

Robert "Bob" Huefner

April 18, 1936 ~ April 28, 2026

After a long life full of purpose, gratitude, and dedication, our beloved Bob died on April 28, 2026, in Salt Lake City of causes incident to age. Bob was born on April 18, 1936, in Logan, Utah, to Wynona McCune Musser and Paul Huefner. He met Dixie Snow of Maplewood, New Jersey, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1959; they married in Salt Lake City in 1960. Cambridge and Cape Cod remained special places to them throughout their almost 66 years of marriage. Their sons Steve and Eric brought great joy and satisfaction to Bob, who will always remain an amazing Dad to them.

Bob lived a life of public and community service. In 1963, at the age of 27, he became the State of Utah's first State Planning Coordinator, serving on the personal staff of Governor George Clyde and then of Governor Cal Rampton (from 2 different political parties!), an experience that furthered his understanding of state, local, and federal policy planning. After his selection as a White House Fellow in the LBJ administration (1967-1968), he served on the personal staff to the Secretary of the Treasury. He developed great respect for the expertise and dedication of career federal and state employees and a deep belief in the value of negotiating from a position of mutual respect to solve policy dilemmas across all three branches of government.

Bob used his BS degree in civil engineering (University of Utah, 1958), master's degree in city and regional planning (MIT, 1960), and doctorate in finance (Harvard Business School, 1971) to deepen his understanding of public-private policy interactions. Returning to Salt Lake in 1972, he launched the University of Utah's graduate program in public administration (MPA) in the Political Science Department. He taught tax policy, public budgeting, public ethics, and health policy for 35 years. While at the U he became increasingly interested and involved in the development of academic bioethics programs. After Bob became the holder of the Governor Scott M. Matheson Endowed Chair in Health Care Studies, he made many friends in the University's School of Medicine and worked with a wide variety of stakeholders across the state and nation in seeking to improve health policy and deliver better care at a reasonable cost.

Bob received multiple awards for his work, among them from the National Governors' Association, the American Institute of Planning, the Salt Lake League of Women Voters, and the University of Utah (Teaching, Service, and Alumni awards). He served in many leadership roles on advisory health, tax, and government organization commissions, both in Utah and nationally, including co-founding Envision Utah in 1997. Throughout his retirement years, Bob remained optimistically active in a variety of civic affairs, and he and Dixie were teammates in many related advocacy groups, causes, and adventures.

Perhaps no more so than to his two sons, Bob was a bit of a Renaissance Man. He taught them to ski and hike, lay brick and hang drywall, create treasure hunts and draw blueprints and value life-long learning. He shared the

importance of knowing history and the value of calculus, helped them cherish the land and love the National Parks, and showed them how to be engaged with the community and world. From him they learned to laugh at themselves, respect different peoples and cultures, and be a good partner with their spouse. Bob and Dixie extended these lessons to their seven granddaughters, including traveling with each of them to explore other countries and climes.

From his youth, Bob devoted time and energy to contemplating how societies could better serve all members of their communities. He was equally at home with his college-days' bricklaying companions and his faculty colleagues. Like the Old Testament prophet Micah, he reverenced justice, mercy, and walking humbly with one's God, both personally and universally. He grieved when war and division destroyed families or communities anywhere in the world. He was deeply disturbed by the growing income inequality in the U.S., and by the excessive special interest money and corporate power that influence our legislative bodies and threaten our democracy.

In his final year, although his memory was increasingly compromised and his mobility failing, Bob continually thought he should be doing more to contribute to a healthy, peaceful society. He never lost his quick wit and sense of humor, even giving the doctors and nurses a few laughs as he was slipping away ("Could I listen to your heart and lungs?" "Only if you tell me what they say.") Dixie, Eric, and Steve are forever grateful to the medical team at the University of Utah Hospital who provided Bob with truly compassionate care in his difficult final days.

Bob leaves a huge hole in the hearts of family, friends, and colleagues, who treasured his curiosity, intelligence, wit, reflectiveness, integrity, and genuine caring, and who will miss the frequent chuckle in his voice.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents and two siblings, Peggy and Kathryn. He leaves his wife Dixie, whose care for Bob, especially in his final stages, gave his sons a remarkable example of devotion and teamwork. He also leaves brothers Jim (Oregon) and Don (Arizona), his sister Ekaterina (Tennessee), his sons Steve (Ohio) and Eric (Salt Lake) and their wives (Julianne Clawson and Martha Thomas, respectively), seven granddaughters (Diana Weaverhuff, twins HuxleyAnn and Eliza, Emmy, Kate, Delaney, and Blythe), and one new great granddaughter, Georgie Weaverhuff.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday June 6th at 11 a.m. at the University of Utah Alumni House.

In his memory, Bob would simply, but fervently, encourage all of us to recommit doing whatever we can to strengthen our civic culture. If you wish, donations can be made to the Robert P. and Dixie S. Huefner Endowed Scholarship Fund at the University of Utah for the support of future generations of students pursuing public service and public policy careers.