



Richard Harrison Gross

November 23, 1941 - February 5, 2024

It is with love, grief, and honor that we announce the death of Richard Harrison Gross, age 82, in Tullahoma, after a very recent diagnosis of advanced pancreatic cancer. Richard touched

countless lives through his relentless generosity and expertise. May we honor him through selfless service to others.

Richard was born on November 23, 1941 in the Bronx, NYC, NY. He graduated from Lake Worth High School in 1959, Palm Beach Junior College in 1961, and the University of Florida in 1962. He earned his master's degree in Botany from the University of Florida in 1963.

Richard's greatest loves in life were his dearest wife of 60 years, Susan, his beloved dogs,

collecting and sharing geodes, and "Dad jokes"; but perhaps his greatest talents were as a

teacher and photographer. Richard taught college for 38 years, including 25 years at Motlow

State Community College. He taught Biology, Microbiology (for the nursing program),

Environmental Science, Geology, and developed and taught the for-credit

photography courses.

at Motlow during his tenure. His excellence in teaching was recognized by countless students

and a string of awards and recognition including the Outstanding Conservation Educator Award,

the Motlow Teaching Excellence award, and a national teaching award. He served as chairman

of the Tennessee Board of Regents Faculty Sub-Council and as President of the State

Conference of the American Association of University Professors. He was a champion for

students and faculty throughout his career.

He was active in many professional societies, and co-founded the Tropical Orchid Society in

West Palm Beach, FL in 1967. He bred and named several orchid varieties in the early 1970s.

He was a professional-level amateur photographer, learning basics from a portrait photographer

in his early 20s, and then self-learning and teaching all the way through the Photoshop era. His

photographs have been published in many college textbooks and several national magazines,

including Rock and Gem.

Besides being a devoted husband, father, and college professor, he spent much time working

with elementary students. He was a "Visiting Wizard" with the Tullahoma Hands on Science

Center and served on its Board of Directors, as well as exhibiting photographs and geologic

specimens at the Center. He taught children's enrichment classes at Motlow in geology, biology,

and model rocketry. He had a great love of and respect for the natural world and science and

took every opportunity to share this with others.

As an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Tullahoma, he helped in leadership and

teaching roles. One of his greatest sources of joy was cooking special meals for the clients of

The Skills Development Program of Tullahoma.

He is survived by his wife, Susan, his daughters Julie and Paula, his grandchildren, Sonny and

Harrison, and great-granddaughter Tzipporah. He was preceded in death by his mother, Phyllis

Romano Hatcher, his sister, Lois Hatcher Cheek, and his father, Joseph Harrison Gross.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in his honor to Trinity Lutheran Church of Tullahoma.

Online condolences may be made at www.davesculbertsonfuneralhome.com.

Daves-Culbertson Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Previous Events

Celebration Of Life

FEB **24.** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Trinity Lutheran Church
705 Wilson Ave
Tullahoma, TN 37388
(931) 455-9475

Celebration of Life Service

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Tribute Wall

BM

“ I am saddened by the news of my former colleague Richard (Dick) Gross passing away. I will always fondly remember his generosity, warmth and habit to crack jokes about almost anything. May his soul rest in peace.

Barry Miburo, former Chemistry instructor at Motlow College.

Barry Miburo - July 05, 2024 at 01:08 PM

KL

“ It is very rare that a student has a teacher that is so passionate about inspiring them to learn and actually helps them to become successfully knowledgeable in that subject. Mr. Gross was that teacher. He helped everyone be successful and inspired each student to be their best. Those people are a rare gem. It was a great pleasure to have Mr. Gross as my Biology and Photography teacher at Motlow in the 1990's. And then about a year ago our paths crossed again when he, Mrs. Susan and their cute dog were walking at TFSP. Mr. & Mrs. Gross were so very kind and giving to Tims Ford State Park and Nature Center, donating excellent nature photographs for display and conducting geod and photography programs for me, that resulted in additional revenue for the park. I am very sorry for the loss of my mentor and friend. God be with you, Mrs. Susan and the rest of your loving family. My the love of our Lord Jesus Christ comfort you during this time and until you and Mr. Gross may walk together again. Much love. Kay Luttrell

Kay Luttrell - February 22, 2024 at 11:49 AM

RR

“ Richard is and was one of my past, dearest and respected colleagues during my Motlow years. He was a superb human being all around, daily endeavoring for truth, science based facts in learning and teaching, besides his beautiful spiritual qualities, and was an inspiration as a most excellent and interesting science professor to many of his past students. A superior "rock hound" and I so enjoyed the years of co-sponsoring science based and outdoor extracurricular activities for the students along with Richard. Richard leaves a "niche" which can't be filled. RIP my intelligent friend. My most sincere condolences to all of Richard's wonderful family.

Robert Reeder - February 11, 2024 at 09:35 AM

BW

“ So sorry to hear of Mr Gross's passing. He was my biology teacher at Motlow. He was a wonderful teacher and a friend to all. Prayers for the family. Betty Watkins

Betty Watkins - February 08, 2024 at 10:18 AM

JP

“ I am very sadden to learn of Dr. Gross's passing. I was very fortunate to have been one of his students. His passion for learning and life made a great impression on me. Condolences to his family. June Parker



June Parker - February 07, 2024 at 11:37 AM

CV

“ I did not know Mr. Gross personally, but when I read his life story, I wish I could have been one of his students and now understand better how his daughter, Paula, is one of the best teachers and mentors, I know. Carla Vitez

Carla Vitez - February 06, 2024 at 08:38 PM