



Robert Joseph Schwanzl

June 14, 1933 - July 10, 2020

Robert J. Schwanzl, 87, of Maumee, OH died peacefully at home on July 10. Bob was born June 14, 1933 in Toledo to the late Wilbur and Alma (Lammers) Schwanzl. He married Carolyn Murray on his birthday in 1958 at Good Shepherd Catholic Church and always commented that he got the best “present” he ever had on his 25th birthday. They celebrated 53 beautiful years together before Carolyn passed away in July of 2011.

Bob grew up on Vermont Avenue, attending old St. Mary’s and Central Catholic High School, graduating in 1951. He was a sergeant in the US Army, stationed in Washington, DC and worked in intelligence during the Korean War. Following his military service, he returned to Toledo and worked a series of jobs, eventually meeting his future bride Carolyn at a dance hall named Club My Own in 1956. Bob decided to take both the fire and police exams, with the fire department calling him first, where he proudly served for the next 40 years, retiring in 1998.

Bob truly loved his job, ultimately ascending to Assistant Chief in 1994. He often said, “it’s not work if you love what you do”. He had a variety of responsibilities in the fire service, including the training bureau. He was proud to have overseen the first female firefighters complete their training and to support the creation of the TFD’s water rescue unit.

Following his graduation from Owens Tech with a degree in their inaugural Fire Science class he also worked as a fire science instructor at Owens for fifteen years. His passion for the fire service was only exceeded by his passion for his family. He adored Carolyn, his “one and only”, and they were blessed with four children, sixteen grandchildren to whom he was “Grandpa Chief”, and three great grandchildren, who dubbed him “Papa Chief”.

Late in his career, Bob became highly involved with the Toledo Firefighters Museum, and has been President since 1993. His family and extended family always enjoyed trips to the Museum, listening to Chief explain the exhibits with enthusiasm and pride. This was especially true when he and the other volunteers were able to locate a new artifact from other museums or private owners.

Bob also became deeply involved in his church, St. Joe’s of Maumee. He was a frequent lector and usher and an active member of the Knights of Columbus, serving as Grand Knight in 2016.

He also enjoyed traveling, whether it was to visit his children and grandchildren or to visit

Ireland where at 85 years old he kissed the Blarney Stone, or Rome, where he was able to see the Pope for a second time in his life. Bob will always be remembered for his love and commitment to his family, friends, and colleagues. He was a man of integrity and an inspiration to countless people throughout his life yet demonstrated humility and kindness always. Whether commanding a scene, teaching a class or telling a story he had a voice that cannot be forgotten. We love you Chief.

Bob is survived by his children Michael (Suzanne) of Mattawan, MI, Joseph (Shari) of Rockford, MI, Dr. Marie (Phil) Mason of Fairmont, WV, and Angela (Ed) Schweickert, of Sylvania, fifteen grandchildren, three great grandchildren, sister Janet Molik of Toledo and brother-in-law Terry Fravor of Oregon. He was preceded in death by his wife Carolyn and grandson Andrew.

Visitation will be held at the Coyle Funeral Home, 1770 S. Reynolds Rd. on Wednesday July 15, 2020 from 2: 00 pm to 8:00 pm with the Last Alarm service at 7pm. Funeral Services will be held on Thursday July 16 beginning at 9:30 am in the mortuary followed by the Mass of Christian Burial in St. Joseph Church, Maumee at 10:30 a.m. Interment will take place in St. Joseph Cemetery, Maumee. Social distancing guidelines will be observed, and visitors are required to wear a mask.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Toledo Firefighters Museum or St. Joseph Catholic Church in Maumee, Ohio. Please view and sign the guest registry at coylefuneralhome.com

Events

JUL **Visitation** 02:00PM - 08:00PM

15

Coyle Funeral Home

1770 S. Reynolds Road, Toledo, OH, US, 43614

JUL **Funeral** 10:30AM - 11:30AM

16

St Joseph (Maumee)

104 West Broadway Street, Maumee, OH, US, 43537

Comments



“ Dear Schwanzl Family: We are saddened by this news and thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. It is always sad to see a final call for a fellow member of the fire fighting family.

