



Robert Clayton Surface

September 12, 1951 - March 1, 2024

Robert “Bob” Clayton Surface, 72, of Crystal Falls, passed away Friday, March 1, 2024, at Aspirus Wausau Hospital with his wife, children and grandchildren by his side after a 6-month courageous battle with esophageal cancer.

Bob was born on September 12, 1951, to Clyde and Bernice Surface. He was born and grew up in Omaha, NE, until the age of 16 when he moved to Crystal Falls, MI. He made many life-long friends on the football field and softball diamond. He graduated salutatorian and was president of his high school class in 1969. He attended Michigan Tech University for 1 year, then transferred to and graduated from Northern Michigan University with a Bachelors of Science degree in math education.

Bob married his high school sweetheart, and love of his life, Margaret (Margie) Ellingboe on June 14, 1975. They spent the early years of their marriage living on both ends of the Upper Peninsula, where Bob had a few different math teaching jobs, and opened an old-time photo shop in St. Ignace and Mackinac Island, but their goal was to make it back to Crystal Falls to settle down and start a family. Once they settled in Crystal Falls, Bob worked for Metropolitan Insurance, built log homes with his brother-in-law at Sculptured Log Homes, taught adult math classes through Community Schools and then began his long-term career with the US Postal Service where he was the friendly face at the post office window for 25+ years.

Bob was truly dedicated to his family and community and served for many years as a member of the Iron County Hospital Board and, more recently, as a member of the Crystal Falls District Library Board. Bob had a beautiful voice and sang for more weddings and funerals than we can count, was a member of the church choir, shared his talent in the community variety shows, and sang the national anthem before events. He loved all types of music, was an avid reader, and more recently found a green thumb and interest in gardening.

He loved nothing more than spending time with his family and had a genuine appreciation for what he had and the simple things in life. On summer days, he enjoyed spending time at the family cottage and could be found wading chest deep in the water and chauffeuring family and friends on the pontoon boat around Lake Mary. In his later years his pride and joy became his grandchildren, whom he called "The Great 8". He beamed with pride when he would talk about them and was always there to support them in their various activities. Grandpa Bob will always be remembered fondly for his willingness to drive the boat for hours while the kids did water sports, teaching them to drive on back roads, helping with math homework, doing puzzles, telling stories and jokes, and baking his famous "grandpa's bread".

He was quick with a smile and a big bear hug, had a genuine interest in the lives of others, and was a great conversationalist. Always first to lend a helping hand, he was gentle, kind, loving, and selfless. While Bob left us far too soon, the impact he had on his family, friends and the community will live on in our memories forever.

He is survived by his wife of almost 49 years, Margie Surface; children Jill (Jamie) Chipelewski of Marquette, Sarah (Tyler) Williams of Crystal Falls and Dan (Jessie) Surface of Crystal Falls; grandchildren Kendall and Kaleb Chipelewski, Clayton, Tanner and Trevor Williams, Hadlee, Lyndee and Calum Surface; brother Paul Surface (Shelley Cantor), sisters-in-law Katherine

(Roderick) Haile and Marcia (Dr. James) Heron; many nieces and nephews and countless extended family members and treasured friends. All held him in the highest regard and loved him dearly.

Bob is preceded in death by his parents Clyde and Bernice Surface; father and mother-in-law Harold (Hank) and Flora (Puzza) Ellingboe; and brothers Keith and Ken Surface.

A Celebration of Life will be held at United Lutheran Church in Crystal Falls, MI, on Friday, March 15, 2024, with visitation from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, and service immediately following at 12:00 pm.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a memorial donation to Friends of the Crystal Falls District Library or Iron County Cancer Unit.

The family would like to extend a sincere thank you to Dr. Fanous and the wonderful staff at Aspirus Iron River and Wausau Hospitals and Dr. Morel and staff at Marshfield Medical Clinic Dickinson.

Condolences to the family of Robert "Bob" Clayton Surface may be expressed online at www.nashfuneralhome.net.

The family has entrusted Nash Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Crystal Falls with the arrangements.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 15. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

United Lutheran Church
506 Superior Ave
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Memorial Service

MAR 15. 12:00 PM (CT)

United Lutheran Church
506 Superior Ave
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Tribute Wall

LL

“ *The Hegstrom, Dettman, Sarkis, Lesandrini and Boussum families are donating to the Iron County Cancer Unit in loving memory of Bob.*

Lisa Lesandrini - March 14, 2024 at 09:35 PM

JW

“ *Jon Van Wagner lit a candle in memory of Robert Clayton Surface*



Jon Van Wagner - March 13, 2024 at 08:06 AM

CS

“ *CFACF & DACF Boards and Staff purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Robert Clayton Surface.*



CFACF & DACF Boards and Staff - March 12, 2024 at 09:29 PM

MG

“ *Margie & family: my prayers to all of you. Bob was a great guy and will be missed.*
Mary Lou (Augustine) Gagala.

mary gagala - March 12, 2024 at 08:56 PM

PN

“ Paul N. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Clayton Surface.

