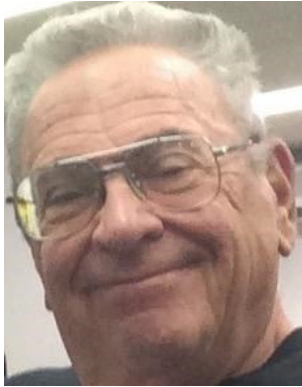


ROBERT LOUIS BENDER

(April 30, 1939 – April 21, 2019)



Bob Bender was born in Philadelphia, PA, to Ray and Sylvia Berlin Bender, older brother of Annette Bender of Mass. He attended Philadelphia public schools, graduating from the magnet Central High School and received his bachelor's in economics from Temple University in 1960. After basic training from his enlistment in the Army reserves, Bob went to Washington DC to work for Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), then moved to Newark, New Jersey to become state ADA director. In Newark, he joined the Congress of Racial Equality and met Patty Ganley. They were married in 1963, after what Bob describes as "a picket line romance" complete with organizing buses to the March on Washington. In 1964, the couple moved to Plainfield while both were in graduate school at Rutgers and Patty directed the Greater Plainfield Senior Citizens Center. Bob completed his coursework in the graduate program, but left school to focus on anti-war and civil rights activism. Bob enjoyed singing. He was a founder member of the Solidarity Singers of the Industrial Union Council, providing "street heat" for labor and social justice pickets and rallies. He was a member of the Clearwater Walkabout Chorus, focused on environmentalism, with Pete Seeger. In the living room with friends and family, he tinkered on the piano. In 1972 Bob and Patty helped found a progressive, community school-Children of the Rainbow-where they would send their children for several years. Professionally, Bob worked in anti-poverty non-profit community organizations including the New Jersey Puerto Rican Congress, the Spanish Community Organization of Plainfield and Model Cities. His last 14 years of work were as Executive Director of Accountants for the Public Interest New Jersey, providing non-profit accounting services to non-profit organizations and needy individuals. He had been an active member of many New Jersey groups including New Jersey Peace Action, the Ethical Culture Society of Maplewood, and the New Democrats of Plainfield. He served as the Democratic Third Ward leader in Plainfield. After moving to Florida in 2005, Bob organized the labor outreach committee of Occupy Fort Lauderdale, then became active with the Broward Black Lives Matter Alliance, most recently working to repeal Florida's racist stand your ground legislation. He participated in the Unitarian Universalists Congregation of Fort Lauderdale and sang in the choir. Bob started an email list serve for years with events for progressives in South Florida, before being blacklisted from gmail for repeated violations of the spam policy. Google was not the only entity that found fault with Bob's activities. The feds were also involved. He was arrested in Los Alamos, New Mexico protesting against nuclear weapons (with Patty and actor Martin Sheen) in the 1990s and in Georgia (again with troublemaker Patty and comrade Ed Lewinson) calling for closure of the Fort Benning "school of assassins." Bob enjoyed swimming and water aerobics at Century Village. He and Patty traveled to Cuba and Nicaragua, China, London and Alaska. They visited with Patty's relatives in Canada. For the past several decades, Bob and Patty spent time during the summer at World Fellowship in New Hampshire. He is survived by his wife Patty Ganley Bender, sister Annette Bender, sons Nat and Daniel, daughter-in-law Gita DasBender, grandsons Deven and Reyen, nephew Matthew Schrot, niece Rebecca Schrot and grandnephew Ryan.