

Through death he helps the living

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Adoption wasn't really necessary because our feelings were the same. "I guess we both needed each other," he added.

His family has since grown. He married nine years ago and the Rocks now have two daughters. He molded his childhood problems into an asset. "It has added a lot of strength to our marriage," he said. The 1971 Farmington High School graduate is "quite content" with a family life he terms "quite rewarding."

IN RECENT years, he initiated ties with his natural mother, who has recovered from her drinking disease and is enjoying her grandchildren and is once again involved in her son's life.

Rock attended Wayne State Uni-

'It's not a job, it's a life you accept.'

— Bob Rock

versity's School of Mortuary Science for five years, working full-time at the funeral home until the Thayers offered him a full partnership to the family business in May of 1976. He also attended the former Alameda Elementary and Farmington Junior High.

Working through family troubles in his early years has brought Rock a sensitivity to his profession — which involves mostly working with families.

"Being needed is important to everybody," he said. "That expertise of

knowing what to do — to ease the burden.

"Each family is different and their needs are different. Knowing when to be there and when not to — that's the hardest part."

ROCK ENCOURAGES families to bring their children to funerals, but only if they're prepared. He took his 6-year-old daughter, Melanie, to Howard Thayer's funeral when she was 2. He explained the death of her adopted grandfather to her as best he could, using a special child's book that the funeral home now offers to its clients.

"There are times when people come into this office when they've never been to a funeral," he added.

His profession drew him into community activities as well, including

many active years with the Jaycees when the local chapter was known for its many earned awards.

He currently serves on boards for the Farmington Area YMCA and the Huron River Hunter and Fishing Club. He is on the maintenance com-

mittee of the 350-home Independence Commons subdivision association. He is also active in the Michigan Funeral Directors Association.

Woven into Rock's life is a variety of activity that includes travel, walking and biking, winter skiing

and a collection of scrimshaw — the art of etching into whale teeth that he discovered while on a trip to Håwaii.

He enjoys gardening, taking care of the gardens both at home and at work.

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