



Robert Alfred Reid M.D.

June 8, 1939 - December 24, 2021

“Listening to us breathe in the dark”

a eulogy for Robert A. Reid

by Heather L. Reid

As many of you know, my dad was born in Italy. This is because his father, Homer Reid, was an adventurous young man who, in the late 1930s, went to study opera there. Probably on a Genoa beach he met a petite young Italian named Lea Maria Moretti and they married on September 3, 1938. They settled in Milan on Via Fabio Felzi, next to the central train station and a half hour walk or so from il Teatro alla Scala, where my grandfather was studying. On June 8, 1939 at 9:21 PM (you can do the math, they make it just barely), Roberto Alfredo Reid (as his Italian birth certificate calls him) was delivered by Dr. Giuseppe Grossi – apparently my dad’s earliest role-model. But the war in Europe quickly heated up and only 5 months later the young family took a train to Napoli, where they boarded the SS Exeter and landed at Ellis Island on December 13, 1939.

Now, I know all this detail because I recently moved to Sicily and needed the documents to apply for Italian citizenship. I like to say that by going back, I am balancing out what Italy lost when my father left – or maybe my grandmother, since my father wasn’t there long enough even to learn the language.

In any case, even with my return, America clearly got the best of the deal, since she gets to keep all three of his male children, his 8 grandchildren (the

last of whom was born just weeks ago), and 3 great-grandchildren (the last of whom was born the day before he died), with many more to come.

In fact, my dad was never legally Italian since his father was American and he left so soon. But after I grew up and began spending time in Italy, I realized he had a distinctively Italian character and it is this I would like to celebrate today. Now, I know what you are thinking—that I am about to talk about my dad's passion for great food and wine, or his love for beautiful women, fast cars, literature, and the performing arts. And those are, arguably, Italian characteristics. But what I want to celebrate today is his generosity of spirit. The generosity I have in mind is not measured by the quantity or even the value of what a person gives. Paradoxically, it has more to do with what they don't do. A truly generous person does not give with their own interests in mind, does not try to influence or control those they give to, and does not expect to be rewarded or even noticed for their generosity. Let me illustrate this with a personal story.

Sometime in the late 1960s, when I was 3 or 4 years old, we piled into the family station wagon to take a road-trip. I used to get car sick, so dad gave me some Dramamine, which immediately put me out and I slept soundly as we drove, waking only for meals and to use gas-station restrooms, which held some weird fascination for me as a little girl. After 8 or 10 or 12 hours of driving, we pulled into a roadside motel for rest and I miraculously came to life.

Did I mention that, as a child, I was often, to put it delicately, a brat. So, when I came to life, I started running circles around the room, jumping between the beds and using my older brother Bobby as a combination trampoline/punching bag.

My exhausted father realized he wasn't going to get any rest with me in that state, so after several failed attempts to reason with me, he decided to give me something to calm me down. Well, I think he made the mistake of telling me that because he says it had the opposite effect and I only doubled my rambunctiousness. So, he gave me a little more and just as suddenly as I had

come to life, I was back asleep.

Now the young doctor was worried that he had given his precious daughter too much sedative, and so he stayed up all night listening to me breathe, to make sure I didn't stop. I bounced awake the next morning asking for pancakes and raring to go, totally unaware that he had been monitoring my well-being all night.

He loved to tell that story, like so many others, but it wasn't until I was well into adulthood that I realized my dad had been listening to my breathing in the dark throughout my entire life. He inconspicuously protected and supported me in everything I did, regardless of whether he agreed with my choices, and even when I was being, um, a brat.

Love and support without judgment or manipulation – this is what I mean by generosity of spirit and my dad has given it not only to his children but also to his own parents, and step-parents, and cousins, and friends, and patients, and I'm sure some of you here today plus many more that we will never know. He spent his life listening to us breathe in the dark so that we could play happily thinking we had simply slept well.

That was Bob Reid's generosity of spirit and on behalf of my family, I ask all of us to honor his memory by being as generous as we can with each other, even—and maybe especially—when we don't agree.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 2. 2:00 PM (PT)

Valle Verde
900 Calle De Los Amigos
Santa Barbara, CA

Tribute Wall

AR

“ I am eternally grateful to Dr. Reid. I really mean that. He delivered me back in 1971 at Cottage Hospital. I never got to thank him for it in person, which would have been really fun, but I hope he knows I'm really grateful to him for how well he treated my mom and my family, and for his help in bringing me into the world! I will ask my mom to write up her recollection of him, as it's really special, and one that I treasure.



Ariana - February 13 at 08:03 PM

SR

“ Happy Birthday Dad! Missing you on this day and everyday.



Scott C Reid - June 08, 2023 at 12:10 PM

SR

“ Scott Reid lit a candle in memory of Robert Alfred Reid M.D.



Scott Reid - June 08, 2022 at 12:43 PM

SR

“ I saw my father last night in a dream. He waved and smiled at me from across a busy street. He was standing at the head of a long line of children all holding hands. Angels do truly exist. I miss and Love you Dad... Everyday.

