



Francis J. Gray

February 6, 1932 - August 25, 2021

COLUMBIA – Francis J. Gray, 89, of Columbia, passed away on Wednesday, Aug. 25, 2021, at the Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital after a brief illness.

He was born in Columbia on Feb. 6, 1932, a son to the late Everett M. and Mary Ellen (Daley) Gray.

Francis was the kindest of men with always an encouraging word for anyone who needed it. He lived well and laughed often in his life. As a profession, he was an English Teacher and Guidance Counselor at the Dover Middle School in southern NH. He spent the school year in Farmington N.H. and his summers next to an old, covered bridge at the family home in Columbia N.H. In his heart, he was a farmer, and his garden was the proof. It was while teaching that he met a librarian who would become his lifelong partner and wife, Olive (Lawrence) Gray. He believed that a successful marriage was one where you give more of yourself than you take, and this was a recipe for their success. He and Olive both lived this message together and shared their love abundantly. Their home was a haven for many, and all were welcome along their travels. His kitchen and its rocking chairs were worn out from great use; no one spent more time visiting that kitchen than who he considered his best friend, Joe Daley. His home provided comfort to many, and his spectacular garden kept them well fed, too. If you were lucky enough to visit on a day when he had made his donuts, you were in for a treat. His mother assigned

him as the caretaker of this family home with rights given to his siblings to share it. He took on this responsibility with great care and lived it well as they all came home again and again. He cherished Olive's family and loved telling their stories of joy, success and beauty in their lives. He loved to travel when he could (especially to Costco in Canada), he loved ice cream, he loved good music, he loved his community and his cousins. He loved his parents, his brothers and sister fiercely, and held their families in his care when they could no longer be here. His niece Maureen Fusco was vigilant in her care for him over the last decade. Without her careful oversight he may have left us much sooner. Francis Gray and the love he spread freely will be irreplaceable.

Francis will be missed dearly by his surviving brother Gerald Gray; his nieces, Eileen, Carol, Michelle, BenjiMarie, Maureen, Sharon, and Mary; and his nephews James, Kevin, and Joseph; along with multiple generations of great nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Olive (Lawrence) Gray in 2011; his sister, (Leora) Jane (Gray) Durocher; and his two brothers, Brandon and Austin Gray.

Memorial calling hours will be at the Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home in Colebrook on Thursday, Sept. 2, from 6 to 8 p.m. A memorial Mass will be held the next morning, Friday, Sept. 3, at 11 a.m. at St. Brendan's Catholic Church, with interment to immediately follow at St. Brendan's Cemetery.

Expressions of sympathy in memory of Mr. Gray may be made to the Great North Woods Center for the Arts, P.O. Box 302, Colebrook, NH 03576; or to an orphanage in Guatemala that was important to him, Guatemalan Brillo de Sol, 6605 Walnutwood Circle, Baltimore, MD 21212.

Condolences may be offered on-line by going to www.jenkinsnewman.com.

Arrangements are entrusted to the care of Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home,
Colebrook, NH.

Cemetery Details

St. Brendan's Catholic Cemetery

South Main Street
Colebrook, NH

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 2. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home
103 Main Street
Colebrook, NH 03576
(603) 237-4311
info@jenkinsnewman.com

Tribute Wall



“ Frank was my guidance counselor in 7th grade at Dover Jr high. When I left in 1991 he gave me his info so I could keep in contact with him. I made the journey out to see him in 2020 at his residence and we laughed and talked about the times he helped me through. He was a very caring man and loved everyone that he was able to talk to. It saddens me to just now hear of his passing as I called his phone and there was no answer. Thank you Frank for all you helped me with when I was young and it was nice catching up when we did. R.I.P. Mr. Gray.....THANK YOU

Charles Dye Jr - February 20, 2023 at 06:24 PM

JS

“ Francis sponsored children with learning disabilities a Brillo de Sol in Guatemala. For the past 5 years he sponsored Jonathan Daniel. Here is a photo recently received from his sponsored student:

WORDS TO YOU FROM DANIEL

Dear Francis: I send you a cordial greeting, thanking you for the support you have given me during this school year. May God bless you and your family for that from all my heart. Yours sincerely, Jonathan Daniel Guch Hernández.



