



Robert Spencer Garmise

October 1, 1944 - July 10, 2021

If death is but the next great adventure, Bob Garmise set sail on July 10, 2021 at the age of 76. He was a man who loved to travel. He tracked and drove across every major highway of the United States, worked a summer abroad in Switzerland, and crashed a snowmobile on a glacier in Iceland before it was trendy. When we suggested he plan a new trip, this is really not what we had in mind.

Robert Spencer Garmise was born to Martha and Morris Garmise on October 1, 1944. He grew up in idyllic Ithaca, New York, playing baseball and sledding with the neighborhood boys, all while his little sister Carolyn tagged along. He reluctantly completed his Bar Mitzvah in 1957 because, in his words, “at least there were gifts.”

Bob cultivated a lifelong commitment to reading outrageously long and tedious books. When it was time for college, he attempted to major in everything. When they told him he couldn't, he settled for a BS in History with a minor in English from the University of Wisconsin, graduate courses in Mathematics and English from Wayne State University, and an MA and PhD ABD in Computer Science from The Ohio State University. Someone must have finally told him he had to leave school and go get a real job.

He moved to Westerville, Ohio in the 1970s where he settled for the rest of his life. Much like Chandler Bing, no one was quite sure what Bob did for work. But it turns out that he was a Senior Research Scientist at Battelle Memorial Institute, a member of the technical staff at Bell Telephone Labs, a Requirements Analyst at The Columbus Dispatch and Vertex Systems, and a Consultant for Compuware, among other technical positions. To be honest, we still don't really understand what Bob did for a living.

But more importantly, Bob joined the Columbus Ski Club. If you've ever talked to Bob, he's probably tried to convince you to join the Ski Club. He was also, ironically, a man who didn't ski. He traveled on numerous ski trips where he happily met up with friends at the lodge after they hit the slopes. He served as Ski Club President, softball and volleyball coach, board member, party planner, and group travel coordinator. To Bob, the answer to the ultimate question of life was both the number 42 and the Columbus Ski Club.

In fact, Bob swept his future bride off her feet at a Ski Club party where he smoothly opened with “I thought you'd be bigger.” Despite Terri not being the strong, powerhouse hitter of his coaching dreams, they fell in love and were married for 33 years. The secret to

their successful union was her acceptance that nothing took priority over the annual Ski Club softball tournament. It might also have been their shared love of reading, backpacking, travel, football and Star Trek. She generously punted his love of historic literature and trips onto their daughter.

Bob was the happiest when he was talking about his three children. His overwhelming pride in them as blossoming individuals did not limit his frequent attempts to embarrass and sometimes exasperate them at every opportunity. When TJ didn't keep up with Bob's standards for room cleanliness, Bob felt the appropriate next step was to throw his bedsheets onto the front lawn. When Alex tried to sneak beer home in high school, Bob took great pleasure in pretending he hadn't seen it and spending the entire evening "almost" opening the fridge door. When he taught Ashley how to drive and she backed into a parked car on day one, he also taught her how to fix a bumper so her Mom wouldn't find out. His heart was in the right place as he taught them, in his own way, how to be responsible adults but never to take life too seriously. His only regret was that they didn't all join the Ski Club.

Bob had a great sense of humor and loved making people laugh. Whether they liked it or not, no one who sat next to him on an airplane remained a stranger for long. The care package he sent to Carolyn's freshman dormitory consisted of only mashed up crackers and peanut butter, with a note that read "I thought you might be hungry." He authored the River Trace neighborhood newsletter, penning his comical take on suburban life. One Halloween, he dressed up as race car driver Bobby Rahal, and convinced his wife to be the race car. He espoused that his humor and happiness were due to his close friendships, and, "You know, that's why everyone should join the Ski Club".

Bob was quirky and wonderful. He had a passion for photography, taking great pleasure in boring family and friends with several hundred hours of living room slide shows. He loved country music, an obvious choice for a boy from a Jewish family in Upstate New York. He prided himself on being a nerd and was unapologetically true to himself. He collected stamps, t-shirts, matchbooks and other treasures we'll continue to dig through for years. Why is there a tree branch in the attic, Bob? He didn't believe in germ theory or green vegetables, but he definitely believed that elbows did not belong on the dinner table. He supported social programs he would never need himself because "That's what makes us a civilized society. We have a responsibility to take care of each other."

He is survived by his beloved wife, Terri Holland; sister, Carolyn Garmise (Steven Musher); sons TJ Gi and Alex Garmise (Andrea), daughter Ashley Patel (Nilesh), grandchildren Avra, Gigi, Autumn, and Oliver, and nephew Danny Musher (Meredith). Bob hated funerals. So, in his honor, we won't be having one. But we will be celebrating his life at the Old Bag of Nails in Westerville on Saturday, July 17th, 2021 with an open house from 4-8pm. As a man renowned for hitting singles in his long and storied softball career, he asked that his ashes be scattered somewhere he's never been - third base.

In lieu of donations or flowers, please consider joining the Columbus Ski Club. Nothing would make Bob happier.

Tribute Wall

KW

“ *What a beautiful tribute to Bob! He sounded like an amazing man. I know he will be missed. Prayers for all his family and friends. Kate Wardrip*

Kate Wardrip - July 14, 2021 at 08:35 AM

CD

“ *Bob was a great guy, always upbeat and had a great sense of humor. He was my board member for the club for some time and always pushed me to do better. Always had a joke. He will be missed.*

Carol Dages - July 13, 2021 at 06:55 PM

DP

“ *Bob was always welcoming to anyone who walked into a ski club meeting or event for the first time. I was privileged to know him a bit, but not well. As a board member now, I want to reiterate that Bob, like so many ski club members, considered them family and friends alike. He knew better than anyone, that going to a ski club party or activity meant that even if you didn't know anyone before you went, you would leave with more than a handful of new friends. Hope you are enjoying all of your new friends wherever you are, Bob.*

Debbie Parris - July 13, 2021 at 05:14 PM

PP

“ *Have never chuckled at the end of anyone else's obituary. Bob was a special friend and never ceased to amaze with his knowledge of all things big and small, and his ability to entertain us with his wonderful sense of humor. We will all miss him greatly. Bobby, we promise to stay close to Terri and enjoy the memories you left us with the walk-off home run of your life! Ray & Pam Paul*

Pamela Paul - July 12, 2021 at 07:48 PM

BA

“ *That was the sweetest obituary I have ever read. I can tell how much Bob was loved, loved life, loved his family and friends, and how dearly he will be missed. Hugs to you all  Brenda Applegate*

Brenda Applegate - July 12, 2021 at 04:13 PM

BG

“ I am always invited to Autumn and Oliver’s birthday parties; it was obvious how Bob loved parties and his family. Such a sweet man and he will be missed.

Brenda Goff - July 12, 2021 at 03:50 PM

NR

“ One of the nicest men I have had the pleasure to call my friend. Outgoing, funny and full of witty humor. He will be missed and in our hearts forever. Nancy & Scott Rees

Nancy Rees - July 12, 2021 at 11:37 AM

TG

“ Miss you, Dad. So glad you had Terri and Ashley to get you through the hard times. Glad you are free of pain. I love you.

Tj Gi - July 12, 2021 at 10:54 AM