork led the way in improving travel on the North Fork Road, formerly a dangerous and unhealthy experience.

Bob was preceded in death by his wife, Jean, and a daughter, Carol Bryan.

He is survived by daughters, Meg Grimaldi of Marina Del Rey, California; Denise Messer of Barbourville, Kentucky; and Katrina Davis of Olancho, California; and son, Dante Grimaldi, of Tacoma, Washington. Bob leaves behind 11 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and one sister.

A celebration of Bob's life will be held in Polebridge this summer on a date to be determined.