



## Robert Nicholas Peay

February 27, 1941 - October 10, 2019

Robert Nicholas (Bob) Peay, 78, of Pine Bush, NY, passed away on October 10th, 2019 at Sapphire Nursing in Goshen, NY.

Bob was born in Middletown, NY to Eleanor and Robert Peay on February 27th, 1941. He went to Middletown High School and graduated in 1958. He went on to earn a degree in English from Yale University in 1963, but not before embarking on a brief stint as a sports writer for the Times Herald Record in Middletown, NY. After graduating from Yale, he went on to earn a Master's degree in education at New Paltz which helped shaped the course of his entire career. Bob quickly became a well-known fixture at Pine Bush High School, where he spent a span of 35 years teaching English, challenging the math department in friendly competition, running the senior class and leading graduation ceremonies (to name a few). Around town, he was a walking encyclopedia, with seemingly endless knowledge in history, literature and most especially sports trivia. Bob ran numerous sports pools throughout the years and continually fostered a fun competitive environment between all participants; he was well-known for organizing and consistently leading the charge with the start of each new season. He also volunteered for the Pine Bush Little League, was a member of the Lions Club and drove for Meals on Wheels during the majority of his retirement years.

Bob is survived by his son, Joseph Peay of Indian Hills, CO, daughter-in-law, Gretchen Zimmermann also of Indian Hills, CO, sister, Eleanor Whittaker and her husband Rodney Whittaker of London, England, nephew and godson Christopher White of Connecticut, nephew Jerehmy White of New Jersey, nephew Matthew White of Connecticut, nephew Nick Whittaker of England, and niece Eleanor Whittaker Machin of England. He is preceded in death by his sister, Susan White, mother, Eleanor Peay and father, Robert H. Peay.

Memorial donations may be made to Meals on Wheels America, [mealsonwheelsamerica.org](http://mealsonwheelsamerica.org) in memory of Robert. The family wishes to extend their gratitude to those who remained closest to Bob, especially during some of the more

challenging moments of his final years, namely Thomas Bemont of Pine Bush, NY and Gregory MacAvoy of Pine Bush, NY; their contribution to Bob's well-being and safety made each transition into each new phase as comfortable and peaceful as possible; words cannot express our thanks enough.

# Cemetery

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## **Cedar Hill Cemetery & Mausoleum**

5468 Route 9W North

Newburg, NY, 12550

# Comments

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“ Bob was my first cousin- most of my memories revolve around family holidays- esp christmas at our grand parents' house on Roberts St. in Middletown. good ones all. Bob had a distinguished career as a teacher. His students were lucky to have him. My sympathies to you, Joe.  
Caroline Schrade DeWilde

Caroline DeWilde - October 26 at 10:35 AM

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“ I was lucky enough to have Mr. Peay for 10th and 12th grade English. Not being a huge English fan, I always thought it was cool that he let me do my 12th grade term paper on Pink Floyd.

If I can indulge on one story. Mr. Peay wanted us to do book reports but didn't want us to write about the book but instead critique it. Not being a big fan of reading, I thought great, I will just make everything up, title, story and author and just write about my likes and dislikes of my imaginary book. A classmate next to me kept getting lower grades than I because he kept writing about the story. Well, the last day of school arrives and this classmate spills the beans to Mr. Peay about what I did all year. I'll never forget him just looking at the classmate and saying, "Well, at least he was using his imagination".

I didn't like the idea of a yearbook so I brought in a spiral bound tablet for people to sign instead. I gave it to Mr. Peay and he drew a crude picture and wrote, "His profile at age 5" to this day I have no idea what it means and I love that.

Thanks Mr. Peay for helping fuel the eccentricity in me.

Jim Quinn  
Class of 87

James Quinn - October 16 at 12:46 PM

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“ I'll never forget reading Beowulf in Mr Paey's class! Those classes stand out in my memories of high school. Reading about his life here is so inspiring. What an impressive, accomplished, patient person. Mentors like Mr Paey make a real difference in kids' lives. Sending my condolences to his family and friends.

Michelle Christina - October 16 at 11:12 AM

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“ Mr. Peay, you are one of the few teachers I still speak of all of these years later. I was so disappointed when they took you from our class halfway through the year to shuffle some faculty requirements around. It was an honor and a privilege to be taught by you. You are the reason I own a copy of Beowulf. May you dine in the halls of Valhalla.

