



Mr. Robert R. "Bob" Fontana

July 3, 1937 - April 18, 2022

CLINTON – Mr. Robert R. “Bob” Fontana, age 84, passed away peacefully on Monday, April 18, 2022, with his devoted wife and family by his side.

Born in Utica on July 3, 1937, Bob was the son of the late Graziano “Roger” and Ninfa “Fanny” (Morice) Fontana. He attended St. Mary of Mt. Carmel grammar school and went on to graduate from Utica Catholic Academy. Bob further pursued his studies at Mohawk Valley Community College.

On August 2, 1958, Bob married his loving wife and best friend, the former Gail V. Burlingham. The couple had a wonderfully caring relationship. Family always came first during their sixty-four years of marriage. Bob and Gail were great providers and perfect role models for their children. Their relationship was like no other—a true witness of friendship, love, and trust in the Lord.

As the primary provider for his family, Bob held a variety of positions. His professional journey began as a Printed Board Foreman at UNIVAC Corp. After UNIVAC left the area, Bob worked for the McDonalds Corporation in Saratoga Springs as the Manager in the Capital Region of New York. Bob eventually decided to relocate back to the Utica area with his family in order to care for his parents; this led to a new position as a Manager of the Burger King restaurant chain in the Utica-Rome area. He was lastly employed by Hummel’s Office Equipment, a family organization, where Bob was well-suited to succeed and even became one of their top salespeople. His many talents and interpersonal decisions—his people skills, compassion for staff and customers, gentlemanly manners, and choosing to treat everyone with special

care—were very appreciated in all his positions.

An out-going man, Bob was known for his compassion and care for others. These earned him many lasting relationships with countless stories made along the way. He touched many lives and his legacy will not be soon forgotten.

At home, that same level of love continued. Bob was a family man who was a good provider and, even more, a great dad. He instilled the virtue of compassion in his children, modeling for them how a loving heart could gain them a lifetime of friendships. Bob taught them the Golden Rule and was proud to be able to provide them with a Catholic education.

For Bob, family was always his main priority. When Bob's children were small, nightly dinnertime was a must. As his family grew, weekly Sunday dinners with his children and grandchildren were essential, his family knew that 4:00 p.m. was sacred and reserved for family togetherness. Moreover, they always lived in a multi-family dwelling which provided loving support, hospitality and a sense of comfort. Once there were grandchildren, it was no surprise to those who knew Bob that he adored them. He delighted in spending quality time with them, which was even more feasible due to their living in the house together—the kids were up the stairs from their grandpa. When Bob heard his names, “Grandpa” or “Poppy,” it was music to his ears! As years passed, he always looked forward to their visits and phone calls.

Golf was one of Bob's passions, which he was so happy to share with his son Mike and grandson Dan. They loved to frequent their favorite fairways at Valley View. Bob was also honored to be a member of the Knights of Columbus Council 189 for many years. In his spare time, Bob could be found league bowling at Pin-O-Rama Lanes or participating in a friendly game of cards with friends. Bob also enjoyed monthly luncheons with lifelong friends. Each year, Bob and Gail provided for a family vacation—from when his children were young to when they could bring the grandchildren. They especially enjoyed trips to sunny Orlando, the sunshine of the Carolinas, and to Virginia Beach. Furthermore, Bob loved visiting Vernon Downs with friends

for the harness racing as well as going to Saratoga for the exciting flat track racing! These family gatherings became some of the greatest memories. Bob always had a pocket full of dog biscuits. His dog, Patches and his grandchildren's dogs, Zoey and Cooper were part of the family. Bob loved all the family pets.

Being a good husband, a great father, and an invested grandfather and "Poppy" were some of Bob's greatest life priorities. He left his family a legacy of love and blessed them with lessons on how to live life to its fullest and most loving potential. There is a unique and sincere assurance that Bob's role as family's gentle patriarch will never be forgotten or diminished.

A faithful man who was a fine example of a Christian, Bob attended Mass each week at his home parish of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Church. He instilled in his family the tradition of praying and renewing his spirit at weekly Mass, which they attended on Saturday evenings, where Bob served as an usher for several years.

Bob is survived by his loving wife, Gail V.; his daughter and son-in-law, Debra and Fred DeLafleur; his son and his partner, Robert J. "Rob" Fontana and Charles A. Jones; and his son and daughter-in-law, Michael R. "Mike" and Gail A. Fontana. He leaves behind his beloved grandchildren, Alison and her husband Justin Jennings, and Daniel Fontana; and his adored great-grandson, Nathan Jennings. Bob was preceded by his brothers and sister-in-law, Charles Fontana, and Thomas and Anna Fontana. Bob will live on in the hearts of his niece and nephew, Roger and Paula Fontana, and his late niece Mary Frances Fontana; his great-nephew and great-niece, Andrew Fontana, and Meghan Fontana. Bob also was blessed with cousins who survive him as well as all who had gone before him. Bob leaves many cherished friends that he made throughout his life.

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to the physicians and staff at MVHS at St. Luke's Healthcare, who were compassionate and kind as Bob's caregivers. Additional thanks are extended to Lauri at Lincare, who gave

special attention to Bob that was so appreciated.

The family will commemorate Bob's life at a private time. In lieu of floral offerings, memorial contributions in Bob's honor may be made to the New Hartford Fire Department—in gratitude for their personal attention and amazing support—online at <http://www.nhfd.com/donate.html>. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to commemorate Bob's life at his Mass of Christian Burial and Celebration of Life on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, at 12:00 noon at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, 648 Jay St. There will be an opportunity to greet the family at the conclusion of services. For those who are unable to attend, the Mass will be livestreamed at <https://youtube.com/c/StMaryofMountCarmelBlessedSacrament>. Entombment in Calvary Mausoleum at Calvary Cemetery will be on Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

Cemetery Details

Calvary Mausoleum

2407 Oneida Street
Utica, Ny

Previous Events

Funeral Service

APR **26**. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Mary of Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament Parish
648 Jay St
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-1482

Tribute Wall

EK

“ *Im sorry I just heard of Bob;s passing today. Bob was a friend of my from the race track and a true gentlemen. We spent time trying to picks winners and once in while we did. Ir was just fun being around BoB. My thoughts and prayers for his family and friends.*

ed keys - April 28, 2022 at 12:33 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Robert R. "Bob" Fontana.*



April 26, 2022 at 12:42 AM

WH

“ *To Bob's Family,
I am so sorry for your loss, Bob was a great guy. I had the pleasure of working with Bob at Hummel's for 15 years. Whenever Bob was in the office the whole place seemed to be a much happier place. Bob always had a smile for and words of encouragement if you were having a bad day. It was a honor knowing such a caring and thoughtful man.*

William Heckel

William Heckel - April 25, 2022 at 08:49 PM

BL

“ To Gail and Family---Please accept my most heartfelt condolences for Bob's passing. Bob was a longtime good friend and, for countless years, a fellow golfer and bowler starting back in our Univac days. Over the years we dug up many a golf course. God Speed, Bob.

Bill Lafferty - April 25, 2022 at 09:19 AM

LM

“ I had the pleasure of working with Bob for many years at Hummel's as he was always very helpful with a smile on his face!!! My favorite memory was when I visited your place in Orlando back in 1999 with a few other Hummel's team members when we were there for a vendor conference. Bob & Gail took such good care of us while we waited for our flight home to Syracuse and fed us the most wonderful dinner! My thoughts and prayers go out to you and your family.

Laurie Meyers

Laurie Meyers - April 25, 2022 at 09:19 AM

TG

“ My sincere condolences to the entire Fontana family at this most difficult time.....I have fond memories of Bob visiting me at Golf Unlimited "back in the day".....A wonderful, friendly man, who truly will be missed by all.....God Bless You Bob!

TOM GADZIALA - April 25, 2022 at 09:18 AM

AA

“ God's army of the "nicest people" to enter the gates of Heaven just gained its KING.

Anna Ambrose - April 25, 2022 at 09:11 AM



“ I had the priviledge of knowing Bob through his time at Burger King and later on, Hummels. He was a great guy and always had a smile for everyone. My deepest symparhy to his family at this sad time.

