



Robert R Rankin

November 19, 1937 - July 22, 2020

Robert Ray “Bob” “Big Red” Rankin passed away due to pulmonary embolism on July 22, 2020 at the age of 82. He was born on November 19, 1937 at Santa Rosa Hospital in San Antonio Texas. As a child and teen, he enjoyed farm life as he tended to the cows each morning before school. Bob graduated from East Central High before joining the Navy from 1958 to 1963. After meeting and marrying the love of his life Anna Mary Miller in 1961 the couple settled in Carson, California where they raised their family and were long-time residents. Robert attained a Masters Degree in Art at California University at Long Beach while also working for Allied Chemical / Honeywell. Through his work Robert became involved in the Union that led to years working with the California Democratic Party and later SOAR - Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees. He was several times elected to the DNC - Democratic National Committee, where he wrote policies & drafted laws to make life better for hard working men & women. He was chosen on several occasions to be a California Superdelegate, a role he took very seriously. He also worked the polls on election days for many years, eventually becoming an Election Poll Coordinator. Bob has a strong belief in the American Democratic process of voting, this was very important to him. But nothing was more important to Robert than his wife Anna. Together they enjoyed growing cactus, roses, flowers that attracted Monarch butterflies, attending to their various collections and decorating for all the holidays. Robert was also an avid chili cookoff competitor and loved playing Santa for his grandkids and others. Bob recently enjoyed looking into family history. He discovered that his family of birth are one of the original Canary Island Descendants, being one of only 16 families sent by King Filipe of Spain to immigrate to New Spain to colonize Texas. They founded the “Ville de Fernando” in 1731, now San Antonio. Bob was excited to know that his family has descended from the first mayor of San Antonio. Bob has a deep love of God and his Catholic faith and was heavily involved in his church of 50 years, St Philomena. Upon hearing of Bobs passing one Priest said “Bob is one person I can say served until his last breath.” Bob enjoyed his role as Usher for most of his 50 years as well as other ways he served the congregation. After retiring from Honeywell and then politics Bob cared for his wife until her passing in 2015. At his wife’s urging Bob was commissioned as a Eucharistic Minister for St Philomena in 2016, working at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Carson,

California and Little Company of Mary in Torrance, California, every weekend until March 2020. To keep fit so he could continue to help people Bob regularly went to the gym to swim and exercise. His neighbors would often see Bob setting out early to head to the gym in the morning to start his day. Bob enjoyed talking to his neighbors and getting them involved in his home improvement projects. Bob was truly loved by all. His positivity and care for people evident to all who knew him. His heart was as big as Texas and as bright as California. He will be greatly missed.

Robert was a devoted husband to Anna Mary Miller Rankin, beloved father to Nancy Rankin Griffin & Theresa Jordan, father-in-law to Rene Griffin & James Jordan, grandfather to Elizabeth Jordan, Sarah & Dane Adams, Mark Jordan, Jeannine Wood & Damien Wood, Great-grandfather of Tianna, Dylan, Aiden, Cole, Jhadin & Amari. His parents Orié Ray Rankin and Anna Emma Jung Rankin preceded him in death as did his brother Werner Albert Rankin and sister in law Ruby Krueger Rankin. He is survived by his siblings Orié William Rankin, Claude August Rankin & his wife Evelyn, Otis Timothy Rankin & his wife Carol, Barbara Ann Rankin Hatch & her husband Frank, Allen Richard Rankin & his wife Patty. Survived by one Aunt, Vernell Jung Dawson and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. Robert's In-laws originally came from New Jersey, George William Miller & Hellen Hackett Miller preceded him in death. His brothers in-law were George Miller, Jim Miller & William Miller, also deceased, as well as sisters-in-laws, nephews & a niece.

A private funeral service will be held 11:30 AM, Thursday, August 6, 2020 at Green Hills Pavillion followed by interment at Green Hills Memorial Park.

The service will be live streamed via the link below.

<https://client.tribucast.com/tcid/55396880>

Comments



“ Memories of Bob Rankin
Part one of five

Bob Rankin was an inspiring man and a humble man.

While working at Honeywell he was chairman of the grievance committee and had the thorough respect of management as well as of the union members. Before contract bargaining managers would tell him what their priorities were that time and what pressures they were under, That led to calmer negotiations. And Bob was fast on his feet in bargaining. One time, after hours of haggling over a \$100 yearly bonus for something or other, which management resoltely refused, Bob, seeing management tiring suddenly said, “OK, we’ll give up the bonus but you have to raise the shoe allowance from \$100 to \$200. Management was so releaved to leave off wrangling they said OK to that and Bob changed the topic before they could realize what he’d done.

