



## Basil I. Gray

January 27, 1934 - April 13, 2016

Basil I. Gray, 82, of Traverse City passed away peacefully on Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at Munson Medical Center surrounded by his loving family.

Basil was born on January 27, 1934 at his grandmother's house in Williamsburg, Michigan to James and Izetta (Oliver) Gray. He graduated from Williamsburg High School in 1952. In 1953 he entered the U.S. Air Force and was stationed in French Morocco. After this first assignment he returned and married the love of his life, Marilyn (Groleau) Gray. They moved to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan where Basil was stationed and where their four daughters were born. From there they traveled to France, England, Texas and South Dakota prior to Basil's retirement and move to Traverse City in 1973. Basil took up shop with his brother, Jim Gray at Northwestern Electric and later moved to Alpine Electric doing what he did best, restoring and repairing all that was broken.

A calm and steady man, thoughtful and purposeful, he was a source of unconditional strength and love to all who knew him. And yet, beneath the quiet demeanor was a man whose high school motto was, "Never speak sense when nonsense will answer the purpose as well." With a glint in his eye, teasing and story-telling, he was the life of every party.

A country boy at heart, he embraced the simple life of his childhood roots riding his bike, hopping on a train to Traverse City for a movie, and hunting with his dad. He continued his love for his family and hometown by researching his genealogy and by becoming an enthusiastic member of the Williamsburg Historical Society. He was an avid hunter with both bow and rifle and loved camping and fishing with both his children and grandchildren. Surviving Basil are his daughters Sharon (Steven Kaplan) Gray of Milwaukee, Susan Ritchie of Seattle, Nancy Gray of Traverse City, Carolyn Gray of Seattle; grandchildren, Bethany (John Richards) Stormer, Lauren Kaplan, John Stormer, Benjamin and Lydia Ritchie, Basil E. Gray; great-grandchildren, Isabela Nibur, Franklin Richards, Ruby Richards; his sister Anna Lou Gilmore. He was preceded in death by his wife, Marilyn and his granddaughter Emily Ann Ritchie, his siblings Earl, Dolores, James, Joyce, Nela, Norma. Funeral services will be held at Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home beginning with visitation at 2:00pm, service at 3:00pm on April 23, 2016 and reception following at Sleder's Family Tavern at 4:30pm.

Those planning an expression of sympathy may wish to consider donations to the Father Fred Foundation.

# Events

---

**APR** **Visitation for friends and family** 02:00PM - 03:00PM

**23**

---

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home

305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**APR** **Memorial Service** 03:00PM

**23**

---

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home

305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

# Comments

---



“ What a peaceful loving man. I was better for knowing him as were many.

Warm Regards,

Blake Ringsmuth

**Blake Ringsmuth** - April 25, 2016 at 10:45 AM



“ Thanks so much Blake

**Carolyn** - April 30, 2016 at 04:38 PM

---



“ My heart and prayers are with you and your family at this time. Basil was a wonderful and humble man. Though I only knew him for a short time, I was honored to get to know him.

Marsha

**Marsha Stratton** - April 22, 2016 at 08:40 AM

---



“ Nancy and Carolyn, I didn't know your dad personally, but I knew many stories about him at deer camp, playing cards, golfing and as my father's friend. And I know you two are such fun and smart women, your parents must have been especially great at laughter and wisdom. Wishing your family much comfort in your grief and love and support for each other always.

**Liz Larson-Shidler** - April 18, 2016 at 05:52 PM

---



“ Thoughts and prayers to all the family. Both Marilyn and Basil were always kind to me. They were good people and always seemed to share their smiles. RIP Basil!

**Donna LaBadie** - April 18, 2016 at 12:49 PM

---



“ Our love and prayers to Nancy and son Basil, and to all of Basil's family and friends. He lived a full, good life and was quite the rascal.

Peace Basil,

Susan Odgers and Tom Mair

susan odgers - April 16, 2016 at 01:48 PM



“ Basil was one of the nicest men I had ever met. Both Basil and Marilyn showed me great kindness.

**Daniel Smith** - April 18, 2016 at 10:14 AM



“ He was one of the nicest man I have ever known.  
So sorry for your loss.

Suzy Ringsmuth

**Suzy Ringsmuth** - April 19, 2016 at 09:33 AM

---



“ I was saddened to see Mr. Gray's name in the obituaries today. I worked as an assessment nurse for the Meals On Wheels program for many years, and ALWAYS looked forward to my visits with him every 6 months.

I enjoyed reading the tribute, and it beautifully describes the man I shared many conversations with; he was so easy to talk to, and was a great listener as well. We covered topics like some of the Traverse City history, trips across the country to see kids and grandkids, diet and natural ways of treatment, and always how proud he was of his family. “A calm and steady man, thoughtful and purposeful, he was a source of unconditional strength” is a very accurate picture of the Mr. Gray I met with.

It was obvious he loved his family, because he talked about each one of you every time I met with him. I know you will miss him every day, and my prayers are with you all.

I will be out of town on April 23, so I'm sorry I won't be able to attend the funeral; I wish I could meet the family he was so very proud of!

Anne Smith, RN

**Anne Smith** - April 16, 2016 at 07:04 AM