

Robert George Russell, Sr.

Born: September 1, 1938 | Died: October 21, 2022



Robert George (Bob) Russell, Sr. (84), passed away peacefully at home in Blount County, TN. Bob was born in Knoxville to Robert Taylor Russell, Jr. and Mildred Louise Qualls. In his junior high years, Bob attended Tennessee Military Institute, was a graduate of Fulton High School and attended the University of Tennessee. He was a graduate of the Fire Training Academy in Murfreesboro. Bob was preceded in death by his parents and sister, Patricia Russell Walker. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Elaine Clonts Russell, and sons, Robert George Russell, Jr. (Jeanine) of Corryton and Randall Taylor Russell (Kelly) of Knoxville. He was known as "Pappaw" to his grandchildren and "Big Pappaw" by his great-grandchildren. Bob lived a full and interesting life of dedication to his family, church, community and country. From the age of 17, Bob worked as a firefighter for the Russell's family-owned Fountain City Fire Department until city annexation. In 1963 he then served the City of Knoxville Fire Department where he retired as Captain in 1994 with 31 years of service. Bob was a member of Arlington Baptist Church, where he served as a youth

sponsor, drove a church bus and served as scout master. As empty nesters, Bob and his wife moved to Townsend, where he served on the Townsend City Commission, including a term as City Mayor. Bob loved God's beautiful world. He was a Master Gardener and member of Tuckaleechee Garden Club in Townsend. He was instrumental in the establishment of the club's Townsend River Walk and Arboretum. The Club honored him with a Lifetime Membership and his own engraved bench on the River Walk. Bob enjoyed traveling in the motorhome. Winters were spent in the Florida Keys often working as volunteer for the National Park Service at such places as Biscayne

National Park and the Dry Tortugas. Bob also spent hundreds of hours working as a volunteer in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and spent one season working as the miller at the Cades Cove Mill. Bob loved all of God's creatures. He worked a number of years as a volunteer zookeeper at the Knoxville Zoo. He enjoyed fishing and was an avid ornithologist. He also worked as a trail guide for Davy Crockett Riding Stables in Townsend with his rescued horse, Windrift. Bob loved his church, Broadway United Methodist Church, in Maryville, where he had served as Chairman of Trustees and President of the Broadway United Methodist Men. Bob served his country for 9 years in the United States Army Reserve Signal Corp as Radio Relay and Carrier Operator. All who knew Bob loved him. A celebration of his life will be scheduled for a later date; tissue research and cremation by Restore Life USA. In lieu of flowers, please consider contributions in his memory to Alzheimer's Tennessee in Knoxville, Tuckaleechee Garden Club for the Townsend River Walk, Broadway UMC or charity of your choice.