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Birth: 1927

Death: 2024

Robert Schuster

OBITUARY

Robert (Bob) passed away peacefully at the Golden Pond Retirement Community in Golden, Colorado, on May 17, 2024. He was born to Helen (Sonnenberg) Schuster and Rudolph "Dude" Schuster on August 29, 1927 in a one-bedroom frame house in the small town of Chehalis, WA and was soon followed by his sisters Marilyn (Mary Jo) and Carole. As a Boy Scout he grew to love the Cascade Mountains where he camped, hiked and learned mountaineering skills.

Bob graduated from Chehalis High School with honors in 1945. He was awarded a B.S. Geology from Washington State College in 1949 and an M.S. Geology at Ohio State University in 1951, spending the summers of

1951 and 1952 working for the American Geographical Society's Juneau Icefield Research Project studying Taku Glacier. Upon graduation he was hired by a US-Army-run arctic research lab based in Chicago.

Returning to Chicago from the construction of a military runway in Fairbanks, Bob caught a NW Orient flight where he met flight attendant and his future wife, Patricia McCanney. Bob and Pat married in February 1955 in Seattle. Deciding arctic work was fairly dangerous, Bob opted to return to college at Purdue University in W. Lafayette, IN.

Over the next 5 years Bob earned an M.S. and Ph.D. in Civil Engineering and welcomed 4 children: Anne, Kathleen, Mark & Richard. Upon graduation, he was offered a position as an Associate Professor in Civil Engineering at the University of Colorado Boulder; the family moved there in 1960.

In 1965, Bob received a fellowship at the University of London's famed Imperial College of Science & Technology. The family travelled to London on Cunard's Queen Elizabeth and settled in a late-Victorian home in Keston, Kent for the year. Bob received a post-graduate degree in Soil Mechanics (equivalent to an M.S.) from the College. The family returned stateside aboard Cunard's Carmania.

In 1968, Bob became a Full Professor at the University of Colorado, but decided he wanted a smaller school and accepted the Chairmanship of the Dept of Civil Engineering at the University of Idaho in Moscow. In 1974, Bob was back at London's Imperial College as a faculty member funded by NATO. That August, he accepted an administrative position at the U.S. Geological Survey at the Denver Federal Center and relocated to Golden, Colorado. [He stepped down 5 years later to focus on field work.] Over the following 30+ years, Bob became one of the world's foremost experts on geological hazards and their mitigation. He participated in investigating the Teton Dam (ID) failure and the repercussions from the eruption of Mt. St. Helens (WA). He was appointed to the Panama Canal Commission advisory panel on geologic hazards, an appointment that lasted 22 years. As a

member of a National Research Council committee, Bob studied the safety of coal-waste dams at mines in the Appalachian Mountains. Bob was a consultant for the United Nations and local governments on geohazard problems in the Soviet Union, mostly during the Cold War. He went on to study geologic hazards in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In Central & South America, he conducted field studies in 10 countries, mainly in the Andes and tributaries of the Amazon. He spent years as a researcher in the Far East, Australia & New Zealand. Bob retired from the USGS in 1995 and became an international consultant based in the US.

In addition to his field work Bob lectured around the world. He was a senior Fulbright at Macquarie University in Sydney, speaking at universities throughout Australia. In North America, Bob was selected by the Association of Engineering Geologists to present the annual Jahn's Lecture Series to geology and civil engineering students at 33 universities. Funded by the Japanese government and professional societies, Bob travelled by train to universities from Kyushu to Hokkaido.

In 2007, Bob became the first recipient of the eponymous Schuster Medal, created by the Canadian Geotechnical Society (CGS) and the American Society of Environmental & Engineering Geologists (AEG) to honor "A North American geologist or geotechnical engineer who has practiced exceptional study, research, and/or amelioration of geologic hazards (landslides, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions)". Bob enjoyed travelling to present the Medal to distinguished colleagues in Canada and the US.

Bob was a gifted speaker, a prolific writer (he published, authored/co-authored, or edited over 300 texts, papers, and abstracts), a voracious reader, a history buff, and a lover of the outdoors.

We are blessed to have shared the years and built the memories we have with him and will miss his presence in our lives tremendously. The family would like to extend special thanks to all of the caregivers, medical and hospice personnel who provided peace and dignity to his passing and made his final years active and enjoyable. The many friends he made

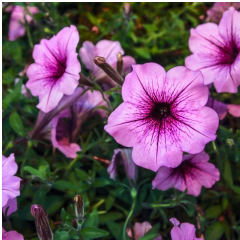
throughout the world and in his years at Golden Pond were very special to him.

He is survived by his sister Carole, 4 children, 5 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, and their respective spouses.

We welcome all to a funeral mass followed by a luncheon and reception to be held in Bob's honor at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 969 Ulysses Street, Golden, on June 4, 2024 at 10:00. On a date to be determined, final internment, next to his wife Pat, his parents, and sister Mary Jo, will be celebrated at Chehalis' historic Claquato Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please make memorial donations to American Alpine Club (Golden, CO).

[Click here to Send Flowers](#) to the family of Robert.



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Flowers**

In memory of Robert



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In memory of Robert