He was such a warm-hearted man that he could resolve diciplinary actions that would seem impossible. One time a hot-tempered member got into an argument with a co-worker. Words were followed by physical action. Then, with several witnesses including two foremen, the hot-tempered guy picked up a 2-by-4 and started whacking the other guy with it. He was fired on the spot, of course. But Bob spent the next two weeks going around talking to one witness after another, He made many rounds of this and the man got his job back. The man was shocked, almost angry. “That’s not supposed to happen,” he said and he asked Bob how he’d made it happen. Bob just said, truthfully, “I don’t know how I did it. Just go back to work.”

Doug Marshall



Doug Marshall - August 05, 2020 at 10:15 PM



“ Memories of Bob Rankin Part 1.5

Bob got involved in politics when they found out there was a bill in Sacramento that would outlaw the storage of a certain dangerous chemical. Honeywell was a wholesaler of that chemical and it was a big part of their business. Bob knew all the safety precautions that were in place at the plant and set out to convince the politicians to shelve the bill. The bill never passed and Bob was hooked. He led the Steelworkers members on many Operation Sacramento trips, our yearly lobbying efforts when local unions sent members there to lobby for or against bills that affected us.

When Honeywell downsized their operation here, Bob's local was absorbed into large amalgamated Local 1981. Bob continued to attend union meetings and even chaired some meetings when the appropriate officials couldn't be there. When he retired he was appointer District 12 coordinator of retiree groups, the Steelworker Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR).

Bob's interest in politics and unionism led him to be an active member of the Steelworkers Los Angeles/Orange Counties Legislation and Education Committee (L&E Committee). He brought his wide experience and infectious enthusiasm to that committee and served as its chairman for some years in the early 2000s, preceding me.

Bob started going to Democratic Clubs, becoming a member of three of them for a while.. He continued to attend the meetings of one of them until shortly before his death. As he became more active in the Democratic Party he was elected to the Los Angeles County party leadership body. There he was named "Democrat of the Year." As he became more widely known he became a member of the California state party and was active in two of its committees. Then he ran for the Democratic National Committee. Not being an elected official, he had to run for that position. Here is the button he distributed to his supporters in one of those elections. Bob made sure that all of his campaign materials were printed at union print shops and that included this button. He had the shop put the union label "bug" right on his eye so it wouldn't be missed.

To get elected by the votes of Democratic Party activists across the state, Bob had to appeal to rural people as well as urban union supporters. His dairy farm country charm served him well and he did get elected to two terms on the DNC.

Doug Marshall



“ Memories of Bob Rankin Part two

As he understood the problems of rural people, Bob was a big supporter of Howard Dean and his Fifty State Strategy. The party establishment did not support either Dean or his strategy. It took Barack Obama in 2008 to prove how Democrats could have real influence across the country with just that strategy. Bob Rankin was accepted by the party establishment because he could energize rural Democrats and bring in new voters, but when he introduced a resolution to the DNC opposing free trade deals they tried to shut him up. When he persisted they made sure his resolution was watered down to insignificance and they stripped him of his DNC committee assignment.

Since Bob is such a “salt of the earth” guy, politicians would seek him out, asking him for his opinion on topics of the day. He conversed several times with Governor Howard Dean. When Eric Garcetti became mayor of Los Angeles in 2013 he would call Bob from time to time. About 2011 Bill Clinton came to Los Angeles and had one-on-one chats with a small group of party activists. Bob Rankin was one of them. I myself remember Bob and I were serving food at the annual Labor Day Parade when someone tapped him on the shoulder. It was State Senator Debra Bowen.

By end of his final term on the DNC, Bob’s wife, Anna, was facing serious health problems and Bob dedicated himself to being her care giver. He dropped all union and party meetings and stayed with Anna until she passed away. Then he had a chance to take care of his own problem which was a cancer that had been diagnosed a year earlier. When his cancer doctor told Bob there was no hope, Bob dumped him and found another cancer specialist. After more than two years of debilitating chemotherapy, he seemed cancer free and returned to a normal life.

Doug Marshall

Doug Marshall - August 05, 2020 at 10:03 PM



“ Memories of Bob Rankin Part 2.5

Bob's attitude toward race was formed by an incident when he was still a boy on the dairy farm. He and his friends used to go racoon hunting with dogs. The dogs would run off in the night and you could tell by their barks when they'd treed a 'coon. Bob knew the voices of all his friends; dogs but one night while working in the barn he heard a dog whose sound he didn't recognize. The sound got closer and closer and into the barn came the most beautiful and well kept coon dog he'd ever seen. He noticed the dog had a collar and on a brass plate on it was written in neat lettering "This dog belongs to (John) Rankin.," and gave an address. John might not have been the name. I don't remember.

