



Robert Weinbaum

February 23, 1935 - December 1, 2022

Robert (Bob) Courier Weinbaum, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and dear friend, died on December 1, 2022, at the age of 87, surrounded by his loved ones, in Royal Oak, Michigan.

Bob was born February 23, 1935, to Harry and Shirley Weinbaum. Also nurtured by an extended loving family of uncles and aunts he and his sister, Barbara, thrived in NW Detroit. He attended the University of Michigan, and headed Michigamua, a senior honorary society whose ring he wore until his death. He went on to Michigan Law School, graduating in 1959. He founded the Mackinaw City Town Crier newspaper with a couple of college buddies. It is still in publication.

After a brief stint in private practice, Bob joined the United States Department of Justice under Robert F. Kennedy as a trial attorney in 1962. Bob represented the United States in *United States v General Motors* in a case involving antitrust issues related to Chevrolet. Bob won the case, which went all the way to the Supreme Court. GM would subsequently offer Bob a position which he would accept. He came home to metro Detroit and began what would become his life-long passion - making General Motors more accountable: safer for its employees as well as responsible for better and safer cars. He rose through the ranks to Associate General Counsel, winning approval from the Federal Trade Commission for GM's joint venture with

Toyota. Bob served as chair of the American Bar Association's anti-trust section, a singular honor for a corporate, in-house lawyer. Just before his retirement from GM he worked on a robust study of GM's role in Germany prior to WWII and published its findings.

Backing up the story a bit: prior to Bob being offered the position at GM, he took a well-deserved vacation to the Virgin Island to celebrate his Supreme Court victory. It was on a St Thomas beach he encountered an island woman weaving hats. They began to chat, and she ended the conversation by telling him that he would soon meet a dark-haired woman that would change his life. Later that evening while at Galleon House Inn looking for a Coke behind the bar, a dark-haired, blue-eyed woman asked if she could help him. That was his May. After just eight months of letters and courtship and 21 days in each other's company, they would marry. May and her three children, Jeanne, Rob and Amy, moved to DC and then later this new family would move to Detroit when Bob would join GM in 1968.

Together Bob and May raised three children, then four, when John Henry was born. Political activism was a key component to their world, be it the anti-war movement or social justice in Detroit. They made time with family in Charlevoix; Lake Michigan being one of Bob's great loves and they enjoyed Michigan football with dear friends. Island life was always an undercurrent in their relationship, and they would make Key West their new island home. They enjoyed their house on Georgia Street for many years, eventually moving there in retirement. Key West vacations for their grandchildren Elliot, Franny, Jordan, Nicholas, Cortlyn and Ty are some of the best memories ever. He found time to serve on the board of the Key West Historical Museum and do satisfying pro-bono and consulting work for many. May's battle with Parkinson would become consuming in her later years, and Bob's attention to her quality of life and her needs, which became constant, is legendary. He would also state she took care of him.

The world has lost truly a gentle, loving man, one who treated all with dignity and respect; a man whose love was constant and truly led by example. Those of us who were lucky to call him Dad, Grandpa, Poppa and friend are missing him so. We were lucky. He is now with his May. Ciao, ciao. If you wish to remember Bob with a charitable donation, please consider the Southern Poverty Law Center or the Michael J. Fox Foundation. No memorial is planned at this time.

Tribute Wall

KH

“*Bob was a good friend and confidant. I could always count on him to provide a helping hand, wise advice, and humor when it was much needed. He treated everyone with respect and always had a smile when he greeted you. He will be missed in this world. I will keep him and his family in my thoughts and prayers.*

Kenneth Hulik - February 14, 2023 at 12:10 PM

MT

“*What a wonderful man. Bob's passing is loss for mankind. Only a few know of what he did to get GM occupational safety on the right track in the 90s. His efforts saved many lives, and he is revered by those who were on the GM Global safety staff. Sue and I had the opportunity to meet with he and May in Key West some years ago, and we understood why she was the love of his life... My continued breakfasts and brunches were always something to look forward to. Our deep sympathy to family and friends.*

Michael A Taubitz - February 14, 2023 at 11:44 AM

“*Bob Weinbaum, or Uncle Bob as he was to me (and I'm 65, he STILL was Uncle Bob to me), was one of the nicest, most considerate, and caring human beings I knew. I always enjoyed talking to him, I was the recipient of his concern and generosity on more than one occasion, and if anyone was an exemplar for how you strive to form a solid partnership with your spouse, who in his case he so clearly loved, Bob Weinbaum was that man.*

At a time in my life when I was a bit anchorless and rudderless, essentially adrift, Bob and May opened their home to me and made me a part of the family, and I will never forget this generosity and if there's one intervention in my life that has made me mindful of "Paying it forward", it's theirs. I was May's biological nephew so there was a connection there that Bob didn't have to so much respect, but I felt accepted by Bob in the same way I was by May, and that acceptance helped shape my view of life and how I want to present myself to my children and family.

