



Robert "Bob" Markofski

November 3, 1936 - June 1, 2026

Robert F. Markofski, "Bob", age 89m of Berlin, Passed away at ThedaCare-Neenah on Monday June 1, 2026.

Bob was born on November 3, 1936, at Berlin, WI, the only son of Andrew and Katherine (Parker) Markofski. He grew up on the family farm near Berlin, attended St. Michael Catholic School in Berlin, and was a 1955 graduate of Berlin High School. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy shortly after graduation and served his country for four years. After Boot Camp at Great Lakes, IL, he attended Engineman "A" School in San Diego, CA, in late 1955, and then served 13 months at U.S. Naval Air Station, Kodiak, AK, as an auto technician in the Navy Exchange Garage at that base. (Alaska was not a state at that time, but a U.S. Territory.) He then was transferred to the Attack Transport, U.S.S. Merrick, AKA 97, with a home port of Long Beach, CA. Aboard ship he worked on diesel engines, primarily in Landing craft carried on the Merrick. It was a strange "twist of fate" that the first sea voyage he experienced aboard the Merrick was to resupply the Pribilof Islands, off the west coast of Alaska. (After just spending 13 months on Kodiak.) The ship also carried the crew to Westpac, (Western Pacific), on two separate 6-month cruises, in 1958 and 1959. These voyages included operations and stops at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Yokosuka, Okinawa, Sasebo, and Muko Jima, Japan, Subic Bay, Olongapo, Cebu, and Manila, Philippines, Hong Kong, China, Inchon, Korea, and Taiwan, Formosa. Another unique occurrence of Bob's Navy experience involved a

shipmate he first met at Engineman School in San Diego, Fred Baines, a fellow Wisconsinite from Waunakee. Fred was in the same class at San Diego, and surprisingly, was sent to Kodiak at the same time as Bob. Even more surprising was when they discovered the next duty station, for both of them, was the same ship! It almost never occurs to have two friends to be together for most of their enlistment. This, of course, made them life-long shipmates. Besides sharing their leave time back home together, they vowed to be “best man” at each other’s wedding, (true), and became Godfather to one of their children. Bob treasured his Navy experience, kept in touch with other shipmates as well, and attended two of his ship’s reunions. He even marched several years in Berlin’s Memorial Day Parade, in uniform, (while it fit him!)

Upon leaving the Navy in 1959, Bob, and Berlin Navy friend Don Greening, moved to Milwaukee, where they roomed together for several months.

Bob secured work as an auto mechanic, first at Deising Pontiac in Milwaukee. In that special town, he found the love of his life, Karen Rush, and after a “whirlwind courtship”, they married in November of 1961. Tiring of the “big city”, Bob and Karen moved to Berlin in 1962, where he and Karen raised four children, Christopher, Gloria, Diane, and Andrew.

In Berlin, he worked for 3 years as a mechanic at West Side Garage. His next move was to Oshkosh Truck Corp., (now Oshkosh Corp.), where he spent the next 31 years of his work-life, retiring in 1997. Though starting in Assembly, he was on the factory Supervisory staff for 16 years, eventually being the Superintendent of Assembly. Bob spent his last 13 years at Oshkosh as Customer Training Supervisor, a job he truly loved, and wished he had gotten into the field much earlier in life. The Training job involved much travel, which took him to every state in the union, (some several times), including Alaska and Hawaii. He also travelled to 15 foreign countries during this part of his

career. He often remarked that the Training job involved way more travel than he had in the Navy.

The job also allowed him to expand on one of his hobbies, photography, which, after retirement, opened another field, as he began to frame and mount his own enlarged photos. (A number of these photos were donated to Patriot Place and can be viewed there.)

The travels continued after retirement, with Karen, of course, going along. Of course, visiting children, grandchildren, and Great-grandchildren became another good excuse for travel. His other hobbies included reading, tinkering with old cars, and his favorite summer pastime, fishing with friends and family on the small Waushara County lakes. He was proud of his “farm kid” roots, and of growing up as part of a large extended family. (Bob was one of the 64 grandchildren of Frank and Sophie Markofski, who had 18 children.) The importance of family, and the farm-raised work ethic, Bob and Karen believe they passed on to their children. Spending time with the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren became the most rewarding part of their later lives. He took great pride in their accomplishments and their own family activities.

Bob was a life-long member of the Berlin Catholic community, both at St. Stanislaus Parish and the present All Saints Parish. He served on the Parish Council for both parishes and was an active member of the Holy Name Society, and taught CCD classes for several years. In recent years he took great pleasure in living history with the 7th and 8th graders at All Saints. He was also an Honorary Life member of the Knights of Columbus, Berlin Council 1547, and held several offices in the Council over the years.

After retirement, he was a volunteer driver for the Veterans Office of Green Lake County for six years, providing transport for Vets to scheduled medical

appointments at VA hospitals in the state. He served several years on the Oakwood Cemetery Board and was instrumental in developing the record of gravesites and map of the same.

He also served on the Board of the Berlin High School Alumni Association for a number of years. He was a past member of the City of Berlin Board of Appeals.

Bob is survived by his beloved wife Karen; two sons, Christopher (Patty) Markofski of Spokane, WA, and Andrew (Lynette) Markofski of Cedar Rapids, IA; two daughters, Gloria Markofski of Oshkosh, WI, and Diane (Kevin) Brose of Marietta, GA; seven grandchildren, Tyler (Secelie) Panske, Jacob Panske, Samuel and Ryan (Cheyanne) Markofski, Alex (Taylor) Brose, Zachary Brose, and Megan (John) Chiles; five great-grandchildren, Wynn, Rohen and Renley Panske, and Blakely and Hallie Brose; special "adopted" Granddaughter Kristi Bares, and her 3 children, Grace, Grant and Gavin; and numerous other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Andrew and Katherine Markofski, four sisters, Bea Meulemans, Andrea Werzinske, Irene Foslin, and Rita Markofski, (Sister Mary Sharon).

Family and friends may visit with the family on Saturday, June 6, 2026, from 9-10:45 at All Saints Catholic Parish of Berlin. A Funeral Mass of Christian Burial will follow the visitation at 11:00 a.m. officiated by Monsignor James Gunn.

Interment will be held following the service at St. Stanislaus Catholic Cemetery with Full Military Honors presented by the Well's Krause VFW Post # 2925.

Cemetery Details

St. Stanislaus Catholic Cemetery

N. Wisconsin St
Berlin, WI 54923

Upcoming Events

Visitation

JUN 6. 9:00 AM - 10:45 AM (CT)

All Saints Catholic Parish
N8566 WI-49
Berlin, WI 54923
(920) 361-5252

Funeral Service

JUN 6. 11:00 AM (CT)

All Saints Catholic Parish
N8566 WI-49
Berlin, WI 54923
(920) 361-5252