



Robert Ferch

September 10, 1939 - May 23, 2025

Robert L. Ferch, affectionately known as “Bobby,” of Hamlet, passed away peacefully on Friday, May 23, 2025, at Northwest Health – Starke Hospital following a sudden illness. He was 85 years old.

Born on September 10, 1939, in LaPorte, Indiana, Bobby was the son of the late Robert J. and Mildred (Strader) Ferch. On November 27, 1974, he married Annette (Rzetelny) in Walkerton, and together they built a life marked by love, hard work, and devotion to their family and community.

Bobby began his career as a dedicated farmer, cultivating the land with care and purpose. Later in life, he found a new calling in education, driving school buses for Oregon-Davis Schools for over 40 years. His passion for safety, discipline, and student well-being earned him the role of Transportation Director, a position he proudly held for more than two decades. Generations of local students knew Mr. Ferch not just as their bus driver, but as a steady and kind presence in their daily lives.

His commitment to his community extended far beyond the school grounds. Bobby was an active member of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Knox and proudly served as a 4th Degree Knight in the Knights of Columbus. He gave generously of his time and talents through elected service as a Davis Township Advisory Board Member and as a longtime member of the Davis Township Fire Territory Advisory Board.

He was especially passionate about preserving community heritage and connections. As head of the Hamlet/Grovertown/Oregon-Davis Alumni

Association for many years, Bobby worked tirelessly to celebrate and unite generations of alumni. He also brought joy to local events as the owner and operator of Dancing Shadows DJ service, creating music-filled memories for countless families and friends.

Outside of his many community roles, Bobby embraced life's simple pleasures. He had a deep love for nature, spending hours tending his fruit trees and vegetable gardens. Together with his beloved wife Annette, he enjoyed canning and freezing the fruits of their labor—a tradition rooted in love and partnership. A man of many interests, Bobby also had a fondness for his Alfa Romeo Italian sports car, which brought him great joy on long drives through the countryside he called home.

Bobby is survived by his devoted wife Annette and their children: Robert "Todd" (Dawn) Ferch, Rhonda (Willard Klein) Ferch, John (Robyn) Ferch, Maria (Tsoe) Mukwena, and Michael (Cleo) Ferch. He was a proud grandfather to 11 grandchildren—Elliott Ferch, Lillian Mellinger, Jonathan Ferch, Nathan Ferch, Jason Ferch, Nicholas Townsend, Gabriele Mukwena, Levi Ferch, Miley Ferch, Lux Ferch, and Wyatt Ferch—and great-grandfather to four. He was preceded in death by his parents and his daughter, Teresa Ferch-Townsend.

Visitation will be held from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. CDT on Monday, June 2, 2025, at Rannells Funeral Home, Hamlet Chapel, with the Rosary beginning at 3:30 p.m. An additional viewing will take place from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. CDT on Tuesday, June 3. A Funeral Mass celebrating Bobby's life will be held at 11:00 a.m. CDT at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Knox, followed by burial at Fletcher Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests Mass donations be made to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church.

Cemetery Details

Fletcher Cemetery

700 E
Hamlet, IN 46532

Previous Events

Rosary Service

JUN 2. 3:30 PM (CT)

Rannells Funeral Home - Hamlet Chapel
102 W. Davis Street
Hamlet, IN 46532
(574) 867-3321
rannellsfh@mchsi.com
<https://www.rannellsfuneralhome.com>

Visitation

JUN 2. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Rannells Funeral Home - Hamlet Chapel
102 W. Davis Street
Hamlet, IN 46532
(574) 867-3321
rannellsfh@mchsi.com
<https://www.rannellsfuneralhome.com>

Visitation

JUN 3. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Rannells Funeral Home - Hamlet Chapel
102 W. Davis Street
Hamlet, IN 46532
(574) 867-3321
rannellsfh@mchsi.com
<https://www.rannellsfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Mass

JUN 3. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Thomas Aquinas Church
404 E. Washington St.
Knox, IN 46534

Burial

JUN 3 (CT)

Fletcher Cemetery
700 E
Hamlet, IN 46532

Tribute Wall

RM

“ Bobby was a very kind and giving man. He always had a smile and had a way of making people laugh. If we had a dinner at church, he would volunteer to do the dishes with his own cleaning supplies. I have known him for quite a while and will miss seeing his smile. Deepest sympathy to his family. May he rest in peace.

Renee Markovitz - June 01, 2025 at 07:11 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Robert Ferch.



May 30, 2025 at 02:52 PM



“ Vivid Recollections was purchased for the family of Robert Ferch.



May 29, 2025 at 09:48 AM

AF

“ Allen, Abby, & Oliver Renz Family purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Robert Ferch.



Allen, Abby, & Oliver Renz Family - May 28, 2025 at 09:04 PM

AF

“ Allen, Abby, & Oliver Renz Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Ferch.

Allen, Abby, & Oliver Renz Family - May 28, 2025 at 09:04 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Robert Ferch.



May 28, 2025 at 11:04 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert Ferch.

May 28, 2025 at 11:04 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Robert Ferch.



May 27, 2025 at 01:54 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert Ferch.

May 27, 2025 at 01:54 PM

MC

“ Bobby was such a sweet soul. He and Allen were always supportive with their DJing for our children’s weddings. Bobby always had a smile and welcoming. A servants heart was always evident in his presence. You will be missed Bobby!

MEWSETTE CARTWRIGHT - May 27, 2025 at 07:26 AM

SB

“ I remember the first time I saw the two of you together. Do you? It was at the Hollywood Restaurant in Hamlet on one of your first dates. Both of you looked almost giddy, so I think it had to be love even in the early stages. So very sorry for the loss of Bobby, he was a powerful man hard to forget.

Shirley Budka - May 25, 2025 at 05:41 PM

JB

“ Best friends for eighty years. Hundreds of memories all good. One of a kind!
John Blad

John Blad - May 25, 2025 at 05:29 PM

CK

“ Bobby was one of a kind! We have lots of good memories of Bobby but the one that sticks out in my mind is when he was Santa’s elf and Chuck was Santa! They did it for a Knights of Columbus Christmas party and it was hilarious. He liked it to have fun and he never acted his age! He will be missed greatly. Prayers of comfort to Annette and the family.

Chuck and Mary Kleinfehn - May 24, 2025 at 04:38 PM



“ Too many. Thankful for Bobby being both of my Sons First Busdriver. His humor,kindness,work ethic,dedication,Apples,popcorn balls,applesauce,and last but not least- My Boss for over 13 1/2 years. (Denise Bus # 33,31,and 4). Gods peace to Annette and Children. 🙏

Denise Sales - May 24, 2025 at 02:09 PM