Nicole Elayan - October 15 at 07:21 PM

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“ Mr. Pay, you are such an amazing teacher. We had so many good times. I remember doing crypto quips and that was all because of you. You gave me my taste for challenging my mind. You were my most favorite teacher at Pine Bush. You will truly be missed. There will never be another like you. Be with the angels. Be at peace.



Darren Trujillo - October 14 at 12:50 AM



“ I truly hate auto spell and me not proof reading. Lol. I know you're laughing at me right now Mr Peay. Well played sir. Well played.

Darren - October 14 at 12:52 AM

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“ I will always remember our trips to golf matches in your VW bus. But, you will always be remembered by many as a caring and gifted teacher. RIP

Michael Swensen - October 13 at 03:46 PM

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“ I met Bob on a golf course. Little did I know at that time that this would be the tip of the iceberg of his vast love of sports. As I got to know him I discovered a multi layered man whose interests and knowledge base went far beyond just sports. He loved movies, music, literature and the list goes on. I've never seen anyone do the New York Times crossword puzzle in PEN, but he did! Always amazing with his encyclopedic mind, it's no wonder that I am reading the tributes from so many of the students he taught or just had contact with at Pine Bush High School. We share his biggest accomplishment. Joe. Thank you Bob and thanks for the good days. RIP.

Frances Thomas - October 13 at 10:20 AM



“ Although Bob Peay was my all-time favorite teacher while attending Pine Bush High School, he told me, numerous times, to ‘never’ start a sentence with the word ‘I’. Unfortunately, I’m feeling the need to break that rule at this time, hopefully, for just this one time, please forgive me. I feel like I am an extremely lucky person to have had the opportunity for you to be such a positive influence in my life. My memories go on and on, you made a normally boring, for me, English class interesting and different from the other classes, so that I would actually look forward to going to it. You had the patience and drive that only a Saint could have, to coach, deal and believe in us knuckleheads on the ‘73-‘75 golf team. Working with you and the class with the making of the ‘Skunk Hollow Gazette’ was one of the funnest classes ever! But the one I am most grateful for is your friendship, for that, I am truly blessed. The influence you had on me and numerous students and friends is something that lasts forever and will be passed on for generations. You are truly missed but will never be forgotten. Thank you for being a big part of my life.

Tom Collins  
PBHS 1975

P.S. Still think he could have put Pine Bush on the map if he was ever on Jeopardy.

Tom Collins - October 12 at 09:05 PM



“ Very intelligent man and unique teacher...glad I had the pleasure of knowing him! My condolences to the family.

Carol Anthony - October 12 at 09:58 PM



“ I never had a class with Mr. Peay but knew who he was. Rest In Peace and know you were a huge influence in so many lives!

Lisa Hill - October 12 at 08:40 PM



“ It’s always hard to say “So long!” to an educational icon of your youth. I never spent a day in his class, but those that did? They loved being there. A teacher walks a fine line while expressing compassion without ever letting become anything more than that.

Mr. Peay was a splendid example of an educator who’d figured it out; He was able to connect with his students as people, while imparting lessons.

The world needs more like him, and I wish him well as his journey continues.

Todd Westerfield - October 12 at 06:03 PM

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“ As one of your former students (circa 1972-75), I thank you, Mr. Peay for the guidance, care and teachings you generously gave each one of us. Your passing will not end the life lessons you've imparted down to the next generation and we, in turn, will pass it forward in remembrance of you.  
Sincerely, Alex Miller, Pine Bush High School Class of '75

Alexander Miller - October 12 at 12:55 PM

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“ So sorry to hear of your passing Bob.Love you. Jackie Swartz

Jacqueline Swartz - October 12 at 09:25 AM



“ Bob Peay was my English teacher in PB High School. He also taught my son Ray many years later. He was a great teacher and fair! I'm sorry for his loss to us and his family

Joyce Monaco Depew - November 07 at 01:08 PM

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“ My deepest condolences to Mr Peays friends and family. I knew Mr Peay as my English teacher, but he was very easy to talk to. I will always remember (back in the 70's), having tea with him, a few times, in the hall by the teachers lounge, before school started. He always made me laugh cause our talks always ended as an a lesson in English language roots, history, or proper word enunciations. Maybe it was my thick Bronx, city accent ... ha ha ha .... I learned something new in everyone of our talks. From our conversations I figured out, on my own, how to tone and tame my accent, and be more aware of my speech patterns and tones (which helped land me a disk jockey job in my college years, which also played a big part in the meeting of my husband) .....Of course I tried to pass my understanding of the english language knowledge, learned from Mr Peay, on, to my own children while raising them ..... I remember running into him by chance , one day, many years ago, with my daughter who was around 15 at the time, and after few minutes, out of the blue he asked where she went to school, and he commented on her "speaking proper english". Turns out I homeschooled my chikdren and drew from what I learned from my great teacher, Mr Peay. .... Of course I told him so, on that day, and thanked him for having such an impact in my life, in something as simple as speech.. I got to witness that "teacher who made an impact on a students life, SMILE" .... It was pretty great to see on him. .... Rest in peace sir. Your pleasant, kind and gentle soul will be missed by many.