Scott C. Reid - March 02, 2022 at 04:34 PM

R(

Hi. I'm so sorry for your loss. (This is random, but were you in mrs smiley's class at Vieja valley?) Raelene

raelene (delisle) - April 15, 2022 at 12:21 PM

SR

Of course I remember you Raelene.

Scott Reid - June 08, 2022 at 12:42 PM

RH

Ha! Oh, good. It was a loooooong time ago! Are you on Facebook? (I have a photo I'd like to send your way.)

raelene hennessey - July 07, 2022 at 01:20 PM

RH

Do you have a contact/mobile number? ... I can text it to you.

raelene (delisle) hennessey - October 10, 2022 at 08:36 AM

SR

scott@wrhsb.com is my contact. Thanks Raelene.

scott reid - January 04, 2023 at 01:08 PM

RA

Sent  

Raelene - April 21, 2023 at 03:43 PM

MT

Scott, I have just learned of "my little Dr.Reid" passing. I am so very sad hear this. I worked for your Dad years ago when I lived in SB. You also handled the passing of my Mother in 2015. Is your Mom still at Valle Verde? I must go down & see her, I love her very much also. My condolences, Mary Timmons

Mary Timmons - August 06, 2023 at 04:45 AM

DM

“*Dear Mrs.Reid and family,
Dr. Reid delivered all of my babies and he was the most deeply,
caring doctor and an amazing person. Godspeed Dr.Reid and my
sincere condolences to the family.
Denise Montanes*

Denise Montanes - January 27, 2022 at 11:47 AM

MM

“ Dear Reid Family,

I read Dr. Reid's daughter's piece on Noozhawk tonight and wanted to let you know that yes, I was one that he watched over and listened for their breathing in the dark.

I met Bob in the emergency room at Cottage Hospital in 1980. I had had an ectopic pregnancy and he walked me and my husband through a very scary experience, particularly because we had tried for months to have this baby. Bob was also the one who leveled with me and told me I was not going to be able to have a child without major intervention. And he stuck with me all the way. He walked me and my husband through every decision, every idea, and by and by we adopted.

He always treated us as if we were his friends and I will cherish his memory for ever.

Fondly,

Myra Mahoney

Myra Mahoney - January 12, 2022 at 09:37 PM

NB

Patti and family, I just found an old copy of Cottage Magazine with you featured. Then I found out Bob had passed away. I'm so sorry for your loss. I go way back with you and the family, as you know Patti. You both were such an asset to Santa Barbara. Marian and I were so lucky to know you both and the family. Bob and Dan watched me so close as I had a very difficult pregnancy. I felt so blessed that they did. With heart felt sympathy, Nonie Blum

Nonie (Gile) Blum - July 26, 2022 at 02:46 PM

RP

“ Dear Patti,
Blessings in this painful time,
Here in Tennessee I feel Bob's loss. He cared for Sally during our first pregnancy in 1971 and seems yesterday you met us a Valle Verde and took us to dinner on Cabrillo.
During my practice in SB Bob was a giant in the medical community. Whether for the Medical Society, Cottage or CMA Bob flourished and led. He epitomized the best of our profession. Medicine has changed and we will not see his like again.
A big life well lived which flows on through his progeny. I will miss him and his welcoming smile.
Bob Phillips M.D.

Robert D Phillips - January 12, 2022 at 04:39 PM

BB

“ Dear Patti and the entire Reid family,

Claudia and I are so sorry to hear about Bob's passing.

The tribute by Heather is perfetto.

I knew Bob, Dr. Reid as a compassionate and dedicated leader of the Family Service Agency Board of Directors.

I served as the Executive Director of FSA for nearly 20 years.

Bob's presidency, following Patti, who was equally compassionate and dedicated in her tenure as well.

From the moment Claudia and I came to Santa Barbara in 1992, Patti and Bob welcomed and embraced us.

The genuine and caring smiles they always wore, were and still are not only a gift in our lives, but a precious blessing we cherish.

As the President of FSA, Bob was my boss.

However, from day one he let me know it was a partnership with me as the ED.

Like a doubles tennis team, we worked together in a mission focused manner.

Throughout my 35 year career as a non profit Executive Director, I never worked with a more respectful, supportive, focused, task oriented and collaborative leader than Bob.

He gave me direction, sage advice and respectful criticism when needed.

We agreed that the Santa Barbara community and our clients were our priority.

Yet, Bob also agreed with me that we should support our amazing volunteers and dedicated staff.

I have long been an Italian Wanna Be.

On a trip to the home town of Claudia's Mom, Giovanna, we discovered the ancestral home and olive groves of the Nardolillo family.

We also met local people from the village.

They helped us find the olive groves.

After thanking these beautiful paesani they told us...

Senori, la familia y il cuore y l'anima del paese!

Translation....

The family is the heart and soul of the village

Bob and Patti Reid cared deeply about their own family, the friends like Claudia and I who came into their life, but most importantly they cared about the village of Santa Barbara and it's citizens.

God Bless you Bob and Patti.

We know that, as my beloved Irish Mom taught me...

We will all be together again, the circle unbroken.

