

Robert Eugene Welton (Bob) was born November 19, 1945 to the late Donald and Flora Welton (Thrasher) in Ottawa, Kansas.

Bob met his wife to be in Harper, Kansas, and Joyce immediately knew that he was the man she was going to marry. Little did she know what a handful he would be, and what a crazy life they would make together. They were married in November 1965 and immediately started their family. Three children were born in three years, and the roller coaster of life began. Bob spent time in the Navy Reserves, learning skills that would serve him as a computer technician for most of his life. He traveled often with his job, so time spent with family was precious. Many weekends were spent at his grandparents’ farm with extended family, or camping, fishing and enjoying the outdoors. He loved teaching his children and grandchildren how to bait a hook and cast a line, and shoot a gun (after learning about gun safety, of course). Family summer vacations were camping vacations, and breakfasts were often fresh-caught fish and eggs over the camp-fire. He shared his love of the outdoors with his family, and they all carry that tradition today. Spending time on a shore, in a boat or a deer blind was time well spent, in his opinion. His job moved the family to Texas in 1979, and he immediately became a Texan. You would never know that he wasn’t a native-born Texan. A fourth child was born in Texas, 13 years after the first one. Can you say, Surprise? We sure could.

Life had its ups and downs, but Bob and Joyce stuck it out together. They showed their children the value of resilience, faith, love, and perseverance, along with a healthy dose of fun, laughter and how to have a good time on a budget.

A defining moment in their lives together was the loss of their youngest son, Donald Ray (Donnie) at the young age of 19. Again, they clung to each other in love and faith and showed a strength that few are required to experience.

Bob’s greatest joys were his family. Visits were welcomed with toothless smiles and an offer of a beer or a whiskey. Cheers, Dad!

Bob loved all things outdoors. He spent many years participating in black-powder rifle camping, called Rendezvous, and belonged to the Ranger Springs Skinners. He was known as Bowmaker in that community. His campsite was always a favorite hangout. Nights were spent telling tales and drinking homemade apple pie (don’t ask). He made life-long friends during those weekends. Only age stopped him from continuing to participate. “It’s tough sleeping on the hard ground when you get old,” he said. Once he couldn’t camp any more, he took up poker. Hold on to your hat, folks. He fell in love. Friday nights at the community clubhouse would find Bob and Joyce at the poker table with a beer and a (hopefully) winning poker hand. Casino trips with friends and poker nights were events that they would never miss, and I mean never. Laughter around the table, and coming home with more money that he took were always his goals. The laughter always happened. The winning, not so much. Sometimes Joyce won the hand and took her husband’s money home. That just made him laugh even more.

Bob was a man who would help anyone with anything. He was first to volunteer his truck & trailer and first to volunteer his time. He taught his family that sharing and giving come before self. When someone at the community clubhouse mentioned that the beer buckets were rusting, he came up and flex-sealed all of them to make them last longer. They are beer buckets, after all. He was known for saying, “One in the Koozie and five in the bucket.” Again, Cheers, Dad!

He was also known by his family as a stubborn old goat. If he decided to do something, nothing would stop him. If he didn’t want to do something, nothing could make him. Some of his children (okay, all of us) inherited that stubborn streak, too. Sorry, Mom.

Bob was a fierce protector of loved ones. His sister, Rebecca recalls a time in high school when a date got “handsy.” When Rebecca told her big brother, Bob made sure, in his own way - read into that what you will - that it would never happen again. He also taught his children to protect themselves. If a bully messes with you, don’t take it. Don’t hit first, but don’t hesitate to take him down. The girls tend to use words more than fists, but we all refuse to suffer bullies.

Bob welcomed two sons into the family by marriage and one daughter. More hunting and fishing buddies! Seven grandchildren joined the fray - more blessings to love. Seven great-grandchildren joined the clan - overwhelming joy. He “adopted” children and grandchildren into the family readily, and always had love enough to go around. He never met a stranger, and shared stories, laughter, fishing poles, bait, and time at the deer blind.

The world was better for having him in it.

Bob went to be with his Lord on Saturday August 28, 2021 as a result of Covid. He leaves behind his wife of 56 years, Joyce, and their three children Theresa DeLong (George), Cyndi Carlton (Tom), and Rob (Marcia), and daughter-by-choice Erin Nelson (Corey) . He relished his role as Papa to Robert Welton, Ashley Boykin, Kyle Welton, Austin Carlton, Karah DeLong, Drew DeLong, and RaeAnn Welton and grandchildren-by-choice Shayla Reed and Jessie Regnold. He also leaves behind a sister, Rebecca Ginsburg (Chuck) and brother Hiram Jonathan Welton (Connie). He is preceded in death by his parents, his son Donald Ray, and his grandson Timothy Welton.

Bob died peacefully in his home with his loving wife by his side.

A celebration of life will be held at the 19th Hole Clubhouse at Westwood Shores in Trinity, Texas on Friday, September 10 at 6pm. Food and drinks will be served, because Dad always thought that it wasn’t a party without food and beer. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, or Schnauzer Ranch and Friends Animal Rescue.

