



Robert J. Phalen Jr.

March 11, 1925 - March 20, 2026

Robert James Phalen, Jr., beloved husband and father, died peacefully on March 20, 2026 surrounded by his daughters.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Norma Jansen Phalen, his son Jimmy Phalen, his grandson, Thomas Rayson, infant David Bronaugh; and his sons-in-law John Bertolami and Martin Stevens.

Bob was born in Peoria, Illinois to Alice Padden Phalen and Robert James Phalen, Sr. on March 11, 1925.

He attended Middlebury College before serving as an officer in the US Navy in the Pacific theater from 1943 to 1946 aboard the USS Shakamaxon. He subsequently continued his studies and graduated from The College of the Holy Cross.

Steadfast in his work ethic, Bob began his career with General Outdoor Advertising in St. Louis, Missouri. before moving to Cape Girardeau, Missouri in 1956 to start his own company, Cape Poster Outdoor Advertising. In later years, not ready to retire, he worked for GE Capital Assurance. He was a life long member of the TGIF POETS Club and the longest surviving member of the Cape Girardeau Lions Club. In honor of his son Jimmy, Bob was a decades-long supporter of the Sheltered Workshop (VIP Industries).

Bob lived fully and generously. He never missed an opportunity to travel to be with his daughters and their families, play a round of golf, drink a gin and tonic, and socialize with friends across all ages. He was a remarkable storyteller, holding groups of any size rapt with tales of days and people gone by. Bob successfully navigated life with his wife and five daughters but was thrilled to welcome his sons-in-law to the family with whom he remained close until his death. He shared his strong love of life in later years with his dear friends Cheri and Luke Langraff and Susie and Jim Dufek. Their love and support has forever endeared them to his family.

Bob is survived by his daughters, Molly Bronaugh (Stewart), Meg Bertolami, Cary Rayson (Scott), Kate Stevens and Beth Howes (Ted); grandchildren Robert, Caroline, Mary and Stewart Bronaugh; Isabelle Bertolami Sadai and Sophie Bertolami; George, Robyn and Caroline Rayson; James and Andrew Stevens; and Meg and Sam Howes; great-grandchildren, Arthur and Ruben Bronaugh; Alice and Molly Baugher; Charlie Jackson, Kazi and Petra Bronaugh and Louise and Esme Sadai.

A funeral mass will be held 2:00 pm Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at Old St Vincent's Church in Cape Girardeau.

Burial will follow at St. Mary Cemetery in Cape Girardeau, with full military honors.

A reception for friends and family will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 pm Tuesday at the Cape Country Club.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to the Chateau Foundation with "In memory of Robert Phalen" in the memo line. Donations can be sent directly to the Foundation at Chateau Foundation, 3120 Independence, Cape

Girardeau, MO 63703. Gifts will be used to support the Foundation's Employee Support Fund.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com

Ford & Sons Funeral Home - Mt. Auburn is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

St. Mary Cemetery

1101 Perry Avenue
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

MAR 24. 2:00 PM (CT)

Old St. Vincent's Catholic Church
C/O St. Mary Cathedral
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703

Tribute Wall

CH

“ *Indelible and everlasting memories of our kind, intelligent and fun loving downtown neighbors, Norma and Bob. They hold a special place in our family’s remembrances of those years.*

Cyndy Hall - March 25 at 08:19 AM

JC

“ *I have cleaned for Bob for almost 30 yrs.*

I always enjoyed working with him though the good days with his wife Norma and his dog Gus and the days after the lost of both over the years.

I enjoyed chatting with him with tales of family and friends in the old days. He always had a great laugh and smile. I will miss him a lot.

*My sympathies to all the families
Jean Cornelius*

Jean Cornelius - March 24 at 12:53 PM

CH

“ *After selling his billboard company, Bob was the owner of AM 1220 KGIR radio in Cape Girardeau for a few years in the mid 80’s. He hired me as the Operations Manager.*

I enjoyed working with Bob. He was always kind and a real gentleman.

My sympathies to his family and may he rest in peace.

Cliff Harris

Cliff Harris - March 23 at 11:18 AM

LP

“ *I always enjoyed chatting with him when he would get his groceries, I will never forget that sweet smile.*



Laurie Powers - March 22 at 03:22 PM

JB

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Judi Brey - March 21 at 09:22 AM