

Robert “Bob” Axtell

July 24, 1952 – April 3, 2025

They say unicorns aren’t real, but clearly they never met Robert “Bob” Axtell. Known as “Fox,” “Foxdog”, “Papa,” “Old Man,” and “Friend” to all, Bob passed away on April 3, 2025, leaving behind a trail of stories and smiles.

Bob was the third of five children, born with a wry grin on his face at St. Luke’s Hospital on the Plaza to Betty Lee and Dan Axtell, Sr. He was outdoorsy from the start, spending his childhood exploring the woods, raising a hawk, and at one point, managing to have a pet monkey. His sense of adventure was only matched by his loyalty: some of his closest friends were made during grade school at Coronation of Our Lady in Grandview, MO and Maur Hill Preparatory in Atchison, Kansas.

After realizing college wasn't the right fit, he dove straight into the workforce. He tried his hand at a few trades, including plumbing, but ultimately found his calling as a proud Boilermaker out of Union 83. Bob loved the brotherhood that came with the work, the hijinks on the jobsite, and the cold beer waiting after a long day with his Brown Noser buddies. His Boilermaker path even led him to meet Cindy, his wife and mother of his two children.

In 1996, on Mother’s Day, Bob was the victim of a random act of violence that left him paralyzed from the chest down. It was a moment that could have broken a lesser man, but not Bob. The very next day, with the same relentless work ethic that carried him through life, he set his focus on adapting, rebuilding, and returning home to raise his kids and live life on his terms. That fateful day ended his career as a Boilermaker but marked the beginning of a new chapter—one defined by resilience, devotion, and a stubborn refusal to let anything hold him back. From that moment forward, Bob poured his energy into being the best dad, the most loyal friend, and a daily source of encouragement and humor to everyone around him. And of course, he excelled at all three.

Bob handled everything life threw at him with grace and laughter. He taught everyone around him what resilience really looked like—and how to laugh in the face of difficulty. Whether he was cracking jokes, offering support, or just showing up as himself, Bob made the world a brighter place.

A lifelong Kansas City fan, Bob was a diehard supporter of the Chiefs, Royals, Mizzou Tigers, and Boulevard's Tank 7. In his later years, he found joy and community as an avid Bridge player, building new friendships around the card table and staying sharp with every hand.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, Betty Lee and Dan Axtell, Sr., and by his former wife, Cindy. He is survived by his brother Dan Axtell, Jr. (JoAnn); his sister Pat Brown (Fred); his sister Mary Williams (Chris); and his sister Sandy Lowe (Jay). He is also survived by his daughter April Axtell and her children, Raven Axtell and Peyton Axtell, as well as by his son Justin Axtell (Liz).

Bob never met a stranger, always loved a good story, and believed that laughter with friends was life's greatest treasure. He didn't need to say it out loud, but he lived by a simple, unshakable ethos:

Be Nice -- Tell Good Stories -- Drink Good Beer

In keeping with Bob's wishes, there will be no formal service. Instead, family and friends are invited to gather, raise a glass, and share stories in his honor on **Thursday, April 10, 2025 from 2:00-5:00PM at Kelly's Westport Inn** ([500 Westport Road](#)).

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to *Harvesters – The Community Food Network*.