



Robert W. Lyons

May 4, 2024

Robert W. Lyons died at the age of 84 on 04 May 2024 in Norfolk, Virginia.

Bob was born in Orangeburg, South Carolina. He was the son of Woodrow W. and Louise Davis Lyons both of whom preceded him in death. He graduated from Orangeburg High School in 1958 and attended Clemson College for one year. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, in June 1963 and served in the Navy until June 1985.

When just a young lad, Bob would stand by U.S. Route 301 each morning as he prepared the "Times and Democrat" newspapers for his delivery route and vow he would one day go north or south, but he was going to leave. Then, at age 18 in August 1958 he left. First, he only went a couple hundred miles up the road to the Piedmont area of northwest South Carolina where he spent one year at what at the time was Clemson College. In the spring of 1959, he competed for and won one of Representative L. Mendel Rivers' appointments to the U.S. Naval Academy.

Then, in July 1959 he left Orangeburg enroute Annapolis, Maryland, where he was privileged to attend and graduate with the Class of 1963-Quality - "63! Following graduation from the Naval Academy, Bob served at a variety of duty stations. He spent most of his "at-sea" time in destroyers except for a one-year tour of duty in 1965-1966 in-country in Vietnam as Officer-in-Charge of

PCF-94 stationed at An Thoi, Phu Quoc.

Following graduation from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, with a Master of Science Degree in Meteorology in October 1972, he became a specialist in meteorology. He also specialized in command, control, and intelligence communications. His final duty tour was as a member of the faculty and staff at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. He retired from the Navy in June 1985.

After taking six months off to reduce the size of his "Honey-Do List" at home, Bob became a Senior Management Engineer for E. L. Hamm & Associates, Inc., in Virginia Beach, Virginia, from January 1986 until August 1991. Ed Hamm was a can-do businessman whose motto seemed to be, "We'll try any job that isn't illegal, unethical, or unprofessional." After leaving that position, Bob became the Executive Director of the Builders & Contractors Exchange, Inc., in Norfolk, Virginia, from September 1991 until April 2009. This was his dream job.

Bob was a highly successful naval officer and business executive who was not overly aggressive, but he knew how to get a job done. While he did not "drive" others relentlessly, he worked hard and set a vigorous pace for his co-workers. He dearly enjoyed spending time with his family, reading, working at his church, and playing golf. During his retirement his greatest joy was enjoying a round of golf with friends and the special elation of his five holes-in-one. We can also say that Bob did not neglect his religious, civic, and professional affiliations; and he brought the same spirit, energy, determination, and problem-solving acumen to these positions as he did when in the world of work. He was also Ordained as Ruling Elder,

Royster Memorial Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, Virginia, in 1990; Coordinator, Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team for the Homeless for Royster Memorial

Presbyterian Church, 1991-2016; Moderator, University Presbyterian Ministry Council, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, 1995-1999; Board member and past president, Suburban Acres Civic League, Norfolk, Virginia; Board member and past president, Joint Forces Staff College Alumni Association, Norfolk, Virginia; Member, Career and Technical Education Advisory Council, Norfolk, Virginia, Public Schools, 1991-2007 and Vice Moderator, 2003-2007; Member, International Builders Exchange Executives, with Headquarters in San Antonio, Texas 1992-2009, and President 2001-2002; Board member and treasurer for The Dwelling Place, Norfolk, Virginia, June 2012-June 2014.

Elected treasurer of Royster Memorial Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, Virginia, in July 2009 and served until "retirement.", in December 2022; Teacher, The Word Adult Sunday School Class, Royster Memorial Presbyterian Church, 2009- 2022; Bob and his wife Sharon were married in July 1977. They were blessed to experience deep love and affection for one another and their two sons. Bob was a true gentleman who treated everyone with love, respect, and kindness even though his ready wit and dry sense of humor may have caused some to doubt his true intentions. His family and friends were blessed to know him and spend precious years with him.

Along with his wife Sharon, Bob is survived by his brother Jimmy Lyons of Aiken, South Carolina; and son Michael Lyons of Alexandria, Virginia. His surviving aunt, Frances Davis, lives in Bolentown, South Carolina. He has cousins living in South Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. He was also preceded in death by his son, Jonathan Lyons.