Paul N. - March 11, 2024 at 08:29 AM



“ Garden Accent - "Perhaps the stars..." was purchased for the family of Robert Clayton Surface.



March 10, 2024 at 12:56 PM

TK

“ The Kovachs planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Clayton Surface.

The Kovachs - March 10, 2024 at 12:56 PM

CK

“ Margi, Jill and Sarah, Dan and families, we are deeply saddened to about Bob. He was one of the first and kindest gentlemen we met when we were "newbies" on the lake. Always the first to lend a helping hand and come chat awhile. It was so apparent that he deeply loved his family and took great care to watch over them and certainly to entertain them at the lake. A great dad and grandpa and husband! We know you will cherish all the great memories he left you with. We will really miss him. Rest assured you now have the love of a special angel watching over all of you.
Love and God Bless,
The Kovachs

Carol Kovach - March 10, 2024 at 12:42 PM

MS

“ Deep Sympathy in your loss of Robert “Bob” Surface to Margie and Family & friends! He was a really pleasant person and helpful neighbor!
From, Mary Jane Soderberg.

Mary Jane Soderberg - March 09, 2024 at 08:02 PM

JA

“ I have many fond memories of Bob...too many to recount just one. However, I will never forget his and Margie's kindness when I left the Twin Cities without a plan or a place to settle. Bob showed up with a U-Haul trailer, transported all of my worldly possessions to Crystal Falls and unloaded them at my family home. Just because that's what Bob did. Sherry and I will certainly miss him.

Jim Addison - March 09, 2024 at 09:13 AM

UD

“ Jill and Family,

The UPHP IT Department is donating \$100.00 to the Friends of the Crystal Falls District Library and \$100.00 to the Iron County Cancer Unit in memory and honor of Bob.

Our thoughts are with you all.

UPHP IT Dept. - March 08, 2024 at 04:08 PM

RV

“ Renee V. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Clayton Surface.

Renee V. - March 08, 2024 at 02:33 PM

RM

“ Hi Margie and family, So sorry to hear about Bob. 😞 You all will be in our thoughts and prayers 💕💕

Renee and Mark - March 08, 2024 at 02:28 PM



“ Margie, so sorry to hear about Bob. He was a terrific guy. You will be in my thoughts and prayers. Les Miller

Leslie Miller - March 08, 2024 at 09:13 AM

SH

“ Steve Hill lit a candle in memory of Robert Clayton Surface



Steve Hill - March 08, 2024 at 12:33 AM

PW

“ So sorry for your loss. Bob was a great guy and a valued member of this community. He will be missed.

Pat Westcott - March 07, 2024 at 11:14 PM

Y<

“ Your UPHP Family <3 planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Robert Clayton Surface.

Your UPHP Family <3 - March 07, 2024 at 01:33 PM

Y<

“ *Your UPHP Family <3 purchased the Heartfelt Memories for the family of Robert Clayton Surface.*



Your UPHP Family <3 - March 07, 2024 at 01:33 PM

PS

“ *My condolences and prayers of God's peace and comfort to family and friends. I will always remember his smile and how kind of a person he was...always was good to see him as I walked in to the post office or around Crystal Falls. Rest in peace. Well done, good and faithful servant of Christ.*

Pr. Soren Schmidt - March 07, 2024 at 10:21 AM

HF

“ *Hegstrom Sarkis and Lesandrini families purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Robert Clayton Surface.*



Hegstrom Sarkis and Lesandrini families - March 06, 2024 at 08:47 PM

CS

“ *Bob was a great guy. I'm really sorry for all of you. God keep you.*

Carla (Anderson) Swanson - March 06, 2024 at 08:04 PM

JS

“ *Margie & Family,
We are saddened to hear of Bob's passing, way too young and loved by many. His smile and joyful presence was loved by all that knew him. Our deepest sympathies to you all, cherish the memories.*

Jack & Gail Schneider

Jack & Gail Schneider - March 06, 2024 at 07:32 PM

JA

“ *I met Bob Surface briefly during Karen's mother's (Murial' Nelson's funeral) I found Bob to easy to talk to and socialize with. Margie and family will be in my prayers*

  *Jim Anderson*

Jim Anderson - March 06, 2024 at 04:52 PM