

# ROBERT FERGUSON OBITUARY

Robert L. "Bob" Ferguson

August 12, 2022

Richland, Washington - Robert L. "Bob" Ferguson, age 89, a longtime resident of Richland, Washington, died peacefully on August 12, 2022. He was preceded in death by his loving wife, Catherine Crosby Ferguson. Bob is survived by his two daughters, Catherine (Martin) Kolinski and Colleen (Mark) Ferguson Lowry, grandchildren Ashley (Brandon) Berkshire, Michael Joy and Keefe Lowry, step-grandchildren Thomas (Lindsey) Kolinski, John (Valentina) Kolinski, Kathryn Kolinski, 6 great-grandchildren and 5 nieces and nephews. Bob is also survived by his brothers-in-law, Howard (Carolyn) Crosby and Edward (Nicole) Crosby.

Born in Dover, Idaho, Bob graduated from both Gonzaga Preparatory School and Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, where he studied physics. A member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Bob was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army in 1956 shortly after marrying Catherine "Katie" Crosby, the niece of famed Gonzaga alumnus, Bing Crosby. Bob and Katie were married for 62 years before her passing in 2018. Bob's military career was predominantly spent in the US Army Ordinance Corps and included assignments at the Pentagon and in Australia for guided missile testing.

Bob spent 60 years working in the field of nuclear energy and was named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy Programs for the U.S. Department of Energy, serving from 1978 to 1980 under President Jimmy Carter. Among several other prestigious roles, he also served as Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Public Power Supply System (later known as Energy Northwest), where he played critical roles in several vital energy projects. In Bob's retirement, he has written several books on the nation's nuclear waste issues, and he co-founded "Clean up Hanford Now", a non-profit advocating for the cleanup of the Hanford, Washington nuclear reservation and promoting a new clean energy mission for the site.

In the early 1980s, Bob became a member of Gonzaga's Board of Regents, and in 1981 he was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Merit Award. Together with his wife Katie, Bob supported Gonzaga students through donations to scholarships, facilities, programs, and unrestricted funds. A terrace at Gonzaga is named in their honor.

In 2020, he was a major donor for the Ferguson Education Center, a Montessori school, which opened at Christ the King Catholic School in Richland, Washington, and in 2021, Bob endowed a faculty position in energy and environment at Washington State University.

A Funeral Mass will be held at St. Daniel the Prophet Catholic Church in Wheaton, Illinois on August 20, 2022, at 1:00pm. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made directly to the Ferguson Education Center, Christ the King School, Richland, Washington. For more information contact Williams-Kampp Funeral Home at 630-668-0016.