

Bob Heck: A life well-lived

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OF THE RIVER NEWS

From truly silly to very serious, people flip coins to resolve all sorts of conundrums. For Bob Heck, a coin flip resulted in a movie date with the woman who would become his wife and eventual partner in building a legacy that goes well beyond their family and business to the community they called home for nearly 60 years.



In the wake of his passing last week at the age of 85, the Heck family is celebrating Bob's life and pledging to continue his legacy.

According to his family, Robert George Heck was born in Superior in May 1936. After graduating from Wausau East High School in 1954 and earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics from the University of Wisconsin in 1958, Heck began his career in the securities business in Chicago. He didn't stay in the big city, however. He returned to Wausau in 1959 and spent five years there working for A.C. Allen/Marshall Company before moving his family to Rhinelander in December 1964 to open a branch office.

Meanwhile, thanks to the coin flip that resulted in him escorting a lovely lady named June to see "The Ten Commandments" in 1956, his family was thriving.

Bob and June would raise five children: Karen, Kathryn, Julie, Ken and David. Ken and David would eventually join their father in the securities business.

Later, The Marshall Company became Smith Barney and eventually Bob, Ken and Dave, along with trusted associates, made up "The Heck Group."

In 2017, the Heck Group started Heck Capital Advisors, LLC, an independent advisory firm based in Rhinelander with offices in Milwaukee and Minneapolis, serving clients in 40 states.

While he was confronted by a number of health challenges throughout his life, Bob always persevered, so much so that his family nicknamed him "The Machine."

"We called Bob 'The Machine,' as he was the most aggressive, most optimistic, and most dedicated person we have ever encountered," the family said in a tribute. "We loved Bob so much and his legacy will live on forever. This dedication was most displayed in his contributions to his business and Rhinelander community. Bob loved Rhinelander and wanted to contribute to progress in Rhinelander and northern Wisconsin. With his lovely wife by his side, Bob was always determined to 'give back' to the Rhinelander community with his time, talent and treasure, working to embolden the educational, social, and business infrastructure through leadership and impactful contributions."

Bob and June were also vocal on their contin-

ued support for the referenda and education for all children.

Of the many community initiatives in which Bob was involved, he was most proud of the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport, the family said. He served as Chairman of the Airport Commission since 1975, and he oversaw its dedication in 1979. Bob's quote was: 'we either progress or we regress, we can't keep the status quo.' The newspaper stated: 'if Heck didn't do anything, Rhinelander could suffer a \$150 million loss in 20 years as result.' The Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport was built from many hours of dedication by Bob, working on the community, state, and federal level for funding and grants for building and maintenance. The airport continues to thrive today. After Bob retired from Commission Chair in 2017, the Rhinelander Common Council named the terminal the 'Robert G. Heck Passenger Terminal' on April 8, 2018, which was one of Bob's proudest moments. Bob loved to say, 'Heck International' and was so proud of the benefits to the Rhinelander community that the airport provided. He often repeated that one could fly out of Rhinelander and be anywhere in the USA by noon and anywhere in the world within one day. Bob always said: 'Airports build cities, cities don't build airports.'

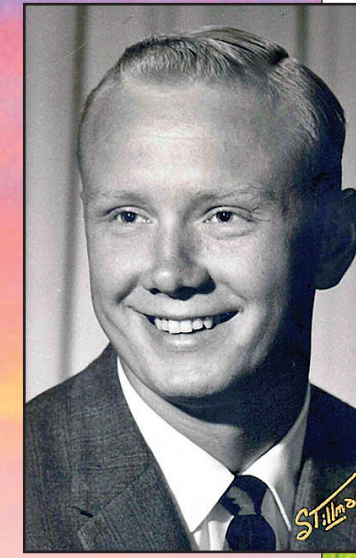
Of all the business and community initiatives Bob was involved in, it was his faith and the togetherness of his family that were the most important, according to his family.

Bob was deeply dedicated to his church and served as Chair of the Finance Council for Nativity of Our Lord for 45 years. He constantly supported building improvements, upgrades, and weekly support. Bob also quietly helped many charities and families behind the scenes. He consistently gave his earned income, time, and efforts in many ways. A firm believer in staying optimistic no matter the obstacle or setback, Bob had two sayings: "All For Thee My Lord" and "Kick Ass". Bob's faith and dedication to the church were steadfast up to the day of his passing. His family spent countless hours praying together and will forever remember Bob's commitment to put faith and family first."

Looking back, the family believes that coin flip from long ago "turned out to be the greatest moment for our family as God brought Bob and June together."

"Bob loved spending time with June and they did everything together: church, family, community," according to the family. "Bob loved his business, clients, team, family, and June. Bob will be forever missed, but his legacy will live on forever. Bob was a role model to many, especially to his children and grandchildren, who will continue to carry on his legacy and love of all things faith and family."

A full obituary for Bob Heck is published on Page 16.



Throughout his lifetime, Bob was the recipient of multiple honors and recognition including:

- While at Smith Barney, Bob was one of only two financial advisors in the nation that received the top recognition club 25 years in a row. The other member was in Dallas. Bob loved how Rhinelander could compete against all the big cities including New York, Los Angeles, and others, often coming out on top. He was recognized multiple times for his fixed income strategies.
- Named one of America's Top Financial Advisors in 2012
- Served as Treasurer and Board member of St. Mary's Hospital from 1972-1979
- Former member of Rhinelander Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, advisor for Headwaters Regional Achievement Center, member of Nicolet College Foundation, and Rhinelander Catholic Central School Board
- Received the Bradley Taylor Award for Outstanding Citizenship
- President of the Heisman Memorial

Fund, and was instrumental in the Heisman memorial being located in Rhinelander, recognizing Heisman's burial in Rhinelander

- Named Man of the Year from the Rhinelander Chamber of Commerce
- Received the Paul Harris Award as an individual for outstanding community involvement, and once again recognizing the entire Heck Family

- Selected by the Milwaukee Journal in 1979 as one of the statewide leaders for the next decade, dubbing him as one of the "Top 80 for the 80s"

- The Northwood Golf Course dedicated the waterfall to Bob and June for their support of the golf course

- Bob and June, together with entire Heck Family, received the WIAA Distinguished Service Award from the Wisconsin Athletics Directors for their support of activities and sports for all students.

- Bob and June were recognized multiple times by the School District of Rhinelander School Board and Hodag Schools' Foundation for their contributions to the schools, including naming the pool the Heck Family Community Pool, along with their two sons' families, and recently for providing tremendous support and donations to the Hodag Dome.