Kathi Piccinini Selear - October 12 at 12:41 AM

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“ Had the privilege of working with Bob for many years. To say he was a real character is an understatement. His knowledge of literature, sports, and trivia was matched by none. One of my memories was talking to my students about the origin of the word "Charlie Horse." I knew it was attributed to a baseball pitcher called Harry the Horse. Bob knew the name and story that went along with the name. May he rest in peace and be fondly remembered by all that he gave to this world.

Bob Bender

Bob Bender - October 11 at 06:03 PM

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“ My sincerest condolences for your loss. When I had class with Mr Peay, I always looked forward to it. He was challenging, engaging and always fun to learn with. After 40+ years out of high school, thinking of him still makes me smile. He will always live on in memory....

Ray Ten Kate - October 11 at 05:34 PM

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“ I got to work with Bob a lot during my senior year at PB as he was one of our Senior class advisors. He always made our meetings enjoyable and ended them in chuckles and laughter. He will be missed.

Lorraine Arbour Snead - October 11 at 05:07 PM

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“ It was never dull at the high school working with Bob. His sense of humor and pranks kept you on your toes. It was great working with him. Condolences to his family.  
Marianne Melielo

Marianne Melielo - October 11 at 03:04 PM

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“ He was definitely one of a kind and not just a great teacher but a great friend you will miss but not forgotten my friend R.I.P

Tim Petersen - October 11 at 01:57 PM

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“ One of my Favorite Teachers, who not only taught English, but shared humor and fun and impacted so many of us! Rest in Peace Bob, your memory will always enrich us.

**jodi lynn** - October 11 at 01:29 PM

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“ I had him Junior year and Senior year. He was one of my favorite teachers... "professor" Peay always made me smile and made class enjoyable. Thank you for making school fun Bob. You've made an impact on many lives, and wont be forgotten.

**Luke Ercoline** - October 11 at 01:22 PM

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“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



**Deborah Harrison** - October 11 at 01:21 PM

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“ He was more than an English teacher. He laughed with you and listened when it seemed others wouldn't. He made reading fun, and I honestly didn't enjoy books until his class. You Mr Peay were well loved and all of us that had you for our teacher grieve today. May God have mercy on you and may he bring peace to your soul. May God bring peace that passes understanding to Joey, Gretchen and the rest of your family. We love you.

**Melinda Kristiansen-McKinney** - October 11 at 01:21 PM



“ He was one of my favorite teachers rest in peace Mr Peay

**Marcie** - October 11 at 01:45 PM



“ I had so much fun learning how to hit a golf ball. A wonderful jokester. Didn't have as a teacher but treated us as equals

**Daniel Mills** - October 11 at 11:06 PM

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“ Mr. Peay made us laugh everyday while we diagrammed sentences. He was a very good friend to my dad and our family. Rest In Peace.  
Lee McIntyre

Lee McIntyre - October 11 at 01:09 PM



“ Mr. Peay was an amazing Freshman English teacher for me (1971-72). I truly think of him often and remember the short stories I read in his class (Bargain, etc.). A wonderful, fun, caring teacher.

Laurie Whightsil - October 11 at 01:22 PM



“ I thought I knew the Brooklyn Dodgers inside out and was sure that they lead the 1951 Giants by 13.5 games on a certain date in August. Bob challenged my expertise as the date was wrong and I had to eat a little crow on that wager. He was tough to stump. Good Times. RIP, Bob.

roger golden - October 11 at 02:38 PM



“ With my sisters at bedside with my Mom. We are remembering fondly Mr. Bob Peay ..his un teaching style and he rocked that mustache. We have been sharing lots of memories of our years at PBC School District

Bett Union-Jakubek - October 12 at 02:52 AM



“ RIP OLD FRIEND

Michael Zanetti - October 11 at 12:28 PM