-The Sidebottom Family

Kevin Sidebottom - July 20, 2020 at 08:16 AM



“ Chief Schwanzl was the consummate human being. He was my Deputy Chief in the Fire Prevention Bureau when I first started working in the Fire Dept. He always treated you with the utmost kindness, fairness, and dignity. RIP Chief Schwanzl. You will ALWAYS be loved!!!!!!!!!!!!

Christa Neuhauser - July 16, 2020 at 10:41 AM



“ Dear Schwanzl Family: We have been blessed to be welcomed into your family when Sue and Mike were married. I grew up with all of you as extended family. Bob and Carolyn always welcomed us to family events and holidays. I cherish the memories and stories that were shared at those times, most recently when the kids and I were welcomed into Chief's home to stay overnight while driving to Adam's graduation. We were regaled with stories of the fire museum, historical tales that went with items donated, and wonderful stories of Grandma and Grandpa Murray from their days in the coal regions of PA. My children loved visiting with him. We will always remember his kindness, strength, integrity, that beautiful orator's voice. Love, JaneEllen, John, J. Everett and Jenevieve Varner

JaneEllen Varner - July 16, 2020 at 10:32 AM



“ Dear Schwanzl Family: Blessings come in many ways, but none better than a connected relationship with Bob and the Schwanzl family. We will cherish all the memories gathered from our travels together to the wonderful Holiday seasons shared. Joanne and Swen Borg

Joanne and Swen Borg - July 16, 2020 at 09:41 AM



“ To the Schwanzl Family. My association with Mr. Schwanzl is thru St. Joseph Church-Maumee. Was privileged and blessed to know a man, who is/was arguably the BEST IN CLASS gentleman, have know for my lifetime--well next to my Dad and Grandfather!! His passion for whatever he was associated with, in my opinion, second to none. He was like a Father figure to me. Saw his struggles with health, right as Covid set in...thus, no more weekly times seeing Mr. Schwanzl at Church--and HEART BREAKING FOR ME TO READ HIS OBITUARY. Ironically last week at Church, was going to ask the ushers...how is Mr. Schwanzl doing? Then buying the Blade...my heart dropped dramatically. Wished am able to adequately express my sorrows for your loss. He WAS the ultimate gentleman. For what this is worth...my grandfather, Ollie Czelusta(former Mayor) am totally convinced, IF we would of ever talked about Mr. Schwanzl, would exude love, faith, and trust for the ultimate gentleman. Plus a man who may be emulated, yet NEVER DUPLICATED. My Father, John Celusta, former assistant city law director, am totally confident, would have words of ongoing praise! And for me...am truly blessed to be touched...privileged to know...a man who has left a tremendous impact on me, my life, and for me, viewed as the ultimate role model in life. MY THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU ALL. My apologies for war and peace...yet this man am confident not only impacted me, but also many scores of people throughout his life. My real regret...my job responsibilities have me travelling the country. To not be able to be in town this week...as about as hurtful for me as you will never imagine. THANK YOU MR. SCHWANZL FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE TO IMPACT/CHANGE MANY LIVES...WE ARE INDEBTED TO YOU FOREVER. And to your Family...will assure you at Church this week, candles and prayers will be offered up to THE MAN...THE MYTH...THE LEGEND---MR. SCHWANZL!! Sincerely--Chris Celusta

CHRIS CELUSTA - July 15, 2020 at 11:29 PM



“ Bob was working in administration and was the first person that I talked to before I was hired. He was always a pleasure to talk to and professional to all. We were all lucky to know him. Rest in piece Bob, and condolences to the family. Dan Whitacre

dan whitacre - July 15, 2020 at 04:11 PM



“ From Right at Home of Greater Cincinnati purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Robert Joseph Schwanzl.



From Right at Home of Greater Cincinnati - July 15, 2020 at 11:57 AM



“ Bob was a great friend and fellow firefighter to my husband, Mike. They worked together for years and shared many stories. Bob & Carolyn were friends of ours for years. Bob was the definition of a great man helping all he met. The TFRD will miss this mans wisdom. Bob will be missed. Cathy Schultz

Cathy Schultz - July 15, 2020 at 11:51 AM



“ Chief Schwanzl was simply the definition of a great role model and leader who contributed so much to the fire service throughout this entire region and beyond. Always a joy to speak with, his wisdom continued to teach us "younger" officers with every conversation. I feel Blessed to have known him and interacted with him throughout my fire service years and I know many others who feel the same. Rest in peace Chief, may God Bless and comfort the Schwanzl family.