I had no idea what a "Coney Island" was until I met Bob - I'm not going to claim great fandom of this particular Detroit variation of what might be considered "food" in some parts of the country, but I enjoyed going to get one and eating said thing with him when the discussion of these ... whatever ... came up. The discussion was along the lines of "Would you like to get a Coney Island?". Having been a denizen of NYC when I was growing up, and someone who for a time had actually lived in Brooklyn very near to where the actual Coney Island is to be found, I hadn't a clue what he was talking about. Off we went to get a "Coney Island". I'm pretty sure I told him then that this wasn't ever going to be a "go to" for me in my life, but it was fun having the experience with him and it sure and heck made an impression on me.

Bob was a gentleman, the most clear cut and obvious representation of the word. If you looked "gentleman" up in a dictionary I'm confident you'd find Bob's picture next to the definition. How he carried, expressed and explained himself to the

world and to me had a profound influence on how I felt myself short of the master in this regard, and again gave me something to work on to perfect.

For me Uncle Bob was a gem of a guy, which was so apropos to the diamond of a wife he had in Aunt May, and I'm sorry my children will not know them as I knew them, I'm sorry that they're not there for me and their family writ large, but I'm so, so very grateful for their influence on me personally, the times I had to share with them, and the lasting impression made by them on me, and in particular with regard to Bob, for the lessons conveyed to me to help me grow and find my rudder and anchor.

James Nugent - February 05, 2023 at 01:22 PM

LJ

“ Although Bob and I shared no political opinions, he was a loyal and forgiving friend. And for years an enthusiastic rival on the Ohio State/Michigan game with our longstanding bet. It began with the loser buying an expensive dinner with the other couple, but after a streak of dinners with a 1-9-1 record I proposed a change to the winner buying because he'd be enjoying it. When Bob readily agreed I had no idea that our luck would change to 15-1 in subsequent years. I fed the Weinbaums for over two decades! But those were just the tip of the iceberg. Waking up at their house the morning after one of May's incredible home cooked dinners, we could rely on being roused with her ear splitting recording of that awful song, Hail to the Victors. There were so many events over the years: Carnival in Rio and Praia do Forte, Brazil where Bob declined on our behalf a generous offer of a GM distributor to take us sailing on his yacht to an island for lunch because Bob considered it a violation of the company ethics policy he had created—Bob brushed off my observation that I didn't work for GM. So many other fond memories: trips to countless places like Hawaii, Mexico, various US resorts, visits to their lovely house in Key West, trying with little success to teach them fly fishing, and sadly May's treatment at the Cleveland Clinic to improve on her implanted device to moderate the Parkinsons symptoms. Never was there a more unlikely but devoted couple. She shepherded him during his career, and he faithfully attended to her in retirement. An impossible model to emulate but an enduring example of love.

Les Jacobs - January 22, 2023 at 12:06 PM

BB

“ I had the honor of getting to know Bob and May when they came into my Barbershop on Main Street in Royal Oak for haircuts. By this time the Parkinson’s had taken over May . Bob was so loving and caring to her . I will miss this kind and loving man and those beautiful blue eyes he was my friend. What an example he was to all and legend in his own right . God bless you Bob you will be sorely missed . Condolences to the family . Bonnie Bourque , Sands Barbershop



bonnie bourque - January 16, 2023 at 11:48 AM



“ My wife Brenda and I were part of Bob's "Key West family." Bob and May were dear friends and were sorely missed when they left Georgia St. Bob was one of the kindest gentlemen I ever knew. Both he and May cared more about others than they did about themselves (truly a rarity today) selfishness was a foreign concept to both of them. Tom Callahan

Tom Callahan - January 16, 2023 at 08:57 AM

BN

“ Bob was a wonderful person with a generous sense of humor. I still recall a late night at an ABA meeting when he and I connected over an infomercial we both saw while at the hotel promoting the Banjo Minnow (<https://youtu.be/m7QwteLR4fs>) - never laughed so hard!

