Bobby L. Crisman passed away February 15, 2019 at his home. He was born on October 30, 1934 at Baird, Texas, near Abilene, Texas. Bob grew up in Abilene and graduated from Abilene High School in May 1953. He attended Abilene Christian College (now Abilene Christian University) from 1953 to 1957. While attending school, Bob worked as a part time church janitor and also worked for West Texas Utilities Company. In addition, he served in the Texas National Guard, 36th Infantry Division.

During the 1950s, Bob and his older brother, Bart explored numerous caves in Texas and were part of the original exploration team in the Caverns of Sonora, pioneering the way for its development and being opened to the public.

In 1957, Bob moved to Carlsbad, NM, joining the National Park Service in what would turn out to be a 39-year career with agency. He also joined the New Mexico National Guard’s 200th Artillery Unit.

On September 7, 1959 Bob married Pauline Howell, a marriage that lasted 58 years, until Pauline’s death in March 2018. Following a promotion to Tour Leader Supervisor in 1959, Bob and Pauline moved to Montezuma Castle National Monument near Camp Verde, AZ in 1960. In 1961, Bob was sent to a new “Ranger School” training program at Yosemite National Park in CA. This program later became the Horace Albright Training Center and was relocated to Grand Canyon National Park.

Bob and Pauline had one daughter, Cathy, who was born in Cottonwood, AZ. Cathy died in Duncansville, PA in September 1990 at age 28.

In March 1965, Bob, Pauline and Cathy moved to Fort Davis National Historic Site in west Texas. For a time, they lived in one of Fort’s stone officer’s quarters built in the 1880s and later relocated to one of the new park employees residences built in 1966.

In October 1970, Bob and Pauline transferred back to Carlsbad Caverns National Park where Bob became Park Naturalist. Through a series of promotions, Bob served as staff interpretive specialist and as management assistant for both Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Park when both parks were administered jointly. He was involved in much of the planning for the development and opening of Guadalupe Mountains National Park. In 1980s and 1990s, he served four long term periods, totaling 18 months as Acting Superintendent between appointments of permanent superintendents. Bob served under 7 different superintendents and was principal assistant to 5 before
Bobby Crisman, 2004, by Dale Pate.