



Mr Robert Szego

August 31, 2023

Robert Szego, 76, of Athens, NY passed away peacefully at home on August 31, 2023.

Robert was born in Budapest, Hungary and he emigrated to the United States as a child. He grew up in New York City where he became a big fan of Yankee baseball. Robert was an entrepreneur who began his career as a computer programmer and systems analyst. He was also a trendsetter for today's "flexible work arrangements"- working late into the night but preferred not to rise much before noon.

Survivors include his daughter Dvora Szego; his siblings Andy Szego and Anne Novak; and close friends Norman Freed, Charlie Dowd, and Dan Rubino

Robert enjoyed filling his free time with many interests including swing dancing, listening to classical music, signing in choral groups, skiing, and studying the philosophy of Ayn Rand. But Robert's great passion in life was flying. He loved nothing more than spending his afternoons buzzing around locally or heading further afield around New England for the metaphorical hundred-dollar hamburger. Robert also enjoyed taking longer cross-country trips to Oshkosh (Wisconsin), the Bahamas, and even a long journey over the Rockies to California. His love of flying also permeated his wardrobe. Robert was rarely seen wearing anything other than T-shirts covered in planes.

The latter half of Robert's life was spent in Greene County, NY where he built

his log cabin in the woods on Sleepy Hollow Lake and purchased his own plane. The red and white two passenger Citabria was quickly nicknamed "Sparky" by his daughter and the name stuck for over 30 years. Robert spent hundreds if not thousands of hours flying Sparky, many of those hours shared with friends and family, including dragging his daughter to fly-ins near and far. It was this love of flying and specifically his aircraft type that led Robert to the next chapter in his life as President of the Bellanca-Champion Club. Running the club brought Robert friendships throughout the general aviation community and allowed him to connect with members around the world-spinning tales and sharing technical advice.

Services for Robert will not be held, in accordance with Robert's beliefs. Anyone wishing to honor Robert's memory can best do so by embracing your own passion in life.

Arrangements for Robert are under the direction of Richards Funeral Home of the Mid-Hudson Valley, Inc., 29 Bross Street, Cairo, N.Y., 12413.

Condolences and memories of Robert may be shared at www.richardsfuneralhomeinc.net

Tribute Wall

NF

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Norm Freed - July 29, 2025 at 10:02 PM

RA

“ *I'm saddened to hear of Bob's passing. I never met Bob, but for 6 years, I have had the pleasure of working with Bob as the printer of the Bellanca Champion Club Newsletter and the Aeronca Aviator Newsletter. We spoke on the phone often, and I shared with him that my son-in-law is also a pilot and enjoys going to Oshkosh. I'm happy to see a couple of photos posted of Bob to have a face to his voice. I will miss working with Bob and offer my deepest condolences to his family and friends.*

*Rick Ayres
Spirit Lake, IA*

Rick Ayres - October 16, 2023 at 10:07 AM

RL

“ Just learned of Bob's passing yesterday - a chance encounter with a Bellanca Triple Tail owner visiting West Virginia. I was admiring her aircraft and mentioned I flew a Citabria and was a member of the Bellanca-Champion Club, and Lucy informed me of Bob's passing. What are the odds we would be at the same airport at the same time and choose to walk out to our airplanes at just the same moment? I think Bob brought us together for the exchange of information. I was very saddened. I met Bob at Oshkosh when he first took over the Citabria Owners Group and transformed it into the Bellanca-Champion Club. His energy and passion seemed to be endless. I contributed articles for him, and we got to know each other at OSH and over the phone. Through Bob's efforts all of us who fly particular airplanes are connected. Our community mourns his loss. As I flew home in my open cockpit biplane, with an unobstructed view of the sky, I looked up and said of prayer of thanks for Bob Szego. I am certain he heard it. My condolences to Dvora and Bob's family. I will miss him greatly.

Rob Lynn

Rob Lynn - October 01, 2023 at 07:47 PM

TD

“ Just learned of Bob's passing today. Quite a shock. My sincerest condolences to Dvora and his family and friends. He was a wonderful caring, loving man with a sense of “silliness/seriousness,(his words not mine) and certainly a man of principles. He was one in a million. I'll continue to treasure our memories and adventures and will continue to look skyward when I hear a plane. Terry

TerryAnn Durant - September 25, 2023 at 01:48 PM

TF

“ Our deepest sympathies to Bob's family. He will always be missed on Haas Hill.

