



Robert Fred "Reuben" Reisbeck

June 7, 1932 - February 13, 2017

Well, the old chicken thief is dead. Finally. Gone on to his reward—whatever and wherever that may be. Probably died of pure meanness.

He lived a long and not especially productive life. In other words he was no big deal. If you were to ask nearly anyone if they knew Reuben, they'd probably reply, "Reuben who?"

But somehow he managed to have a lot of fun.

Reuben was born June 7, 1932 in the old Reisbeck family farmhouse, three miles west of Berthoud, in Larimer County, Colorado. His parents were Phillip H. and Doris VanGalder Reisbeck. They were good and decent folks.

He went to public school there at Berthoud, and then went on to Colorado A&M College in Fort Collins where, somehow, he managed to earn an undergraduate degree in General Agriculture. He was never on the Dean's Honor Roll.

Then on October 9, 1955, he did just about the only really intelligent thing he ever did do; he married the very fine and lovely Sandra Lee Laulainen. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arde Laulainen of Cheyenne, Wyoming. (She wasn't of age when they got married. He had to tell a waitress in Estes

Park, Colorado, that it was all right for her to drink a Manhattan.)

That marriage occurred as he was complaining his way through two years of active duty in the United States Army.

Following his anything but illustrious military career, our young warrior began a time in his life when he did a lot of dumb things and didn't do any of them very well. Finally Oklahoma State University took him on, let him hang around the campus in Stillwater, gave him a little office, and even let him teach some courses. Meanwhile, thanks to some GI Bill educational allowance -- and a hard working wife who could do anything well -- Reuben received an MS in Mass Communication at the University and then an EdD in Higher Education/Mass Communication. He wasn't impressed with all his education, especially the "Doctor of Education" degree, claiming it wasn't really a doctor's degree, and that it was probably worth less than a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science. He often would point out that, "Even a rectal thermometer has degrees."

He was certainly educated beyond his intelligence. But going to school is easier than working at a day job.

The best and happiest part of his career at OSU seemed to come after he became a faculty member of the Agricultural Information Department. There he produced all the Division of Agriculture's radio programs, and very often produced and hosted the every-weekday-morning television agricultural show, "Sunup." Big Whoopee! It's hard to believe that anyone would watch that ugly old man on TV.

And then he retired in 1997. Some people wondered what he retired from. Now, he and Sandra (he called her "Mama") had a 60-acre place outside of Stillwater. They lived out there well over thirty years in all trying to raise a few

Appaloosa horses and some mangy old Hereford beef cows. The truth is they simply didn't know much about practical ranching, and they made every dumb mistake in the book. But it was something to do. And they actually had a good time at it. For example, they'd haul hay together at night when it was cool, and other things like that -- things sane people would never consider doing.

We will say, however, that the old war horse was a chicken man. He loved chickens, and raised a new flock of broilers and layers every year.

When you get down to it, what old Reuben was best at was spending money. It was a good thing Mama was tighter than a tick, else wise they'd have been living at the county poor farm.

His wife, Sandra, and three children who grew up and left home long ago survive the old man. They include Robin Reisbeck Barbe of Springerville, Arizona, Craig Reisbeck of Siloam Springs, Arkansas, and Holly Jo Reisbeck Popham of Columbia, Missouri. And there are four grandchildren; Austin and Ashley Popham, son and daughter of Holly, and Clayton and Elizabeth, son and daughter of Craig. Reuben has a surviving brother, Jim, of Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Reuben's ashes will be placed in the Columbarium at the Estes Valley Memorial Cemetery at Estes Park, Colorado. Obviously his body was cremated.

He didn't owe a soul any money (that we know of,) and, since he had no debtors, it's pretty dadburned improbable that anyone else would take note of his passing enough actually to take the time to come to some sort of memorial service.

But on the slim chance that anyone might show up, we hope they bring along a big bottle of Dago Red and have a good time giving old Reuben's memory a good what for.

By the way – you'll have to pay your own way to Estes Park and buy your own wine.

