



George Francis Gruendel

October 30, 1932 - March 28, 2025

George Francis Gruendel, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and friend, passed away peacefully on March 28, 2025, in Columbia, Missouri, at the age of ninety-two years. Born October 30, 1932, in St. Louis, Missouri, to Richard and Catherine Gruendel, George lived a life marked by unwavering dedication to family, community, and service.

He graduated from Christian Brothers College High School in 1951 and subsequently served his country with honor in the United States Marine Corps from January 19, 1955, to August 4, 1957. His commitment to service continued throughout his life.

George furthered his education with Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Quincy University graduating in 1955, Sangamon State University graduating in 1990, and the University of Illinois graduating with his PhD in 1992. While in college he enjoyed playing sports and was recruited for the St. Louis Browns Baseball Team.

It was while attending Sangamon State University, where he met his beloved wife, Elizabeth "Liz" Ann Karriker, whom he married on April 4, 1988, in Springfield, Illinois. George and Liz were blessed to share six children: Karen, Teresa, Michael, Angela, Stephen, and Liesl.

George was a dedicated educator, sharing his knowledge and passion for learning by teaching. He worked as a professor at the University of Illinois. After retirement he relocated to Salem, Missouri, and taught military science classes at Webster University.

A hard worker with a genuine passion for people, he was a mentor to many and a cherished member of both the Rotary Club and the Dent County Prevention Coalition.

George enjoyed the simple pleasures of life. He was an avid outdoorsman and passionate runner who completed the Chicago Marathon. He found great joy in family gatherings and cherished making memories with his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. In later years, he discovered a talent for painting, expressing his creativity. Known for his playful spirit and knack for pranks, he possessed a remarkable ability to bring joy to those around him.

George is survived by his loving wife of thirty-six years: Liz Gruendel of Salem, MO; his children: Karen Enno and husband Joe, Theresa Waters and husband Chris, Angela Hale and husband Jim, Stephen Gruendel and wife Tina, and Liesl Veselenak and husband Jeff. He leaves behind a legacy of love that extends to seven grandchildren; fourteen great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren; extended family and dear friends.

Preceding him in death were his son: Michael Gruendel and parents: Richard and Catherine Gruendel.

George's life was a testament displaying dedication, compassion, and unwavering love. He was a bright light in the community and will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

Funeral Services for George Francis Gruendel were held Tuesday, April 1, 2025, in the Wilson Mortuary Salem Chapel with Pastor Bill Stack and Billy Miller officiating. Song selections played were "I Can Only Imagine" and "Go Rest High On That Mountain". Military Honors was provided by the American Legion Post 99 and United States Marine Corp Honors Team. Burial was in the Cedar Grove Cemetery. Arrangements were under the direction of Wilson Mortuary of Salem, Missouri.

Memorial Contributions may be made in memory of George Gruendel to the Healthy Dent County Prevention Coalition and may be left Wilson Mortuary. Memorial Envelopes will be available.

Online Condolences may be left at www.wilsonmortuary.com

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 1. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Mortuary - Salem
1000 West Scenic Rivers Blvd.
Post Office Box 45
Salem, MO 65560
(573) 729-5555
<https://www.wilsonmortuary.com/>

Funeral Service

APR 1. 1:00 PM (CT)

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1000 West Scenic Rivers Blvd.
Post Office Box 45
Salem, MO 65560
(573) 729-5555
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Tribute Wall

CL

“ I was just thinking about George, who was a mentor of mine at Brewer Science. He was a great guy. I think he may be the person that got me into beekeeping. My sympathies to the family.

Christopher Landorf - November 07, 2025 at 11:51 AM

Jl

“ George was a man who genuinely wanted to make the world around him a better place. He fought uphill battles against drugs in the Dent County community, but above all he cared about those in need. He was personable, kind, and had a genuine interest in every conversation he had. George was a servant of all people and strived to make our world a better place!

Jillian - April 14, 2025 at 12:01 PM

MT

“ I met George and Liz during my studies at Webster University. Both had a positive impact on my life during the tragic loss of my husband with their compassion and caring. Our world lost another great man and my thoughts are with Liz and her family and friends, who will provide her the support to endure life without George.

Mary Travis - April 09, 2025 at 06:41 AM

TF

“ The MO and IL Gruendel families purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of George Francis Gruendel.



The MO and IL Gruendel families - April 04, 2025 at 01:12 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Videos Album*



Wilson Mortuary - April 01, 2025 at 06:07 PM



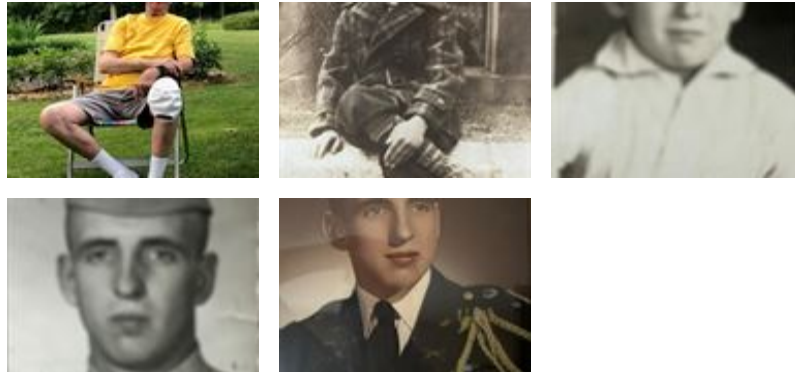
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Wilson Mortuary - April 01, 2025 at 03:34 PM



“ 86 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Wilson Mortuary - March 31, 2025 at 04:54 PM

BB

*Liz, so very sorry to hear about George. Bill and I always looked forward to seeing you both on New Year's Eve and have very nice memories. Love to you and your family.
Bill and Liz Bennett*

Bill and Liz Bennett - April 01, 2025 at 12:00 PM

JB

“ I’m so sorry to see this, and so sorry for your loss, Liz! I always so enjoyed seeing you guys at the Farmers Market. You both were always so upbeat and and spread joy wherever you were! Hugs and prayers.

Jo Ann Blackwell - March 30, 2025 at 08:42 AM

KF

“ Kathie, John, Alan & Barb Tody Family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of George Francis Gruendel.



Kathie, John, Alan & Barb Tody Family - March 29, 2025 at 10:27 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of George Francis Gruendel.

March 29, 2025 at 02:05 PM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of George Francis Gruendel.*



March 29, 2025 at 02:05 PM