



William P Crain

August 7, 1939 - November 1, 2024

William P. Crain, 85, of Centralia, passed away on Friday, November 1, 2024. He was born on August 7, 1939, the son of Robert and Beata (Sebald) Crain in St. Louis, MO. He married Leila Anne Gross on August 4, 1962 in Port Washington, New York and she survives him in Centralia.

Along with his beloved wife of 62 years, Bill is survived by his daughters, Jennifer (Brian) Martin of Collinsville, Illinois and Allison Austin of Centralia; son, Matthew Crain of Springfield, Illinois; five adored grandchildren, Chris Crain (Carlie Willis), Will Martin, Ellie Martin, Kate Martin and Kalen King; two precious great-grandchildren, Marah Coles and Ivy Crain; sister, Barbara Crain; brother-in-law, Richard Gross; sister-in-law, Sheila Crain; beloved niece and nephew, Joshua and Sarah Crain; other nieces and nephews and many close friends and colleagues.

Bill was preceded in death by his infant son, Jonathan Towart Crain; father and mother, Robert M. and Beata Barbara Crain; parents-in-law, Albert and Alice Gross; brother, John Crain; dear cousin, Pam Meng and daughter-in-law, Danielle LaChance.

Bill was a 1957 graduate of Centralia High School, a multi-sport athlete and Class President. He received First Team All Star Honors on the 1956 Orphan football team and was honored by the Centralia Sports Hall of Fame

individually and as a team member. He was selected as an IHSA all-state center during his senior year of high school, played football at the University of Michigan as a freshman and was a proud 1961 Michigan graduate. He attended the University of Missouri School of Law and joined his father in the practice of law at the Crain and Hall law firm in Centralia in 1964. Bill retired from Crain, Miller and Wernsman in 2014 after practicing law for over 50 years. He was a brilliant lawyer with a practice that focused on non-profit law and established not-for-profit organizations that developed and operated numerous DD facilities throughout the state of Illinois. He was instrumental in developing the State of Illinois Animal Disease Lab, Bell Tower Inn, Doctors Nursing Home in Salem, Marion County Elderly Housing, the Bob White Apartments for low income elders, Marion County Affordable Housing, The Marion County Drug Court, Bryan Manor, Penta Group, Penta Nascent, Community Transportation Development, Southern Illinois Rural Healthcare, Hickory Meadows and Hickory Ridge Apartments and the Tech Center which later became the South Central Transit Technology Center in Downtown Centralia. He obtained the very first license granted to a 15-bed ICFDD facility in Illinois. One of the many honors and recognitions he received was an appointment to the statewide committee to recommend the federal prosecutor for the Southern District of Illinois.

He was a lifelong member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Centralia and served as an elder and church president and Parliamentarian for the LCMS Southern Illinois District Convention. He was actively involved with the local Democratic Party for decades and counted Paul Simon, Dick Durbin, Neil Hartigan, Kurt Granberg and Glenn Poshard among his many good friends. His political fundraisers were the stuff of legend. Bill was an avid private pilot, a member of the Airport Board and represented the local fixed-based operator who founded the flight school at Centralia Airport. He considered his sobriety and active involvement with Alcoholics Anonymous for over 47 years as one of his greatest privileges and blessings. He was a great storyteller and purveyor of

baked goods and , until recent years, a fixture at Greenview Golf Course, providing free (and unsolicited) golf tips to other golfers. He had fond memories of golf trips to Scotland, Ireland and England and vacations in Michigan and Florida with family and friends.

He lived for his family and the time spent with his wife, children and grandchildren was his greatest joy.

The funeral service is scheduled for Saturday, November 9, 2024 at 1:00pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Centralia, with a time of visitation at the church beginning at 11:00am until the time of service. Christian burial will follow at Hillcrest Memorial Park in Centralia. Memorials may be made in Bill's honor to the Centralia Cultural Society or Trinity Lutheran Church in Centralia and will be accepted by the Sutherland-Garnier Funeral Home at 235 North Sycamore Street in Centralia, IL 62801 (618) 532-3523, who is honored to be of service to Bill's Family. Online condolences may be made to the family by visiting www.sutherlandfuneralhome.com or the Funeral Home's Facebook page.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 9. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Trinity Lutheran Church
201 South Pleasant
Centralia, IL 62801
<http://trinitycentralia.org/>

Funeral Service

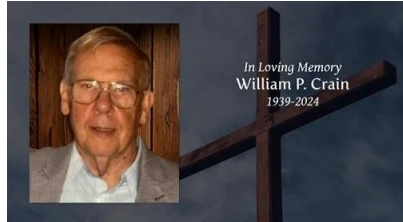
NOV 9. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM.

