

Hiawatha , KS



Robert “Bob” Parks, beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, left this life for his next, early in the morning of September 19, 2017, in his home of 53 years, with his wife holding his hand and surrounded by family and love.

Bob was born December 10, 1924 to Ira Martin Luther Parks and Mary Catherine Locke Parks in the family home at 305 Utah in Hiawatha. He grew up in Hiawatha and attended Hiawatha schools, graduating a proud Redskin with the Hiawatha High class of 1942. He participated in sports, excelling in football, where he claimed to have worn out his cleats every week.

Shortly after graduating, he joined the United States Army during the height of World War II as a pilot candidate. He was sent to training at the University of West Virginia, where he contracted scarlet fever, leaving him with a hearing loss preventing him from being a pilot. After recovering, he was stationed in Newfoundland, where he was an airplane mechanic. He served his country proudly until the spring of 1946.

In the summer of 1945, home on leave, Bob and a few buddies, were cruising Oregon Street in Hiawatha and it was then that he met the love of his life, Patricia “Pat” Dannecker. A watermelon and picnic at the Hiawatha Lake started a love affair that would last the next 72 years of his life.

Bob and Pat were married at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Rulo, Ne. on March 5, 1946. They spent the majority of their married life in Hiawatha, with a few years spent in Iowa, where Bob worked for Safeway Co. He was recruited by Lyle Brown in 1964 to work for the Prudential Co. and retired after 30 years. He continued in the insurance business with Lyle and remained a licensed agent until the end of his days, even going to the office everyday at Brown Ins., until it closed in June of 2017.

He also built, along with lifetime friend, Bill Hargis, the first Best Western in Hiawatha and along with Pat, operated a thriving restaurant and lodge and made many friends along the way.

He was the very proud father of Tim (Rhonda) of Lawrence, Nancy (Rusty) Wright of Hiawatha

and Mark (Marinela) of Olathe. He loved his grandchildren following and attending their activities- Andrew Parks, Lawrence; Qwinn and Abbey Wright, LaVista, NE; Tiffany Wright, Gillette, WY; Toby Wright, Chicago; Mitchell Wright, Hiawatha; Andrew Mermer, Overland Park; Jack and Kaiti Parks, Olathe; and great-grandchildren; Caden and William Wright, LaVista, NE. He is also survived by his sister Pat Wagner, Hiawatha, and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, son, Phillip Joseph, brother Charles and his grandson, Zachary Parks.

Bob and Pat lived life to the fullest and their lives were filled with wonderful friends and many, many good times that bring smiles and laughs to this day. He loved to play golf and was a longtime member of the Hiawatha Country Club. Though the elusive “hole in one” was never his, he took great pride in the three his son Tim made. His love of football was passed to his son, Mark. It was with joy and pride he watched Mark and later his grandsons play the sport he loved. Along with Pat, he enjoyed the past three years of helping Nancy and Rusty restore the 709 Oregon building, now named for him and the Parks’ before him and those to come, as the Parks-Wright building.

Bob was a lifetime member of St. Ann’s Parish of Hiawatha. He served in many capacities through the years there and his life will be celebrated at 10 a.m., Friday, September 22, 2017, with a funeral mass. A rosary and visitation will be held on Thursday, September 21, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at Chapel Oaks Funeral Home in Hiawatha. Cremation has been affected and burial will be at a later date. Memorial contributions are suggested to St. Ann’s Parish or Mount Hope Cemetery, specifically for the Stone Restoration project.

Bob was a quiet man with a wonderful sense of humor. He lived his life with integrity, honesty and joy, mixed with worry, always faithful to pray. He will be missed forever.  
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