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*The Symphony
Ball*

Trapp &
Company 40th
Anniversary



Alaskan's 83rd
Anniversary Sale

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On The Cover

Alaskan's 83rd Anniversary Sale

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Photo:
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The Flower Man

Everyone in Russell, Kansas, knew that the skinny Trapp boy dreamed about life outside of a small Kansas town: even as a teenager, he subscribed to *Gourmet* magazine. At age 11, the only son of an oil driller and his doting wife stepped into the Russell Flower Shop and asked for a job. In fact, he asked for a job without pay. "I knew if I asked for money," **Bob Trapp** laughs today, "they wouldn't hire me." Bob got the job and started sweeping the floor and cleaning the flower cans. He watched what the other employees did with flowers and began to create his own small arrangements from flowers that were going to be thrown away. Someone noticed that young Bob had a gift, because one day, when everyone in the shop began working furiously on arrangements for a major funeral in Russell, even teenager Bob was put in charge of putting flowers together. His future career effectively started at that point.

"What I thought I was going to be," Bob said, "was an opera singer. That's what I studied in college." Bob - who celebrated the 40th anniversary of Trapp & Company on September 29th - did eventually go into the entertainment business,



Bob Trapp

but not as a singer. Bob had such an extraordinary eye and distinctive personal style, he would create spectacular special events, including parties for former U.S. Ambassador Charles Price and his wife Carol at London's Court of St. James. One of those special nights included Princess Diana and Prince Charles honored guests. Bob will never forget the lovely young royal, Diana, stopping to look at his shoes, raising her gaze up his profile until she looked intently into his eyes: "Mr. Trapp," she said with a smile, "I've heard so much about you. I'm told you're the Flower Man."

For many people in Our Town, Bob - though famous for his sense of interior style, the successful namesake candle company he created and later sold, and his memorable special events - will always be The Flower Man. Bob loves beautiful flowers and loves to tell the story of creating a backdrop of fragrant sweet peas for the London wedding of one of the Price daughters. Standing at the back of the church and looking up, past the flowers to the choir loft, he saw one of the invited guests, movie star Roger Moore, loudly singing a hymn. "Not bad," Bob told himself, "for a kid from Russell, Kansas."

The legendary Senator Robert Dole isn't the only famous native of Russell. Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter was born in Russell, as was Bob's childhood friend Wendell Anschutz, longtime KCTV-TV news anchor. "Wendell was our high school class president," Bob says proudly.

As a young floral designer in Kansas City, Bob made important friends early: he'll never forget the afternoon he saw a powder blue Lincoln Continental pull up in front of the store where he was working, and a tiny woman in a matching powder blue dress and hat stepped out of the car. "It was Muriel Kauffman, and I was dazzled," Bob said. "She was my first celebrity client." There were many others, including the Deramus family. After Bob created the *décor* for the debutante party of the twin daughters of the late William Deramus, he helped arrange the financing for Bob's first shop in Westport.

"I'll never forget that first day," Bob recalls. "There was, for some reason, a hippie parade on Westport Road, and an old lady was giving away soup right in front of my shop! I thought, 'What have I gotten into?' But it was a wonderful location."

Trapp & Company moved into its current location on Main Street two decades ago, and five members of his loyal staff - **Ken Sherman, Steve Chester, Todd Chester, Daniel Houk, and Kevin Kirby** - have worked with Bob for a combined 112 years! (But they all look many decades younger!)

Bob and his employees will greet friends and patrons during the shop's annual holiday open house, October 29th, 30th and 31st. Be sure to tell him that he's come a long way from Russell, Kansas!

KANSASCITYTRANSPORTATIONGROUP

KC Gangster Tour

Take a 90 minute interactive
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Our Gangster Tour features an interactive look at the Pendergast era from 1920 to 1945. The tour highlights infamous crimes like the Union Station Massacre, shows the locations of speakeasies and gambling halls and explains how liquor flowed freely during prohibition. The homes and workplaces of crime bosses and the sites of major turf wars are also featured on the tour. Sounds like an "offer you can't refuse." The excitement begins every Saturday at 2pm from Union Station. Call today to make your reservation.

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