A memorial service with Military Honors will be held at 1:00 pm on Saturday, May 18 at Royster Memorial Presbyterian Church, 6901 Newport Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia 23505

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 18. 1:00 PM (ET)

Royster Memorial Presbyterian Church
6901 Newport Avenue
Norfolk, VA 23505

Tribute Wall

AC

“ Bob was my Executive Officer onboard the USS Harold J. Ellison (DD-864) when I was an Ensign in 1976. He was one of the finest Naval Officers I met during my 20 years in the Navy. He was also one of the finest individuals I have ever met. It was a privilege to serve with him. Rest in peace XO.
Andy Crawford. November 28, 2025

Andy Crawford - November 28, 2025 at 10:46 PM

HM

“ I always smile when I think of Bob. Such a good Samaritan he was. It was a privilege to have him as my Boss. Sending prayers to family and loved ones. God Bless.

Helen Moore - May 18, 2024 at 12:41 PM



“ America the Beautiful was purchased for the family of Robert W. Lyons.



May 16, 2024 at 09:53 PM

MV

“ Michael Tollette & Brenda Romano, VBX planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert W. Lyons.

Michael Tollette & Brenda Romano, VBX - May 16, 2024 at 09:53 PM

BR

“ I was fortunate to work with Bob as Past President and long-time member of the Builders Exchange Network (BXNet), formerly the International Builders Exchange Executives (IBEE). Over the years, I came to respect and admire Bob for his thoughtful approach to issues, wise counsel and ready wit. His passionate advocacy for the Builders Exchange community earned him the respect of the entire membership throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Brenda Romano - May 16, 2024 at 09:25 PM

AS

“ It was my privilege to work for Bob at The Builders Exchange for over 10 years. He loved his job and brought about many good changes to the Exchange. He loved his family, his church and his country. Our deepest sympathies to his lovely wife, Sharon, his son, Michael and family. He will be sorely missed by many.



Arlene Spring - May 16, 2024 at 08:20 AM

JP

“ Woody (Bob) roomed with George Candelori, and Ben Redd in the room right next to me, Bob Prangly, and Ron Klemick for our last 2 years at the Naval Academy. He was just a Number # One Good Guy, and you could not help but like him! He did have a very "dry sense of humor" as Ben Redd says, but he was very good at slipping in a derogatory zinger at any of us, out of the blue, that would break us all up laughing. He was just a fun guy, and a good friend to us all...!

Jerry Potter

Jerry Potter - May 15, 2024 at 04:23 PM

BR

“ *Bob (or Woody as we called him) was our roommate for three years at the Academy in Annapolis (see photo from our 45th USNA Reunion) ... me, George Candelori, Fred Beckham, and Dave Driskell. To call Woody “quiet” was an understatement, as he was quiet and unassuming but rock solid ... he could be counted on to stand behind any one of us at any time. He had a dry sense of humor and was full of folksy (sometimes a bit off color) sayings that would crack us up (we were rolling on the floor, but he was dead pan every time) ... many of those sayings remain with me to this day. He had a mischievous side to him that came out from time to time, like the time he brought back a TV at Christmas break (which we were not allowed to have) and hid it in an attic cubbyhole that we could access by a removeable panel. Joanne and I were honored to have him as an usher at our wedding (see photo) following graduation in June of 1963 ...*

Ben & Joanne Redd



Ben Redd - May 15, 2024 at 10:11 AM

JM

“ *Thinking of you and praying for your comfort and peace. Love,
Jennifer*

Jennifer McWhirt - May 13, 2024 at 10:27 PM

LP

“ *Lynne Kelley and Gary Page purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Robert W. Lyons.*



Lynne Kelley and Gary Page - May 13, 2024 at 07:14 PM



“ *Rest in Peace, Bob. It was an honor to serve with you, both in An Thoi and in Naval PostGraduate School. You will be remembered as one of the “Good Guys”.*

Norman Scott - May 12, 2024 at 06:54 PM



“ *In the beginning I did not want to give up my aunt Sis, but after getting over my little fit, I welcomed him and grew very fond of uncle Bob. He attended the military academy with none other than Roger Staubach and that in my teenage years was awesome. My family and I had the best and most definitely educational time visiting them in Hawaii. Thank you for everything, and also for taking great care of my aunt "Sis". Rest in Peace and may our good Lord be with the family and friends.*
Tom Beasley



Tom Beasley - May 12, 2024 at 04:56 PM