-written by Robert "Reuben" Reisbeck

Tribute Wall

DY

“ Bob was a good friend, and I was blessed to know him. He joined our church and we enjoyed having him there as our brother. I was sad to have him leave for AR but thankful that he could be there with Sandra. And now, he's with the King! Joy!

Dan Yost - March 01, 2017 at 06:21 PM

 Bruce Parnell

“ I got to know Bob at the Golden Oaks home in Stillwater, OK, meeting to read and talk about the Bible together. He was quite a blessing to our congregation, especially because of the joy He had in Christ Jesus. I thank God for short time that we had to get to know Bob, and to learn from his faith and life.

*Pastor Bruce Parnell
Stillwater Reformed Presbyterian Church*

Bruce Parnell - March 01, 2017 at 03:02 PM

SD

“ I owe a great deal to Bob for helping me make it through ag Comm. As a transfer student I found it difficult to fit in, that is until I met Bob! He was an amazing teacher and a great friend. I think of him often, I strive to be like him, and I pray the family finds comfort and peace in the knowledge that Bob rest in the comforting arms of God the Father Almighty.

scott dewald - February 18, 2017 at 10:10 AM

CW

“ On behalf of the friendship that Bob and my husband, James White, shared for so many years at Oklahoma State, I want to let you know that I am praying for the family as you start an unusual transition in your lives. Sandra, we will always remember the crazy times, good and bad, that our husbands had in their areas of work, but what is so very important: the many, many students whose lives were influenced for the good by these two guys. Take care of yourself in the days ahead.

Carol White

Carol White - February 16, 2017 at 11:57 PM

JS

“ When I first came to interview for a job as a television producer/director with Ag Communications at OSU, they sat me down in Bob's office and left me there for what seemed like hours. I thought to myself, "this man is truly from Mars". I took the job anyway. After long road trips, many laughs, and early morning hours together I came to know Bob as he really was. He was a gentle, kind soul who took the time to patiently help a kid fresh out of college get on his feet for his first real adult job. I knew absolutely nothing about agriculture but Bob took the time to help me understand and that in turn allowed us to do a pretty decent job putting together a little show called SUNUP. Don't get me wrong, I wanted to kill Bob a time or two. We did have our little scraps but never left work angry at each other. After all, how can you stay mad at Bob? It is impossible. I left OSU Ag Communications in 1992 but have thought about Bob and all he taught me many, many, many times over the last 25 years. I hope that the lessons I learned from Bob have rubbed off on my 2 sons and the many student interns that I have come in contact with over the years. God Speed Bob Reisbeck. You will be missed. By the way, if you do actually head back to Mars, please send back pictures.

John Schiebe - February 16, 2017 at 02:52 PM


RM

“ *Bob was a decent fellow that I was way too young to fully appreciate. Touched a lot of lives and did it all without taking himself too seriously. I am glad I got to know him and I'm glad for some of the lessons he taught me.*

Rob McClendon - February 16, 2017 at 02:44 PM



“ *Austin Moore is correct: The obit is a perfect story of Bob. I can hear his voice as if he were reading it to us. I knew the minute I read the first line that he had written his own obit ... and was NOT surprised! What a wonderful man! My prayers are with the family. Please know Bob did do a lot of important things and was treasured by many. May the Lord grant you peace.*



Shelly Peper Sitton, OSU AGCM Class of 1988

Shelly Sitton - February 16, 2017 at 12:16 PM



“ *This obituary is a perfect tribute to the man I knew while working as an intern for SUNUP in the mid-90's. He always had a good story, and he always had a chicken feeder filled with candy corn in his office. Both were much appreciated by we starving college students. Good bless this family and Godspeed Dr. Bob.*

Austin Moore - February 16, 2017 at 10:10 AM

PE

“ Well, I now know where Bizzy gets her sense of humor after reading the obituary written by your dad, Craig. What an entertaining man! I wish I would have known him. Please know that our prayers are with you and the family during this time. May you be blessed as you share wonderful memories over the coming days. And, I hope it goes without saying, that you should call if you need anything. Love to all of you!

Patti, Greg, Tanna and Tabitha

PATTI EILAND - February 15, 2017 at 12:47 PM