Joseph Phebus - Brillo de Sol - December 11, 2021 at 02:11 PM

JT

“ I was in Frank's 1st year of teaching at Horne Street in Dover. Wonderful, inspiring educator, who taught me the discipline of structuring a sentence and so much more. These skills carried me into the 8th grade, where his wife of many years, Olive Lawrence, picked up the torch and taught me how to express my thoughts in a well-written paper. These two beloved people probably added more to my education and later success in life than almost anyone else. I hold both Frank and Olive in a special place in my heart.

jon toof - September 18, 2021 at 01:55 PM

KM

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Keely McCarthy - September 11, 2021 at 09:07 PM

KM

Coffee and donuts with old classmates, Neil & George, June 2021

Keely McCarthy - September 11, 2021 at 09:12 PM

DH

“ Not only did Francis provide emotional support for the students of Dover Junior High, but he supported me during a difficult time as well. He was a caring and compassionate man.

Debra Hackett - September 02, 2021 at 03:19 PM

DR

So sorry for the loss of Francis! I made trips to they're house to care for Olives sister while working for UCV home health. Both Francis and Olive made my job enjoyable, while telling stories and watching Francis in his garden. It was such a pleasure to know both of them. Rest In Peace Francis and now you are with your beloved ❤️

Debrah Ricciardi - September 07, 2021 at 10:40 AM

JN

“ My condolences to the family of Francis, a compassionate, kind man and friend for many decades. Even though I've been gone for 30 years we always managed to get together to reminisce whenever I vacationed back to the area. It was his friendship and famous donuts. Francis will be missed, May he rest in peace.

Jim Noyes

Jim Noyes - September 01, 2021 at 06:50 PM

GH

“ Gail Gregory & Harmon Hudson purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Francis J. Gray.



Gail Gregory & Harmon Hudson - September 01, 2021 at 10:05 AM

RR

“ *What a remarkable man he was! I was so honored to be his great niece. He had a remarkable way of listening with his whole mind and heart. I’m grateful for his warmth, wisdom and generosity, his hospitality and donuts. I’ll never forget how he drove all the way from Colebrook to the Boston area just for lunch and a chat in the porch, and insisting on driving all the way back! (And more than once!) Rest In Peace with Aunt Olive.*

Rachel Rockenmacher - August 31, 2021 at 09:13 PM

HU

“ *Mr. Gray was my 7th grade teacher.at horne Street school..he would get a little wild at times..his favorite expression was 'ill clobber you"..I never saw or heard of him acting it out..I also remember him ice skating at willand pond in dover with some of the kids..he enjoyed that..
I had been out of school many years and I saw him at dover push cart..I said hello Mr. Gray...he remembered me & said you can call me francis..he will always be mr.gray to me..great guy!!*

Hugh - August 31, 2021 at 08:53 PM

DM

“ *Mr. Gray was my guidance counselor in middle school. Really great guy!! Sorry for your loss!!*

Darcy Moulton - August 31, 2021 at 05:41 PM

BC

“ *My sincere condolences to the family of Francis, such a great guy,I’m sure he will be missed by many.I will miss his wonderful donuts and fellowship.*



Bill Cummings - August 31, 2021 at 11:18 AM

DA

“ *He Helped me so much at Dover Middle school. Such a great Man.
Sorry for you loss.*

Dale - August 31, 2021 at 06:56 AM

SA

Thanks for sharing, his students meant so much to him.

Sharon Alleman - August 31, 2021 at 08:28 AM

SC

“ *Sorry for the loss,
Never would be who I am now Mr.Gray was my guidance counselor
at woodman park school in the middle 80s..great man*

Shawn Cromeenes - August 31, 2021 at 04:50 AM

SA

Thanks for sharing, his students were so important to him.

Sharon Alleman - August 31, 2021 at 08:28 AM

TG

“ *The Goodwin Girls purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Francis J. Gray.*



The Goodwin Girls - August 30, 2021 at 04:05 PM

OC

“ *Francis was the personification of a true gentleman. Always kind,
polite and happy. He will be missed.*
Odette Crawford

Odette Crawford - August 30, 2021 at 02:28 PM

AL

“ I will always have vivid memories of Francis, from the Sing a Longs at Reggie's camp where his beautiful voice always stood out, to the hospitality of his home, sharing his thoughts, his garden, and especially his home made donuts. He had a lot of compassion for others, no matter what the circumstances, and gave generously of himself. He deserves to rest in peace. Alice and family.

