

Morris, Robert W.

MORRIS, Robert William, 84, of Springfield, passed away peacefully on March 13, 2026.

Bob lived an exciting life as a scholar, creator, historian, professor, father, and husband.

He was born in Tottenville, Staten Island, NY on September 28, 1941. He graduated from Duke University and then earned his PhD in Paleontology from Columbia University in 1968. He devoted additional time to studying at the Duke Marine Lab.

Bob married Leslie Jean Neimeier (Morris) of Brooklyn, NY in 1968; they moved to Springfield, Ohio in 1968 when Bob accepted a position as Professor of Geology at Wittenberg University.

Bob spent his 35 year academic career, from 1968 to 2003, teaching at Wittenberg University. He led students on geology field trips throughout the United States and for 12 years, he co-taught a summer field course in the Bahamas. He actively published and was awarded grants from the National Science Foundation, the American Museum of Natural History, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. At Wittenberg, Bob volunteered keeping statistics for the home football games and enjoyed playing intramural basketball.

After moving to Ohio, Bob became interested in Native American history and history as it related to the region where he now lived. He enjoyed walking in fields to look for arrowheads and other artifacts. He collected artifacts, and he meticulously catalogued them. Bob wrote and published his findings in the Ohio Archeologist and he co-authored the book "Archeology and Artifacts of Clark County, Ohio." He was a member of the Ohio Archeological Society. He volunteered in curating the artifact collection for the Clark County Heritage Center. Bob enjoyed reenacting and was a member of the First Mad River Light Artillery.

Bob was a creator. He did his own pen and ink illustrations for paleontology and archeology papers that he wrote. He collaborated with his wife Leslie in her pottery work by carving designs into clay mugs, plaques, and candleholders.

Bob enjoyed ballroom and line dancing at the Eagles Club.

Surviving family members include his wife Leslie Morris, daughter Kristin Morris (Columbus, Ohio), son and daughter-in-law David Morris and Aruna Ganju (Chicago, IL) and their daughters Uma and Anaïs. Bob is survived by his sister Jean and her husband Dan Smithwick (Sarasota, FL), sister-in-law Joy and her husband Bob Yasso (Yorba Linda, CA). Bob is also survived by his nieces and nephews.

The family thanks Cherish Hospice and the Masonic Community for the excellent care Bob received in the latter stage of his life.

He will be buried in Ferncliff Cemetery.

A celebration of life will be held at a future date.

Donations in memory of Bob can be made to:

Cherish Hospice, 1929 East High Street, Springfield, Ohio 45505

First Lutheran Church, 30 S. Wittenberg Avenue, Springfield Ohio 45501