Barry Nigro - January 16, 2023 at 08:10 AM

SC

“ One of the nicest and most honorable men you'll ever meet and a great mentor and friend to a young lawyer. Thanks, Go Blue, and RIP RCW. SJC. Steve Cernak.

Steven Cernak - January 15, 2023 at 07:33 PM

TG

“ I had the pleasure of knowing and working with Bob for about 40 years. He was one of the finest people I have ever known. His legal skills and accomplishments were outstanding, but more significantly he had exemplified an ethical life with great empathy for all people. He and May will be remembered with great fondness and appreciation. Tom Gottschalk

Tom Gottschalk - January 15, 2023 at 01:53 PM

JE

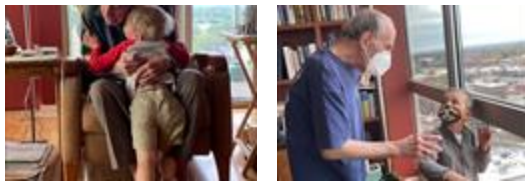
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jeanne - January 15, 2023 at 10:08 AM

JE

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 10:00 PM

JE

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 06:02 PM

CO

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Cortlyn - January 14, 2023 at 03:13 PM

JE

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 02:07 PM

JE

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 02:02 PM

JE

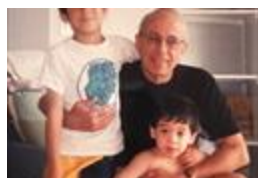
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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 11:12 AM

JE

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 11:09 AM

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 10:52 AM

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 10:40 AM

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jeanne - January 14, 2023 at 10:40 AM

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jeanne - January 12, 2023 at 10:48 PM

RO

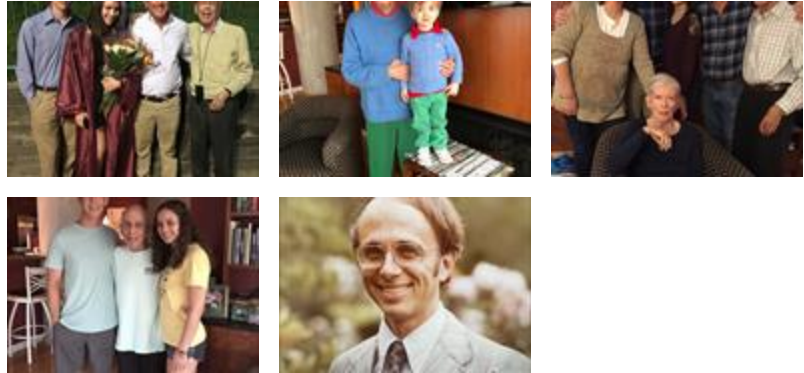
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Rob - January 12, 2023 at 10:25 PM

CO

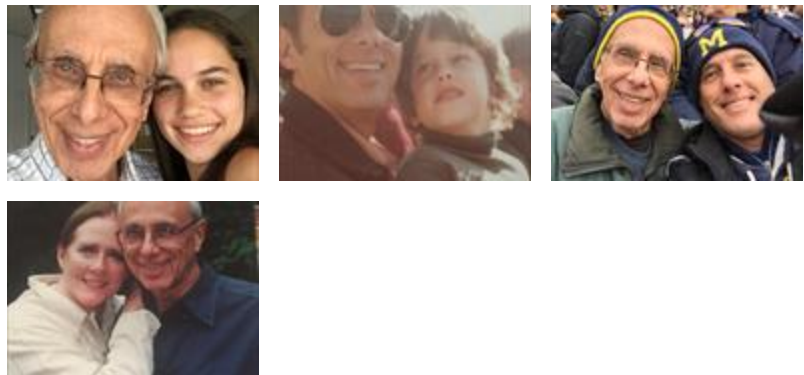
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Cortlyn - January 12, 2023 at 05:46 PM

JW

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john Weinbaum - January 12, 2023 at 05:24 PM

JE

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jeanne - January 12, 2023 at 04:55 PM