Now Bob knew all the Rankins in the area and where they lived. Neither the name nor the address were familiar to him. Just then the owner of the dog stepped into the barn and said, "I see you found my dog." It was a handsome Black man, quite well dressed, neat and clean. Bob said, "You're (John) Rankin!" When the man said it was so, Bob said, "I'm Robert Rankin." The man answered, "Isn't that wonderful," took his dog and left.

Bob had always been told that Blacks were dirty and not as good as whites. But the evidence was there to the contrary and Bob decided within himself that what he'd been taught to believe was wrong.

To keep himself in shape Bob would go to the gym twice a week and work out in a pool on two other days. He prepared his own meals most of the time and made frequent trip to see his daughter in Santa Clarita.

Doug Marshall

Doug Marshall - August 05, 2020 at 10:00 PM



“ Memories of Bob Rankin
Part three

Before her death Anna had suggested Bob become a eucharistic minister for their Catholic church. These are people who visit religious people in hospitals, couns4el them and bring the holy communion if they desire. Bob went through the training at the church and served in that capacity at two different hospitals until the COVID-10 pandemic made that impossible. He counselled Catholics, Christians, Jews and even one Muslim.

Bob enjoyed that work a lot but he did say that after leaving the bedside of terminal patients he would have to adsk the nurses for a place to sit down. He would be quite drained. He spoke of one patient who was very depressed. His condition was serious but not necessarily terminal. The patient would have to put a lot of effort into getting better but so far was not doing so and slipping lower. Bob talked with the patient one day and came back a different day to check on him. The patient's doctor happened to be in the room and asked Bob, "What did you say to him? The difference is like night and day." Moments like that kept Bob going.

Another thing Bob loved to do was to decorate the front of the house for Halloween and Christmas. Even in 2019 he was still enlisting the help of a neighborhood boy putting up the Haloween decorations. Then he would give out candy only to those kids who dared to make the circuit of his scary front yaard. One trembling youngster would only do it when Bob offered to go with him holding his hand.

One other side of Bob Rankin was his comic books. He had a large trove of classic comic books that he sold on the internet for years. If I remember right his virtual store was called Big Red's Comics. I bet Tessa found a lot of them in the sheds in Bob's back yard.

Douglas Marshall - August 05, 2020 at 03:50 PM



“ Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Robert R Rankin.



August 05, 2020 at 08:32 AM



“ Bob (Big Red) Rankin District 12

Bob Rankin was born in 1937 and was the oldest son having five brothers and one sister. He graduated from a small rural high school on the outskirts of San Antonio, Texas. After High school, he ran the family dairy farm for two years and then joined the Navy. After boot camp he served on the USS Bennington, CVS 20, an anti-submarine warfare aircraft carrier home ported in San Diego. His ship took two cruises to the Western Pacific where they were home ported in Subic Bay in the Philippines and Yokosuka, Japan. His ship was one of the first to serve off the coast of Vietnam. Bob was a Third Class Electrician.

In 1961, and two months before he was discharged, Bob met his future wife, Anna Mary. They were married four months later. Bob got a job pumping gas before hiring in at Allied Chemical. The company then changed its name to Honeywell. Bob joined District 50 of the United Mine Workers Union where he served in many jobs including local union president.

While working for Honeywell, Bob went to the California State University, Long Beach and got his Bachelors degree in Education. In 1991, he went to a workshop about becoming a delegate to the Democratic Convention and ran to be a delegate for Bill Clinton. He was elected to the DNC in 2000 and has been a delegate to the Democratic Convention several times. Bob was a Super Delegate in 2004 and also a Super Delegate in 2008.

Bob retired in 2003. At Honeywell, he started in the labor gang, then became a Serviceman and finally went to the Maintenance Dept. as a mechanic in the electric gang becoming an Electrician. A month before Bob retired, he was asked if he would consider becoming active in our SOAR organization and he became a SOAR Coordinator. Some time later, Bob was appointed to the SOAR Executive Board and he resigned in 2012.

I've lost track of Big Red Rankin but remember him as a very big man and a really nice guy. I wonder about him.

Charlie Averill - August 04, 2020 at 06:01 PM



“ Although I did not get to see Uncle Bobby very often, when I did, he was always so positive and encouraging. I just loved that so much!
We all will certainly miss him very much. Prayers to all! Love you!

Bonny Rankin Collins - August 03, 2020 at 02:30 PM



“ I had the pleasure of long talks about many things with my brother. We spoke many times about his daughters Nancy, Theresa (Tessa) and of course his wife Anna. He will be missed. His love for his family was very important on his to do list. Just a couple weeks ago he told me how he missed his Anna. May they be together forever now. Love and prayers.

Allen Rankin - August 04, 2020 at 04:32 PM



“ Bonny Rankin Collins lit a candle in memory of Robert R Rankin



Bonny Rankin Collins - August 03, 2020 at 02:26 PM