Much love,

*Bill and Claudia Batty
Nipomo, CA*

Bill Batty - January 12, 2022 at 04:09 PM

HR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Heather Reid - January 07, 2022 at 04:12 AM

HR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Heather Reid - January 07, 2022 at 04:11 AM

HR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Heather Reid - January 07, 2022 at 04:09 AM

JR

“ Dear Grandpa,

The rock of our family, I miss you so much. I miss that warm smile of yours always greeting me when we'd arrive for dinner with the family. I miss your hugs, your amazing hugs. I will never forget our Maui trips to Napili, oh how I wish we could go back there just one more time. I know that was like a second home to you, and you shared that beautiful place with all of us. The home videos you made are now all that more special to me and I hold them close to my heart.



You were such a strong, caring, unbelievably smart man & I will forever cherish the time I got to spend with you. You have given your family and loved ones so much without ever asking for anything in return. Anyone who knew you would say the same.

I love you so much, grandpa. You may be gone, but I feel you with me still. I feel your warmth, your presence, and your love. We all miss you more than anything. You were truly one of a kind.

Love, Jess

Jessica Reid - January 06, 2022 at 11:55 PM

AR

“ Dear grandpa,
I have been trying to find the words to say to express how much you meant to me, the impact that you had on my life, and what a wonderful man you were, but they all seem so futile in comparison. The truth is, the love and admiration I had for you cannot be put into words... rather, it is something to be felt. I feel you so deeply in my core, in who I am. You helped shape the woman I am today.

You had been the one I called when I needed advice, when I wanted to share good news, and when I simply just wanted to hear your voice. Who you are has so deeply impacted this entire family, and I feel so blessed to have had the 29 years I did with you. While some days it feels hard to breathe without you, I remind myself, you are still here. I can feel you.

Thank you for your endless love, your sacrifices, your advice, your belief in me, and those unforgettable bear hugs.

Always,
Angela Reid

Angela Reid - January 06, 2022 at 04:31 PM

PR

“ While we have been separated by circumstances, careers, and actual miles we have always been connected by blood, parents and brotherhood. Miss you big brother! May the God we both love and serve give comfort to your wonderful wife Patti and your children during this very difficult time.
Love You Bob!

Phil

Philip R Reid - January 06, 2022 at 04:15 PM

PR

“ Dear Bob, grandfather to my beautiful children and great-grandfather to my newborn grandson Ace Amiri. How much we all miss you. How blessed we are to have had in our lives. I never forget all the special moments we've had together. All our our Hawaii trips, Sunday night family dinners, the famous Reid bbq's, when you drove me to my wedding 28 years ago, delivering my daughter, your second grandchild. I could go on and on what a wonderful man you were and how much You were loved by us and the whole community. You are at peace now. Love you always...

Your daughter-in-law, Pamela Reid

Philippians 3:20-21

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Pamela Reid - January 06, 2022 at 02:42 PM

“ Dear Dad,

You've been gone only four hours, almost to the minute. Bob says you passed peacefully, though had a hard night, only finally resting with your head on your eldest son's shoulder and then in his arms. Though I know those moments were so hard, it seems right—just changed around a bit: the father becomes the child, sleeping the way we, your kids did, on your shoulder, in your arms when we were young.

I'm here, feeling helpless in quarantine and, yet, carried by your humility, your beauty, your vulnerability, your strength—and, above all, your love of family. As a father, you gave us what you, as a young boy, didn't quite have. Though you were too humble to ever show it, you must've been so proud of the way you did nothing but give to us, just as proud as we still are today to have such a beautiful father.

Strangely, in these last few difficult days, the memories are not coming to me. I'm all alone, separated from all of my loved ones—from you in these last moments—with nothing but the quiet for the memories to come flooding back. But they don't. From what I've heard of others who have been through something like this, they talk of these memories that pour in, but they're not coming back for me. Not yet.

I know they're there—in droves—but they're not like footsteps behind me. Rather, they're all of this untouched snow before me—as fresh and alive as can be—waiting to be lived. And so, I'll walk the rest of my days here forward into all of these memories of you.

And so, I can't wait for what you will bring me tomorrow. The way I see myself in my own son and daughter, just the way so many see you in me. In the way I will live with you in my heart and through the way I will always try love my own family better, as you always did.

Tonight, Dad, I'm standing out in the snow, in the dark, to say goodbye, to say I love you, and most of all to say thank you. All of these memories are in front of me—to hug Mom, Bob, Heather, and Scott—to hug Stephanie, Jasper, and Rhys Robbie—just the way you said I always hugged you as a kid, full well knowing I learned it from you... because I wanted to give it back, to be capable of such warmth.

Tonight, Dad, let's rest, because rest hasn't been easy in these last few nights, and I want to be ever sharp, open-eyed, and lovingly kind for all of these memories ahead.

*Love,
Rick*

12/24/21 9:19pm – Mt. Utsayantha, Catskills, NY

Scott C. Reid - January 04, 2022 at 01:44 PM

SR

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Scott C. Reid - January 04, 2022 at 01:42 PM