Chief Ronald Tate (retired)
Richfield Township Fire Department



Ronald Tate - July 14, 2020 at 08:34 PM



“ TOLEDO FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION purchased the Magnificent Life Spray for the family of Robert Joseph Schwanzl.



TOLEDO FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION - July 14, 2020 at 12:14 PM



“ Dana Commercial Vehicle purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Robert Joseph Schwanzl.



Dana Commercial Vehicle - July 13, 2020 at 08:16 AM



“ With Love the VLHomeTeam & Families purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of Robert Joseph Schwanzl.



With Love the VLHomeTeam & Families - July 13, 2020 at 06:34 AM



“ My late husband, Gary Abbe, Sr., was friends w/Bob. He always spoke highly of him, Gary was a firefighter in FL for ten years and then at Springfield TWP #3 for another ten years. They never worked together but, I know he thought the world of Bob.

Nancy Abbe

Nancy Abbe - July 12, 2020 at 08:02 PM



“ Chief Schwanzl, He was one of the finest men I have ever known. He was my instructor, coach, and mentor. He always made you better every time you were with him. A great model of leadership. I will miss you Chief, Rest In Peace.

Chris Herman - July 12, 2020 at 05:46 PM



“ Dear Family of Bob Schwanzl,
My deepest sympathy for the death of Bob. I have been blessed to know him and visit with him before he passed away. He is a very special person and I will always remember him, especially from our pilgrimage to the Beatification of Blessed Solanus Casey.
May he rest in the love of our Heavenly Father. My prayers are with the family.
Sister Kathleen Knueven, SND

Sister Kathleen Knueven, SND - July 12, 2020 at 11:44 AM



“ I will always remember the way he treated my father who was a volunteer firefighter during a class we took from your father in the 70s. When he told me to study for the Toledo test , I did and finally made it , Joe and I were in the same class. He talked with my dad at the swearing in like they were old close friends. It was special when he came to my fathers funeral . I was lucky enough to have two sons on the TFD with me he treated them like he treated me . Always class in everything he did. I will never forget The Chief. Prayers to the family. The Vedra's

John Vedra - July 12, 2020 at 11:14 AM



“ To the Family of Chief Bob Schwanzl:

Please accept my heartfelt condolences on Bob's passing. He was a consummate gentleman, terrific leader and wonderful friend to all of us in city of Toledo government. He will be greatly missed!

May God be with you all during this time of great sorrow.

Tom Crothers - July 12, 2020 at 11:07 AM



“ I will always remember your Dad coming to visit Pat when he was in a coma at Hospice. He hadn't talked to anyone in a few days. Your Dad walks in, gives me a hug and then in that deep voice says Pat..Pat sits starlight up, says Bob Schwanzl how the hell are ya! Kris and I couldn't believe it. That day Pat was able to talk to all of us.. They were good buddies .. Pat valued his friendship with your Dad. Your Dad lived a full life and one to be proud of. He is at peace!

sharon feeley - July 12, 2020 at 11:01 AM



“ HE WAS THE LAST OF THE GOOD GUYS..YOU COULD TALK TO HIM LIKE HE WAS YOUR BROTHER..EVEN ON THE JOB...RIP BOB....

JIM CLARK - July 12, 2020 at 09:59 AM



“ Rest in Peace Bob. You were a great man and wonderful friend to my Dad, Bill O'Connor. He sure enjoyed being with you at the Museum and going to fire shows to collect memorabilia.
Sincerely,
Bill O'Connor Jr.

Bill O'Connor, Jr - July 12, 2020 at 08:33 AM



“ Dear Shari and Swanzl Family,
I am so very sorry for your loss. It is hard to lose a parent. They have been with you every day of your life. The Chief sounds like a exceptional man. May your many happy memories comfort you in the days ahead.
Irene and Tom Paunovich

Irene Paunovich - July 11, 2020 at 06:21 PM



“ I am very saddened by his passing. While I did not know him well first hand, I got to know him through his son Michael. They are a wonderful family and I wish them all peace and love.

Mark Bucklad - July 11, 2020 at 04:49 PM



“ My good friend. We will miss you very much. Love to all.

Gina Reynolds - July 11, 2020 at 03:18 PM