Alice - August 30, 2021 at 02:03 PM

FF

“ from Carole L. Day's family & friends purchased the Love's Tapestry for the family of Francis J. Gray.



from Carole L. Day's family & friends - August 30, 2021 at 08:26 AM

TF

“ the Rockenmacher-Medeiros family purchased the A Full Life for the family of Francis J. Gray.



the Rockenmacher-Medeiros family - August 29, 2021 at 09:40 PM

CB

“ So sorry for the familys loss, Francis was a wonderful person thru and thru. Loved all the visits we would have when Olive was in the hospital at Dartmouth. And occasionally when we were up north and would see him working outside. He is a wonderful angel!

Robert and Cindy Bissonnette

cindy bissonnette - August 29, 2021 at 01:04 PM



DL

“ I am so happy to have shared one more visit with you recently. As always it was lighthearted & cheerful. We will miss your beautiful musical voice. Sing away in heaven. RIP, Francis.
Alan & Diane Little

Diane Little - August 28, 2021 at 06:35 PM

DC

“ Francis was a wonderful man and he will be missed by many. RIP Francis

Dencie Cunningham - August 28, 2021 at 06:33 PM



AU

“ Audie lit a candle in memory of Francis J. Gray

Audie - August 28, 2021 at 04:44 PM



FA

“ *A kinder, more gentle soul, I have never met. Francis was a cousin of my mom. I enjoyed his stories of our family in their younger days.*

Faith and Wally Adair - August 28, 2021 at 04:19 PM

SA

“ *Wishing we could spend many more Thanksgivings with you! Our hearts are breaking yet we still bask in your love. We were so blessed to call you Uncle and will always hold you dear.*



Sharon L Alleman - August 28, 2021 at 10:15 AM

LP

“ *I will miss you, my good man... always remember what you told me...take it easy...one day at a time... My deepest condolences to all of his family and friends..*



Linda Powell - August 27, 2021 at 09:47 PM

LP

“ *I miss seeing you and having that wonderful talk... good man will be miss..*



Linda Powell - August 27, 2021 at 09:44 PM

JB

“ *Jim And Janet Bennett lit a candle in memory of Francis J. Gray*



Jim and Janet Bennett - August 27, 2021 at 07:09 PM

JB

So sorry to hear of Francis passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with his brother Gerald Gray and family...and the extended family.... He was always so friendly and cheerful to be around. So glad he recently got to come to Groveton with Gerald and Myra and have lunch with us and friend Jane Cunningham..May he RIP

Jim and Janet Bennett - August 27, 2021 at 07:13 PM

JP

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Joe Phebus - August 27, 2021 at 06:01 PM

JP

“ I first met Francis and his wife, Olive, through his brother Brandon many years ago. After Brandon moved to Colebrook, and Francis and Olive cared for him, I frequently visited and got to spend time with him. After Brandon passed away, I remained close to Francis. He has been a mentor, generous supporter of my work with children with disabilities at the school in Guatemala, and most importantly a dear friend who was never without a quick smile, a wonderful wit, and an inspiration in how to live life joyfully, and with gratitude, one day at a time.

Although I no longer live in New England, we stayed in frequent contact by telephone. I'll miss you my dear friend. Today I am sad and missing you, but thankful for all the years of memories and that when we spoke a couple weeks ago, we laughed together and I had a chance to tell you that I love you.

Rest in peace, my friend. I know you are in a beautiful place with Olive and Brandon, and you will always be with us in heart and mind.

Joe Phebus - August 27, 2021 at 03:02 PM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Francis J. Gray.



August 27, 2021 at 02:45 PM

TE

“ *Tricia E. Ellingwood lit a candle in memory of Francis J. Gray*



Tricia E. Ellingwood - August 26, 2021 at 04:33 PM

RM

“ *Francis was a classmate at Plymouth, as well as a treasured friend throughout our lives. In recent years we went to Tanglewood several times together, sharing a fabulous experience and enjoying the music. He will remain in our hearts with wonderful memories of friendship and love.*

Robert and Elinor Mawson

Bath, NH

Robert and Elinor Mawson - August 26, 2021 at 01:18 PM