

Dr. Gabriel Roy Horst, age 90, passed away peacefully on December 31, 2023 at his home at Holiday Maple Downs Retirement Community in Fayetteville, New York. Roy was married to Ruth S. Horst (Stelter) for over 65 years.

Born in Ephrata, Pennsylvania on July 13, 1933, Roy was the son of Amos Horst and Mary Leisey, who were Mennonite farmers in the greater Lancaster Pennsylvania area. Roy grew up on the farm with his six sisters growing cash crops such as tobacco, and crops and livestock that would also feed their family. The family farm was sold when Roy was a teenager. He did not finish high school but instead worked a variety of jobs during his teens to support his family. Roy's youngest sibling, Galen, was born when he was readying himself to travel to New York to continue his education.

Roy received his GED and attended Wagner college in Staten Island NY, where he met the love of his life, Ruth Stelter. They married in 1958, and moved to Boston Massachusetts where he attended Medical school and she was a full time Registered Nurse. Roy and Ruth then moved to Ithaca, New York where he earned his PHD in Zoology at Cornell University. During his doctorate studies, he was mentored by Dr. William A. Wimsett, where he specialized in the study of kidney function, especially in Vampire Bats. This interest in bats allowed Roy to travel throughout the western United States and Mexico.

Following his doctoral studies, Roy and his family moved to Tucson Arizona, where he was a faculty member in the Department of Anatomy, University of Arizona College of Medicine. While in Tucson, he organized the first "Bat Meeting" and became the program director for the North American Symposium on Bat Research, a position he maintained for the organization's first 25 years. He left the Southwest to take a faculty position at the University of Vermont before he eventually settled in Potsdam, New York where he was Chair of the

Biology Department at the State University of New York (SUNY) Potsdam. Roy's role at SUNY Potsdam would continue to evolve as he did, and he eventually became the head of the grants department at the college. This dual role as an educator and administrator was a lifelong career which allowed him the ability to help his students pursue graduate degree work and further their education and careers. His students were always the most important part of his work.

Roy retired from Potsdam State as an educator of Distinction, having been named Professor of the Year at Potsdam twice during his tenure. His professional career has been highlighted by his study of not only bats but also of mongooses, an animal that he tracked throughout the Virgin Islands, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii. He has won numerous awards throughout his career. He has published in peer reviewed journals and has served as editor of Bat Research News as well.

In addition to his work, Roy loved to spend time travelling the world with Ruth, vacationing and visiting his two sons and their grandchildren, playing with model trains, gardening, and telling stories as a seasoned college professor who can spin a tale with the best of them. Roy will be remembered for his love of nature and all the creatures that he encountered. Like all scientists, his curiosity was genuine and lifelong.

Roy is survived by his wife, Ruth, of 65 years; his sons Gregory (Terry), Jeffrey (Diana), and four grandchildren: Justin and Gretchen (Greg/Terry); and Taylor and Jacob (Jeff/Diana).

Roy will be cremated with his ashes spread in the future. Funeral services will be held in the spring of 2024. Donations in Roy's memory may be made to the North American Society for Bat Research: <https://www.nasbr.org/>