



## Robert "Bob" Byron Webster

March 9, 1932 - May 16, 2013

On the morning of May 16, 2013, Robert "Bob" Byron Webster, age 81, passed away peacefully in Royal Oak, Michigan. Born March 9, 1932, at Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, MI, Bob was the only child of Donald Byron Webster, GM Engineer, and Glennie "Betsy" Elizabeth Webster, artist, of Birmingham, MI. Bob was a life-long Michigan resident, and 1949 graduate of Baldwin High School, Birmingham, where he was Captain of the Swim Team and State Champion his Senior Year. Throughout his formative years, Bob always returned to Michigan and eventually settled in Bloomfield Township, Birmingham where he has deep family roots, and lastly Beverly Hills. Bob and his parents travelled the country when he was younger, and later he would travel through Europe, but his heart always belonged up north at "The Cottage" on Crystal Lake, Beulah, where he spent his childhood and adult years picking cherries, climbing sand dunes, fishing, swimming, downhill and cross-country skiing, and learning to sail. He continued these cherished traditions with his children and grandchildren every summer and winter. Bob served his country by enlisting in the 127th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, an Air Defense unit of the Michigan Air National Guard on January 8, 1951, during the Korean War. He was stationed in Portland, Maine for two years and then attended service school at Lowry AFB, Denver, CO in 1952, serving as Squadron Sgt Major in 1953. In 1961, he was commissioned and served to the rank of Major, at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan. Bob swam for University of Michigan, earned his undergraduate degree in 1955, and was

a member of the Alpha Phi Chapter of Phi Gamma Delta. With 4 years of the GI Bill, Bob's father steered him away from engineering and toward law after saying, "You seem to have a gift for gab, maybe you should be a lawyer". Bob earned his law degree from University of Michigan in 1957 and began his legal career as a clerk for U.S. District Court Judge Ralph Freeman in 1957. Upon passing the Bar in 1958, Bob went into private practice, beginning at Slyfield, Harman, Reitz and Tait as an associate, then Hill, Lewis, Adams, Goodrich and Tait until 1973 when he served as an Oakland County Circuit Court Judge appointed by Governor William G. Milliken. During his time as Circuit Court Judge, Bob served as alternate presiding Judge and Chief Judge each for two years leaving a reputation of a dedicated, fair and wise Judge. He returned to private practice in 1982 specializing in commercial litigation, family law, professional liability, alternative dispute mediation and arbitration until his retirement in 2011. He was a partner with Hill Lewis, Clark Hill PLC, and Giarmarco, Mullins & Horton, P.C. Bob served as President of the State Bar of Michigan from 1989-1990; Was appointed by the Michigan Supreme Court as Chairman of the Committee to Revise and Consolidate Michigan Court Rules; was on the MSC Task Force on gender issues in the court; co-chaired the Judicial Qualifications Committee, a congressional committee that reviews the qualifications of candidates for federal judgeships; and served in various capacities with the American Bar Association and the State Bar of Michigan. Bob is a past director of the American Judicature Society and National Commissioner on Uniform State Laws, and a co-author of Martin, Dean & Webster "Michigan Court Rules Practice". Local politics were also a draw for Bob and he served as a Precinct Delegate when everything was recorded with paper and pencil and his family helped to go door to door during elections as well as a Delegate to the Republican Convention in 1972. Bob also served on numerous non-legal Boards such as the Horizon Health Systems and other organizations. An avid vegetable gardener, Bob was also drawn to genealogy and spent many dedicated hours to learning about his family tree passing down both interests to his children and grandchildren. Bob

is survived by his children: Anne E. Webster Jacobs and husband, Chris Jacobs; Allison D. Webster Giddings and husband, Gavin Giddings; Peter H. Webster and wife Penny; James B. Webster and their mother, Marilyn Hey Webster. He is also survived by his beloved grandchildren: Colin Jacobs, Samuel Giddings, Ethan Webster, Kyle Jacobs, Glennie Webster, Alexander Jacobs and Sydney Giddings. Visitation will be held at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home in Royal Oak, MI, on Tuesday, May 21st from 4 p.m. – 8 p.m. followed by a memorial service at the Birmingham Community House in Birmingham, MI, on Friday, May 31st at 3 p.m. Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the Boys and Girls Club of Oakland and Macomb Counties or the Crystal Lake and Watershed Association.

# Tribute Wall

JS

“ *Bob Webster was amongst the most earnest and kind men I have been privileged to know. His rye sense of humor was a joy to experience. Condolences to his family and God bless. Cynthia Diane Stephens*

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**Judge Cynthia Diane Stephens** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ *I met Bob through Diane Dietle, I was retired and working a little in Sr Care. Diane told me that Bob needed some help. Well long story short I hooked up with Bob and we spent a little over a year together. A strong friendship came out of that time together. Bob was a caring man who loved his family very much. While he will be missed his legacy will last forever. A true gentleman. Bob and Sandy Bean*

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**Bob bean** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MN

“ *Bob Webster was a wonderful person. He was always eager to share his wisdom and support when I was a young associate at Hill Lewis. His fortitude and no nonsense approach to resolving matters remained guiding principles for me as I progressed in my legal career. Rest in Peace. Marsha Nettles*

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**Marsha Nettles** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

GC

“ Bob Webster was our Uncle Bob to me and to my brother, Malcolm Brown. I babysat his children when they were little and lived in their beautiful home "up the hill" in Birmingham. Uncle Bob and his children's Mother, Aunt Marilyn were a "cool" couple. Uncle Bob and I share the same birth date, March 9th, and I loved his dry sense of humor. My sympathy to his family. Gail Brown Chapman Oxnard, CA

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**Gail Brown Chapman** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ Bob was at first a mentor of mine at Hill Lewis, then a partner working together on some fascinating cases, and throughout - a good friend. I will forever recall him with lots of fond memories.

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**Douglas West** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

PD

“ A great Judge and an even better person. Pat M. Donofrio Judge, Michigan Court of Appeals

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**Pat M. Donofrio** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ Bob was the lawyer I hoped to become when I was a court clerk, and my mentor when I became a lawyer. He was a good and honest man. My deepest sympathies to the family.

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**Kevin Breck** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Peace, Grace, Strength and Blessings to the Webster Family. Respectfully, Matthew T. Smith.

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**Matthew T. Smith** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ I will miss my Fiji "little brother". Margy and I have great respect for Bob's many accomplishments. We send our deepest sympathy to the family. Chuck and Margy Murray

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**Chuck Murray** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RE

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the entire Webster family during this time of sorrow. May you find comfort by all the wonderful memories that you made together. Joel and Rhonda Lim EltonWylie E. Groves, class of 1982

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**Rhonda Elton** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EM

“ We will miss him...he had one impressive resume...I may have behaved better as a child if I knew how important he was!

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**Earl McHugh** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ Our thoughts are with you in this time of sorrow. Stan & Barbara Smart, Kalamazoo, MI

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**Stan Smart** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM