

ROBERT MEAD 1924 - 2021

The Rotary Club of Bedford suffered a terrible loss this week. The last of our founding members has slipped away from us. He was there in the beginning and all the way through our 65 years of working around Bedford and the world. I would categorize him as a quiet man. To quote a phrase, a quiet man that carried a big stick! In the 40+ years I've known Bob I don't think I ever heard him raise his voice, but he always managed to get things done. He wasn't the kind of man that would participate in open floor debates. He preferred to work his magic behind the scenes. One of the things he was most proud of in Rotary was his perfect attendance in Rotary. Bob had perfect attendance for over 50 years, and we loved him for it. When he was hospitalized we actually cancelled our regular meeting and held it in his hospital room at Leahy. With tears in his eyes, all he could say was "Thank You!" Bob was president of the club in 1962 – 1963 and in 1984 he showed up in my office at the DPW and asked to talk to me privately. I'm here Bob, to ask you to be our president next year. We're in a hell-of-a-mess and I think you can straighten it out, and I'll be there in the background to help you. I said yes, we did straighten it out,



1988 Mort Stern,
Bob Mead, and Jim
Harrill

and the rest is history. Our club has done a lot of projects in and out of Bedford over the past 65 years. And Bob has been the champion of many of them and participated in all of them. If Bob heard of a problem around town, or if any of our members were having difficulties you could count on a "private" visit from Bob, and he would do his best to solve the problem. If it required the help of the club, he would organize it, if it were a private problem of one of our members he would solve it for them if he could, He did not want nor did he ever asked for anything in return. I knew of some of these instances and lets just say, there were a lot of them over the years.

Who knows how many lives Bob has touched over his 96 years and his 65 years in Rotary I wouldn't even want to venture a guess, but it started in Rotary with Spring Brooks Park, not the renovation, I'm referring to the original construction, then there was 9/11. I can still hear him talking "We can't let this go, he said;

let.s build a memorial so folks won't forget, and they'll have somewhere quiet to go with their thoughts." Bob was not at all bashful either, he was tenacious! About 10 years ago he heard the Shriners were collecting aluminum can tabs and selling them to buy equipment for their children's hospitals. Bob decided it was a good idea that we should get involved in. Before you knew it collection jars started showing up all over town. At last count he collected over 2,000,000 of them. The local Shriners even made a special trip to our club meeting to present him with a giant Teddy Bear to commemorate that accomplishment. At all our meetings he would go around and make sure you had taken the aluminum tab off the can for him.

Bob found out I collected stamps about five years ago. I swear I now have the stamps and postage off every one of the postal deliveries made to his home since. He was also quite the prankster. And he was sneaky about it too. When a prank was sprung everybody laughed and when we looked at Bob, he was just sitting there with a big grin all over his face.

Bob had quite the family, his beautiful wife Marge, a pile of kids, and even more grandchildren and great grandchildren. We were his friends, and part of his extended family. Every week we would go around the room and drop a few bucks in the happy dollar pot for a new grandchild, a retirement, a memorable vacation, etc. but each week when it would come to Bob, his standard statement was always "I'm glad I'm still able to come to the meeting."



When someone, or something is always there, we have a tendency to take them/it for granted. In all the years I've known him I don't think Bob ever fell into one of those categories, he was bigger than life and we all looked forward to seeing him every week. I am proud to call him my friend; and I will miss him, all the members of our club will miss him, deeply! Safe journey my friend.

*Robert A. Cassidy, Bulletin Editor
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