



Robert Christian Doerschner

April 15, 1923 - January 23, 2021

ROBERT C. (BOB) DOERSCHNER, 97 of Alexandria, Virginia passed away on January 23, 2021 at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, surrounded by family and God's love. He was formerly from Dormont (Pittsburgh), PA before relocating to be with his son, Rob. Bob grew up in the Allentown neighborhood of Pittsburgh and graduated from St. George Elementary and High Schools. Shortly after graduation, he was drafted into World War II and served his country in the Army Air Corps, primarily on Guam in the Pacific. His service also included selection for the Army Specialized Training Corps to train future officers with a college education, but the program was disbanded after a year to prepare for the invasion of Europe. Upon his return home after the War, he enrolled in college on the GI Bill at the University of Pittsburgh, earning his bachelor's degree in education in 1950. Early in his college days, he went one weekend to do research for a paper at the central office of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and met a particularly attractive reference librarian, Fran, who helped him find information. He decided that he needed to do his own research about this lovely lady. After he got up the nerve, he asked her to attend with him as his date, a special dinner honoring those who served in World War II. It was sponsored by the men's club at his church, and was held at the popular Bill Greene's nightclub where Les Brown and His Band of Renown were performing. Thankfully she accepted, and a lifelong, deep romance and friendship began. He began teaching at the Homewood School in the City of Pittsburgh after graduation

from Pitt and achieved a Master's Degree in Education and principals' certificate, part-time. After teaching full-time and caring for his Dad for three years after his mother's passing, he and Fran were married at St. Paul's Cathedral in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh in 1953. A year later, they bought their first home in the Dormont suburb of Pittsburgh, and within a couple of years, their son, Rob arrived on the scene. He taught Special Education to mentally and physically-challenged students, primarily in a few schools on the South Side of Pittsburgh and taught English to immigrants at night. He greeted each immigrant student for class in their native language to welcome them. In 1959, he was selected as Assistant Principal at the Homewood and Belmar Schools in the City of Pittsburgh, and a year later was promoted to be principal for the largest elementary school in the City with 1500 students in grades K-6, in an inner-city neighborhood. In 1968, he accepted a principal position closer to home at the Kelton School in Dormont and a year later, was asked to take on the principalship of the new middle school in the Keystone Oaks School District. He held this position for four years and established many new and innovative programs, especially since the middle school concept was new to education. Then until his retirement in 1983, he was principal of two elementary schools in the Greentree suburb of Pittsburgh. Bob was a great example of enjoying retirement and service to others. He did not know when he had time to work. He was elected to the parish council and the chairperson of the Worship Committee at St. Bernard Catholic Church in Mt. Lebanon, PA, played chauffeur for his wife, cared for his stepmother and other relatives, volunteered in some local political activities, ran for school board, volunteered at a local skilled nursing facility, and accomplished many projects on his home and at his son's homes in Marietta, GA, O'Fallon, IL and eventually in Alexandria, VA. He was especially dedicated to support his wife and son and other family members, neighbors, and friends. Since his wife's passing, he enjoyed reading the newspaper and other literature; watching educational programs; having conversations with family and friends; being with his buddy, his son and enjoying activities

together; daily talking with his “baby” brother; and watching and cheering for Pittsburgh sports teams. He was a joy to be around as he was a very upbeat, positive, kind, caring, and faithful son, husband, father, brother, uncle, cousin, and great man. He insisted that people of all ages call him “Bob” or just “Dad”. He was a lifelong, devout Catholic Christian. All who knew him are grateful to God that his mind was sharp until the end. He is already sorely missed by those who love him. He is survived by his son, Rob and Rob’s girlfriend, Janice Bryner, both of Alexandria, VA; brother Don (Bernigene) Doerschner of Mars, PA; niece Christy (Mark) Matheny of Union, WV; niece Nancy (Bob) Dunn of Fairmont, WV; nephew Ed Doerschner of Mars, PA; niece Conni (Lloyd) Wilson of Ross Township, PA; niece Nancy (Dave) Haupt of Dover, DE; godson Bob Kress of Wexford, PA, and great nieces and nephews, cousins, and close family friends who are family. He is preceded in death by the love of his life, Fran; parents George and Marie Doerschner; brother Norman Doerschner; and sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Sam Weis. Funeral arrangements are being made by Jefferson Funeral Chapel, 5755 Castlewellan Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315. <https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com/> The funeral mass of Christian Burial will be held on Friday, January 29, 2021 at 12 noon at Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 8710 Mount Vernon Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309. It will also be livestreamed and recorded through the parish website. https://www.gs-cc.org/mass_videos.html. Masks will be required to attend along with appropriate social distancing of attendees. Viewing will begin 1 hour before the funeral at 11 AM in the church. A separate graveside service will be held at a later date at Queen of Heaven cemetery in McMurray, PA and will be arranged through Laughlin Funeral Home, 222 Washington Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15216 <https://www.laughlinfuneralhome.com>. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be sent to the Little Sisters of the Poor, 1028 Benton Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15212; St. Joseph’s House of Hospitality, 1635 Bedford Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, or Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 8710 Mount Vernon Memorial

Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309. Rest in peace, Bob as you are reunited with Fran and are with the Lord.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 29. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church
8710 Mount Vernon Highway
Alexandria, VA 22309
<https://www.gs-cc.org/>

Funeral Service

JAN 29. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church
8710 Mount Vernon Highway
Alexandria, VA 22309
<https://www.gs-cc.org/>

Tribute Wall



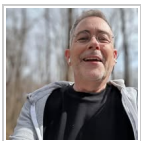
“ *Robert Christian Doerschner*

October 27, 2022 at 09:45 PM



“ *Rob,
My sincere condolences on the passing of your Dad. I so enjoyed serving at Good Sheppard with the both of you and seeing how lovingly and kindly you cared for him in more recent years.
T
o my surprise when I read the obituary, what a small world! I grew up in Mt. Lebanon, right off McFarland road. St. Bernard's 8 years- my sister still Cantors there. My dad and most recently my brother are all buried at Queen of Heaven. Should have guessed- Pittsburghers are good people.
But again, I am so sorry for your loss. You were an incredible son, he must have been a great Dad.
Warm regards,
Elaine
McClelland*

Elaine McClelland - February 04, 2021 at 03:16 PM



“ *He was my principal at Jay Neff Middle school. I will always remember him as being a nice man. Not a scary principal but one who commanded respect with a kind, gentle demeanor. God Speed Mr. Doerschner*

*Steve Fleshman
Jay Neff Class of 1973*

Steve Fleshman - February 03, 2021 at 11:38 PM

BJ

“What a small world! I went to this website to express my condolences on the passing of my aunt, when I saw a familiar face and name; Robert Doeschner, my first principal at Baxter Elementary School in the Homewood-Brushton neighborhood of Pittsburgh! Teaching second grade was my first job in 1967 after finishing my Masters degree in Special Education at Pitt! I recall being told that Baxter was the largest elementary school in western PA at that time. We were a "Team Teaching" school where there were 6 classes for every grade! Mr. Doeschner was welcoming and supportive to me as a slightly overwhelmed, brand new teacher. He was a calm, competent leader and a great "boss."

During my second year at Baxter, the teachers' union went on strike for collective bargaining rights, which had half of our staff out picketing our building. Unfortunately, our principal took this personally when nothing of the sort was intended. I recall feeling very badly when he expressed this to us. As the union took hold in many districts across the state and did much to improve teaching and learning conditions, I assume he came to accept the concept, forgive us, and harbored no ill feelings as time went on. I retired in 1999 after a 33-year career, 31 of which were in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. I have many warm memories of Baxter School; the children, parents, teaching colleagues, and Mr. Doeschner, all of whom made me feel welcome, which was reassurance that I had made the right career choice. Reading this obit, it is heart-warming to know that "Bob" continued to live a wonderful, productive life in many different roles. I know he will be greatly missed by friends and loved ones, and to all of you I offer my deepest sympathy. (This has been a great trip down "Memory Lane" for me.)

*Sincerely,
Barbara (Cook) Jewell*

Barbara Jewell - January 29, 2021 at 10:28 AM

PH

“ Rob, Frank and I send our condolences. We will see you on Friday at the visitation.

Frank and Pat Van Haste

Patricia Van Haste - January 27, 2021 at 12:19 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Robert Christian Doerschner.*



January 27, 2021 at 10:11 AM

FM

“ *Fredda and Dan Myers purchased the Beautiful i n Blue for the family of Robert Christian Doerschner.*



Fredda and Dan Myers - January 26, 2021 at 06:24 PM

MT

“ *Bob and Fran were a special couple who lived a true witness of Christian love.*

My special memory of Bob was that he was an early morning riser (even after retirement). He read the local newspaper and circled pertinent news articles to be read later by his beloved Fran. She enjoyed his editorial zeal!

May Bob rest in the Lord's peace and joy!

Msgr Edward J. Thein - January 26, 2021 at 05:54 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Robert Christian Doerschner.*



January 26, 2021 at 05:38 PM