Trinity Lutheran Church Centralia

Tribute Wall



“ *Sutherland Funeral Homes, Cemetery and Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of William P Crain*



Sutherland Funeral Homes, Cemetery and Cremation Services - November 08, 2024 at 05:08 PM

MM

“ *Prayers & thoughts are with the family at this time... I always enjoyed seeing and hearing Bill share at the Sunday morning meetings at Saint Mary's hospital. As a fellow friend of Bill W that made it even more special. Treasure all the good memories and times... Michael Marcum*

Michael Marcum - November 16, 2024 at 08:47 AM

DS

“ *Oh gosh, Allison. I'm so sorry to hear of your Dad's passing. I know how much you loved him, and how much he loved you. I'm thinking of you, friend. Please let me know if there is anything I can do. Love you very much!*

Dustin Soper - November 08, 2024 at 07:15 PM

TB

“ *Teresa B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William P Crain.*

Teresa B. - November 08, 2024 at 05:20 PM

MR

“ Marc and Stephan Ramirez planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William P Crain.

Marc and Stephan Ramirez - November 07, 2024 at 11:13 PM

MR

“ Marc and Stephan Ramirez purchased the Serenity Wreath for the family of William P Crain.



Marc and Stephan Ramirez - November 07, 2024 at 11:13 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of William P Crain.



November 07, 2024 at 03:30 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of William P Crain.

November 07, 2024 at 03:30 PM

CA

“ Corp. Dev., Env. & Innov Team at Ameren planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William P Crain.

Corp. Dev., Env. & Innov Team at Ameren - November 07, 2024 at 12:52 PM

CA

“ Corp. Dev., Env. & Innov Team at Ameren purchased the *Your Light Shines for the family of William P Crain.*



Corp. Dev., Env. & Innov Team at Ameren - November 07, 2024 at 12:52 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of William P Crain.



November 07, 2024 at 10:59 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of William P Crain.



November 06, 2024 at 06:17 PM

VH

“ Our thoughts and prayers for/with family and friends!

Vickie & Wayne Houser - November 06, 2024 at 06:36 AM

DP

“ Upon learning of Bill’s passing, the memories came flooding back. The lunches i shared at his big 3 story home, a place for just “hanging out”. The shot he made at Trout Gym from half court with his back to the basket. Wouldn’t be surprised if he had his eyes closed too. The year Bill and I were stagehands for school assemblies. It’s all pretty much about those formative years. He was a friend. A great host. And he married a wonderful girl. Condolences, Leila.
To his family, your dad was one of a kind.

Dan Parker - November 05, 2024 at 02:06 PM

MR

“ Mattie & Sandy Roter purchased the Bed of Pink Roses for the family of William P Crain.



Mattie & Sandy Roter - November 05, 2024 at 09:36 AM

RA

“ Thought and prayers to the Crain family
So sorry for the passing of Bill
Lorren & Rose Ann Abernathy

rose ann abernathy - November 04, 2024 at 09:43 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of William P Crain.

November 04, 2024 at 08:13 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of William P Crain.*



November 04, 2024 at 08:13 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William P Crain.*



November 04, 2024 at 09:25 AM



“ *Prayer for the Crain family. I thought a lot of Bill. I hope the Crain family finds comfort they are in the thoughts and prayers of many.*

Patti J Hahn - November 03, 2024 at 05:49 PM



“ *I thought highly of Bill . He helped many people. He shared much spiritual wisdom , experience, strength and hope. He and his family will be forever in my heart and prayers. Leo & Debbie Ohms*

Leo Ohms - November 03, 2024 at 03:21 PM



“ *We want you to know that we're thinking of you during this sad time. Many fond memories. Tony and Elizabeth Horn*

Elizabeth Horn - November 03, 2024 at 12:22 PM

WJ

“ Wendy Jourdan lit a candle in memory of William P Crain



Wendy Jourdan - November 02, 2024 at 05:14 PM

JF

“ We would like to send our deepest sympathy, and prayers for the Crain family. Bill was truly a good longtime friend, and will be missed!
Jim & Lisa Fowler

Jim & Lisa Fowler - November 02, 2024 at 11:14 AM

DD

“ Sending love and prayers to all of you at this difficult time. Bill was a one of a kind and I will never forget all of the things he taught me about cooking when him and Leila hosted political dinners. He will be deeply missed.

Donna Dodson - November 02, 2024 at 09:30 AM