Vic Fariello



Victor Fariello - April 24, 2022 at 09:57 AM

ED

“ Our heartfelt sympathy to The Fontana Family .
Our prayers are with you ,
The DePerno Family at Captain John's

Elaine DePprno-Brown - April 24, 2022 at 08:57 AM

TM

“ *To the Fontana Family,*

So many wonderful memories of Cousin Bobby. I so Loved hearing the stories of Bobby & Gail and the trailer they lived in when they first got married. I remember my parents telling me about all the pic nics and family outings all the aunts, uncles & cousins went to, which I am grateful that they continued into the next generations as well.

I can recall when Bobby worked in Rome at Burger King many many years ago, he gave my brother Mike his first job there. Bobby always had a smile on his face. He was a very loving person who always put family first. Anytime someone was sick, in the hospital or needed help Bobby was right there to lend a hand. He will be greatly missed by many.

May Bobby now be free of pain.... and Rest in Eternal Peace.

All my Love,

Cousin Tina Mayhew

Tina Mayhew - April 24, 2022 at 04:19 AM

AJ

“ *Rob and family, Our most heartfelt condolences in the passing of your Father. May time and wonderful memories ease your grief, while making you realize that the love your father had for you will always be in your heart. Sincerely, Alan and Chris*

alan c jones - April 23, 2022 at 04:52 PM

GM

“ So sorry to learn of Bobby’s passing. He was a kind and gentle soul and a super dedicated family man. I really enjoyed listening to him talk as well as talk with him at those many family gatherings, being it at Grandma’s house, one of the other aunt ‘s places or one of those delightful family picnics at Sylvan Beach. I never saw him get angry or utter a bad word about anyone. I Bobby has had his medical ups and downs over the years. That is finished now. The Lord has called him home to be at peace. God bless you and all your family.

Guy Morice - April 23, 2022 at 01:44 PM

TW

“ Memories will linger on, Bob always had respect and caring words for all in his life. I would see bob often at Parkway Drugs and have good conversations. Thoughts with you Gail and you family .

tim wissenbach - April 23, 2022 at 08:31 AM

BN

“ Bill and Janet Newman purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Mr. Robert R. "Bob" Fontana.



Bill and Janet Newman - April 22, 2022 at 05:59 PM

BH

“ TO ROB, CHARLIE, GAIL AND THE FONTANA FAMILY:

Remember, Bob has only gone away for a little while. He is now safe and secure in the loving arms of his Savior, Jesus Christ! We are deeply sorry for your loss and will remember Bob as a kind and loving father and friend.

Bill and Joyce

Bill Haldeman - April 22, 2022 at 01:55 PM

JS

“ *Fontana Family,
Bob blessed so many people with his kindness. Praying that you'll find comfort in your memories of him and in the knowledge that others are missing him, too.*

Fondly, Jacquelyn



Jacquelyn R Schmidt - April 22, 2022 at 10:21 AM

ST

“ *To Mike, Gail, and family...so sorry for your loss, your dad sounds like a wonderful man, we are sending our love and prayers to you all.*

Love, Fred and Sandi Tedesco

Sandra Tedesco - April 21, 2022 at 07:07 PM

LA

To all the Fontana Family, I am so very sorry for your loss 🙏❤️

LaurieDowell - April 21, 2022 at 07:17 PM

PF

“ Aunt Gail, Debbie, Fred, Robbie, Charlie, Gail, Mike, Alison and Danny....our hearts are full with some wonderful memories and time with all of us together!!! Please know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers at this sad time. We wish we were with you all but know that we are sending you all our love until we see you again!! God bless and please let us know if you need anything!! ❤️
love Paula and Roger...

Paula Fontana - April 21, 2022 at 05:56 PM

FL

“ Dear Gail and family,
We are so very sorry about Bob's passing. He was truly a kind and caring family man who always kept in touch with even his extended family. We always enjoyed his visits, phone calls, and conversations. He was a great guy and a great cousin. We will miss him. Our thoughts and our prayers are with all of you.
Love,
Don and Francine Lazzaro
Ted and Edie Camesano

Francine Lazzaro - April 21, 2022 at 05:29 PM

MI

“ Dear Gayle and family,
It was always nice to see Bob come in the gym, he always said hello and talked very fondly of his family...I am so sorry for your loss and may he rest in peace.
Respectfully,
Michelle Randazzo

Michelle - April 21, 2022 at 01:18 PM