



Robert Gray Jr

November 11, 2025

Good Evening

Robert (Bob) William Gray, Jr. (83) of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, passed away on November 11th after a long-term illness. He was born in 1942 to Robert W. and Ruth M. Gray in Newark, Ohio.

After graduating from Newark High School he attended Ohio University and then graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1969. He volunteered for the United States Army while pursuing his undergraduate degree. During this time, he served two tours in Vietnam, one in 1966 and a second tour in 1969. As a result of his distinguished service as a member of the 101st Airborne Infantry and 82nd Airborne Division, Lieutenant Colonel Gray was awarded over 25 medals, several for valor.

Lt. Colonel Bob Gray was awarded the Bronze Star for heroism in ground combat, another Bronze Star for meritorious service, the Army Commendation Medal for heroism in Vietnam, and the Purple Heart for wounds received in action. He proudly served as the Alabama State Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart for several years, naming several of our highways Purple Heart Highways.

After serving his two combat tours Bob Gray earned a Master's degree from the University of Alabama while teaching Army

ROTC. Later, he graduated from the Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, AL. During this time, he continued to serve in the National Guard as a reservist for more than two decades, until he retired as a Lt. Colonel from the U.S. Army.

After finishing law school, Mr. Gray worked as a Labor Law Negotiator for several grocery store companies, owned 19 Piggly Wiggly grocery stores in Central Texas, and owned many small businesses in Jacksonville, Florida. Each of his children worked in the family businesses and benefited from his example of work ethic, professionalism, and integrity.

After stepping away from entrepreneurship Bob lead HR teams at multiple manufacturers corporations finally retiring after serving as the VP Human Resources of Hunt Refining in Tuscaloosa, AL.

To say that Bob was a force of nature would be an underestimation, as he made many friends around the world. He was the most dedicated husband, to his wife and father, friend, and advisor to his four children and eleven grandchildren. He always prioritized his family in his decisions and career opportunities.

Most summers, he loved nothing more than to be fishing at Birch Lake in Ontario, Canada. His grandparents introduced him to his happy place many years ago, when he was growing up in Ohio. His children and grandchildren have continued this summer tradition for over 50 years. He was also an avid Alabama fan and a collector of stamps and coins.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Robert W. and Ruth Gray. He leaves behind his wife, Margaret (Maggie), and the love of his life, with whom he has shared almost 60 years of marriage. As a retired teacher, she also volunteered as a Lay Minister at Holy Spirit Catholic Church for many years.

They have four children: Bob (Heather), Julie, Alan (Susan), and Michael (Beatriz). Bob took great pride in his 11 grandchildren, including Robert (Kimberly), Byron (Veronica), Aaron, Lydia, Sophia, Luke, Melina, Olivia, Leonardo, Tripp, and Raphael Gray. He enjoyed every minute that he spent with each of them.

The Gray family requests that, in lieu of flowers, those who are comfortable doing so donate to Holy Spirit Catholic Church to continue providing pastoral care to the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital in Tuscaloosa.

A memorial Mass will be held at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, on December 6, 2025. There will be a visitation at 10:00 a.m. and Mass at 11:00 a.m. Bob will be laid to rest in the columbarium niche at the church after the Mass. Hospitality will be provided after Mass in the parish hall.

Tribute Wall



“ *Heavenly Grace Spray was purchased for the family of Robert Gray Jr.*



November 23, 2025 at 08:28 AM



“ *Tom and Karen Ellin purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Robert Gray Jr.*



Tom and Karen Ellin - November 21, 2025 at 02:56 PM



“ *Tom and Karen Ellin planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Gray Jr.*

Tom and Karen Ellin - November 21, 2025 at 02:56 PM