



Gail Hartfield Gray

July 26, 1950 - January 19, 2024

We lost an incredibly special and much-loved person when Gail Hartfield Gray passed away on January 19, 2024, in Austin, TX after a brief & sudden illness. Gail was born July 26, 1950, the first child of Paul & Ramona (Hirschi) Hartfield in Buffalo, NY, soon followed by sister Cheryl & brother Gary. She graduated from high school in Elma, NY in the spring of 1968 and then moved to Washington, D.C. to study at George Washington University. She graduated from GWU in 1972 with a BA in History and moved to Texas to attend law school at UT Law for a year.

In the following years, Gail moved a few times, living in Dallas & Houston prior to settling in San Antonio in 1979. There she married William Dennis Gray on October 16, 1982 & they had two children, Elizabeth & Scott. She spent her kids' school years highly involved in volunteer activities, particularly the PTA. In the mid-1990s, she was President of NEISD PTA, a large school district in San Antonio, that involved working with a lot of different organizations to help numerous schools & children.

Gail also traveled a lot in her life, beginning as a child with cross-country trips from Buffalo to southern Utah to visit her mother's family in Rockville, UT. Even in her adult years, she made several trips to Utah, including with both of her kids to various reunions. She also loved to take her kids on weekend drives to explore the Hill Country & various locales throughout Texas. One of her favorite places to visit was the beach & she made many summer trips to Port Aransas with her immediate family as well as occasional extended family.

In addition to travel in the US, she visited a lot of locations throughout the Caribbean while scuba diving & taking underwater photos! She also visited Australia & New Zealand a couple of times, along with other areas in the Pacific.

One of Gail's greatest loves was cooking & she spent her life honing her skills and teaching others. Her family lovingly calls her "the Professor." In 1999, she parlayed this love to a job with Central Market Broadway, beginning in the Cooking School, but eventually

leading multiple departments prior to her retirement in 2019. She influenced numerous people and made many friends during her time at Central Market, as well as continuing to nurture her love for all foods & her constant exploration of new dishes.

Her creativity was not limited to food, as she also spent years creating beautiful wood-painted art, homemade stuffed animals, and other crafty sewing creations, always sharing these gifts of love with family & friends over the years.

Perhaps the characteristics that best describe Gail were her quick-wit and intelligence. She never missed an opportunity to crack a funny or dry joke, engage in a debate or share her knowledge with those around her. She even took this to the national stage when she was on Jeopardy in the early 1990s!

Recently, Gail & her son Scott relocated to Austin from San Antonio to be closer to her daughter & other family. While she always described herself as being from upstate NY, she did admit that Texas was her home as well, especially after spending 50 years here.

Gail was loved by so many & will be missed fiercely. She is preceded in death by her parents, Paul & Ramona Hartfield as well as the father of her children, Bill Gray. She is survived by daughter Elizabeth Gray & her wife Teresa Simpson, son Scott Gray, sister Cheryl Hueber & husband Jim, nephews Nick Salai, Cal Hueber & niece Emma Nesladek, brother Gary Hartfield & wife Nan, and nephews Evan & Jarrod Hartfield. She is also survived by numerous cousins and other extended family, primarily in New York & Utah.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Gail's honor to the following organizations as she was an avid supporter of worthy causes and education:

World Central Kitchen

<https://donate.wck.org/give/499865/#!/donation/checkout>

Sustainable Food Center

<https://sustainablefoodcenter.org/support>

National Park Foundation

[https://give.nationalparks.org/site/Donation2?idb=1420318005&DONATION_LEVEL_ID_S ELECTED=1&df_id=6141&mfc_pref=T&6141.donation=form1&idb=\[\[S76:idb\]\]](https://give.nationalparks.org/site/Donation2?idb=1420318005&DONATION_LEVEL_ID_S ELECTED=1&df_id=6141&mfc_pref=T&6141.donation=form1&idb=[[S76:idb]])

A Celebration of Life will be held at 11 a.m. on February 3, 2024, at Chateau Bellevue in Austin, TX.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

FEB 3. 11:00 AM (CT)

Chateau Bellevue
708 San Antonio St
Austin, TX 78701