

ROBERT DEAN RUNDEL



Robert Dean Rundel Robert (Bob) Dean Rundel died peacefully on July 21, 2011 at his home in San Rafael, CA, following a brief illness. Bob was born in Palo Alto on January 9, 1940.

Thus began an amazing life of a truly unique individual. Always excelling in school, he graduated from Dartmouth College in 1961 with a BA Cum Laude in Physics. He went on to receive his PhD at the [University of Washington](#). In 1968 he began teaching Atomic and Molecular Physics at Rice University in Houston, TX. He then worked at [NASA](#), joining the Environmental Effects Project Office of the Space Shuttle. In 1980 he accepted a position at

Mississippi State University, teaching Physics and Astronomy.

Although he was lured back to California by Jandel Scientific Software in 1991, Bob continued to support MSU and the students he loved so much. He endowed the Rundel Memorial Scholarships, contributed to the building of the Stan Rundel Reading Room, (named after his father, Morton Stanley Rundel), and then purchased a van for the local Boys and Girls Club of West Point, MS, which was named "Stan's Van". In 1999 MS State granted him the status of Professor Emeritus of Physics and Astronomy. Bob spent his life being intensely curious. He was an avid reader and a great lover of classical music. He spent many years playing the piano. In the last ten years of his life he became an expert in identifying and classifying different varieties of rocks from all over the world.

Bob leaves his wife of 35 years, Joanne Gordon, daughters Megan Rundel (husband Jim Kelsey and son Jonah) of Orinda, and Amy Utzinger (husband Urs and children Alex, Ben, Clara and Sam) of Tucson, AZ. Also step-children Scott Gordon and Wendy Gordon Hobbs (children Drew, Mitch and Jeff), all of Austin, TX. He loved all of his grandchildren very much. Bob was the oldest of four boys, and he leaves his brothers Phil (wife Judy) of Topanga, Jim (wife Elese) of Santa Rosa, and Rick and Marnea of Sonoma. We will all miss his intellect, communication skills, and wry sense of humor. The family is thankful for the care given to Bob, particularly by Dr. Raymond Brow, his Primary Care physician, Dr. James Claiborne and Isabel in Ophthalmology, Dr. Jonathan Graham in Podiatry, Dr. Jeffry Cardneau in Vascular Surgery, and Dr. Erick Hjortsvang in Oncology. While living in San Rafael Bob contributed regularly to the Marin Humane Society. His last few days were spent under the loving care of Hospice by the Bay. Donations in his memory may be made to either of those groups. A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

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