



## Robert Lee Kearns

September 23, 1922 - March 11, 2006

Robert Lee Kearns, 83, Topeka, died Sat., Mar. 11, 2006.

Bob was born Sept. 23, 1922 in Greenleaf KS, the son of Merle and Veronica “Babe” Rogers Kearns. He graduated from Concordia High School and served his country in the Army Engineer Corp. He began his career in broadcasting with his first commercial experience in Atchison in 1944. After six months he went to WIBW Radio in Topeka where he was assigned the evening shift from 5 p.m. until sign-off. He wrote commercial scripts, radio programs and performed live on air with other entertainers. He worked several network shows originating from Topeka during the war and interviewed many national celebrities of the time. He was the host of Capitol Federal Bandstand Show, which boasted 6365 shows. Sales was added to his duties in the late ‘40s.

In 1951 Bob helped prepare for the coming of television to Topeka “with little or no place to gain experience.” He said they went on the air in 1953 “with two cameras, a transmitter and guts. No programs, no sponsors, and no experience.” Bob was soon appointed sales manager for WIBW AM/FM/TV. He continued his on-air activities with the new medium and he became well known throughout the area as a public speaker and Master of Ceremonies.

In 1981 Bob was appointed Director of Community Relations for the WIBW stations. He became the stations’ ambassador to the community, working directly with groups striving to improve the area and bringing back ideas on how they could help. He was a Gold Coater with the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, worked with the Kansas Assoc. of Commerce and Industry, Downtown Topeka, and “his ladies” at Fleming Place for a Monday afternoon current events meeting. Bob hosted a local television show, “In Your Own Back Yard” with Chuck Marson and later with Joe Fritton. He retired from WIBW on Dec. 31, 1992.

Bob’s community involvement included Topeka CVB Advisory Committee, Shawnee Co. Economic Development Committee, Railroad Days, Litter Control Commission, Red

Cross, United Way, Crime Stoppers, Junior League, Washburn Communications Advisory Board, St. Francis Hospital, Salvation Army, the Kansas State Fair Board, and Sales and Marketing Executives. He was Master of Ceremonies for the Governor's Prayer Breakfast for nine years. Bob was a founding member of Topeka's Professional Ad Club. He was a member of Assumption Catholic Church, the Knights of Columbus, Fourth Degree James W. Gibbons Assembly, No. 0286, the American Legion, the Saint Patrick's Day Committee, and the Moose Lodge.

On Feb. 23, 1946, Bob and Doris Shaeffer were married in Atchison. She preceded him in death Aug. 10. 2002.

Survivors include their daughter, Roberta Schiefelbein, and her husband, Joseph, Hoyt; granddaughter, Amy Raines, and her husband, James, Topeka ; grandson, Andrew Schiefelbein, and his wife, Pamela, Mayetta; a brother Don Kearns, and his wife Diane, Lawrence; and two brothers-in-law, Lawrence "Pete" Rathert, Nortonville, and Bob Shaeffer, Mission Viejo CA.

Mr. Kearns will lie in state from 4 to 8 p.m. Tues. at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Rd, Topeka KS 66614, where family will greet friends from 6 to 8 p.m. A parish rosary will be prayed at 6 p.m. at the funeral home followed by the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus Chalice Ceremony. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Wed. at Assumption Church. Burial will follow at Mt. Calvary Cemetery.

Memorial contributions are suggested to Assumption Grade School sent in care of the funeral home.

# Tribute Wall



“ Robert Lee Kearns

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM

CS

“ Roberta,  
I am so sorry to hear about your Dad. Numerous things come to mind when thinking of him. I especially remember the late night donut runs and how he would talk about the "old" days. His laughter was infectious. Living next door all of those years, I couldn't help but to learn a few things from Bob. He knew how to be a great father, neighbor, and still have a fabulous career. I know you and your family will miss him dearly. My sincerest sympathy. Chris

Chris Sharkey - March 16, 2006 at 10:42 AM

MB

“ I remember watching Mr. Kearns on the show "In Your Own Back Yard" with Chuck Marson and later with Joe Fritton and seeing him on the Capital Federal commercials...he was an icon to Topeka and the surrounding viewing area. He was a great supporter to the Knights - my sympathy to yoor entire family...Sir Knight Michael J. Browne

Michael Browne - March 15, 2006 at 03:30 PM

SH

“ Dear Don , From our family to yours our most sincere condolences in the loss of your brother.  
He was an Icon and a pillar to the city of Topeka and WIBW; just as you have been to the Kansas State Patrol and the University of Kansas. Please call if we can be of help in any way.

Yours Truly, Steve Hoyt 785)760-2700 shoyt@sunflower.com

Steve Hoyt - March 14, 2006 at 08:34 PM



“ Robert Lee Kearns

March 14, 2006 at 12:35 PM

LS

“ THE MOST TRUSTED NAME.....IN SAVING'S  
JUST ONE OF THE NUMERIOUS THINGS THAT COME TO MIND  
WHEN I THINK OF BOB KEARNS.  
I WORKED WITH BOB FOR 30 YEARS,BOB WAS THE MAN WHO  
SOLVED PROBLEMS,BOB WAS GOOD TO EVERYONE AND WILL BE  
MISSED BY EVERYONE WHO KNEW HIM.  
GOOD BYE.....MISTER KEARNS.  
LARRY SLAWSON

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**LARRY SLAWSON** - March 13, 2006 at 09:34 AM

MM

“ Roberta: I am so sorry for your loss. I remember both your parents as very nice  
people. My sympathies to you and your family.

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**Marilyn Meakins** - March 13, 2006 at 09:12 AM