The Delp Family - September 13, 2023 at 11:40 AM

TF

The Delp Family

The Delp Family - September 13, 2023 at 11:41 AM

RI

“ My deepest sympathy to Dvora, Anne, Andy, and the thousand of Bellanca Champion Club members for their loss. Robert embraced the support for a generation of aircraft that would have fallen by the wayside if not for his vision and determination to continue the work of predecessors who supported Bellanca, Champion, and Aeronca aircraft.

If takes individuals with a special DNA to step in and pick up the reigns to build something bigger and better that should continue to provide the information and knowledge that becomes so scarce with the passage of time.

Hi was all it took to engage Robert in conversation that would last for hours if it involved aviation. An hour spent with Robert reflecting on what could be was priceless and a memory I shall cherish.

Richard - September 11, 2023 at 11:44 PM

LD

“ It is with great regret I learned of Robert Szego’s passing a week ago. Always known as Bob by me he was extraordinary and exemplary in how he took the reins of the Bellanca Champion Club in 1997 and turned it into a lasting and consistent organization to serve more than 800 aircraft owners for 26 years. Within a few years the Club had expanded to provide helpful support and options that burnished its reputation. And he brought many aircraft owners together at a number of gatherings across America every year. Also, among Bob’s extraordinary feats, was his effort in helping secure the artifacts of the original Bellanca Company for the Smithsonian’s Air and Space Museum. Across the U.S. and on to foreign countries, the owners of these long loved airplanes will feel a personal loss too because Bob’s wonderfully engaging personal style was another of his substantial gifts. His family can take some solace from the legacy he has left as a part of aviation history. He will no doubt be greatly missed by many hundreds of the members of the Bellanca Champion Club, and I will always be grateful for his friendship and devoted leadership.

Lawrence Dattilio - September 08, 2023 at 04:47 PM



“ I am sorry to hear about the passing of Bob. His support and friendship was much appreciated. My condolences to his family.

Janet Atkins - September 07, 2023 at 10:48 AM

PK

“ Sorry to hear about the passing of our friend Bob. After we moved to Florida, we were happy to have him spend a night with us after he flew in from New York. Mike and Peggy Kern

peggy kern - September 06, 2023 at 02:22 PM

JC

“ Our Heart Land family is saddened by the passing of Bob. He would stop by once a week to chat with us and share all that he accomplished throughout his life. Rest Easy Bob .

JoAnne Adamo Conway - September 06, 2023 at 01:38 PM

JW

“ I am sorry to hear about Robert's passing. He was a friend and a mentor to my son Max during his teenage years and was kind enough to invite Max to fly with him one year to the Oshkosh air show in Wisconsin . Max spent many Saturday's helping Robert clean and care for his Citabria and just talk about airplanes for a few hours. I'm sure Max will miss him and I am thankful their paths crossed. God bless

Jackie Wojtusik - September 05, 2023 at 02:53 PM

NF

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Norm Freed - September 05, 2023 at 01:14 PM

NO

Bob in his favorite place - the Pilot seat!

Norm - September 05, 2023 at 04:50 PM

NF

Most may not know... Bob created a "vanity" tail number for his plane...It was a 1973 Tail Dragger - N73TD.

Norm Freed - November 16, 2023 at 01:03 AM

NF

“ Bob and I met 50 years ago when starting my career. He was my mentor and advisor, my best friend and fellow pilot. He will always have that special place in my heart. My condolences to his family and friends.

Norm Freed - September 05, 2023 at 12:45 PM

KB

“ Condolences to Bob's family and the aviation community. Bob was a staunch supporter of our EAA Chapter 146. He will be missed.
Kate Barnhart, Chapter Secretary

Kate Barnhart - September 05, 2023 at 12:22 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Richards Funeral Home of the Mid Hudson Valley Inc. - September 05, 2023 at 10:18 AM



“ So sorry to lose my good friend, Robert Szego. Deepest condolences to the family. *James Spee, Redlands, California.*

Jim Spee - September 04, 2023 at 01:22 AM

RS

“ *Richards Funeral Home Staff lit a candle in memory of Mr Robert Szego*



Richards Funeral Home Staff - September 01, 2023 at 02:57 PM