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**Gavin Spence(1942 - 2018)**



Gavin  
Spence  
July 23, 1942-  
January 24, 2018

Columbus, GA- Dr. Gavin G. Spence, 75, passed away on Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at Grandview Medical Center, Birmingham, Alabama. A Mass of Christian burial will be held at 10:00AM at Holy Family Church, 320 12th Street with Father Patterson presiding. On Sunday, January 28, there will be a visitation with the family from 3:00-5:00 PM, followed by a rosary in the chapel of Striffler-Hamby Mortuary, 4071 Macon Road.

Gavin Spence was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, the son of the late Gordon G. Spence and the late Alice Spence. He grew up in Wellesley and Whitinsville, Massachusetts, where locals first stoked in him a zealot's devotion to the Boston Red Sox, the Celtics, and the New England Patriots. After graduating from Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts in 1964, he completed his formal education at Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, earning a PhD in Chemistry in 1968.

Dr. Spence continued his love of chemistry over the course of his career at Hercules in Wilmington, Delaware (1968-1987) and Callaway Chemical Company in Columbus, Georgia (1987-2003). He amassed 24 U.S. patents and numerous citations for his work in paper chemistry. In 2003, he began to work as an independent consultant; over the years, he was sought out by corporations in America, Indonesia, China, and Brazil for his experience and expertise. Gavin pursued a lifelong passion for learning that extended far beyond the scope of the sciences. With his late wife, Gerry, he became an active member of the Columbus Academy of Lifelong Learning (CALL) at Columbus State University, where he served as interim President, arranged social gatherings, and led courses in subjects ranging from Organic Chemistry to Broadway musicals. An avid Jeopardy fan and Trivial Pursuit champion, it should come as no surprise that he also helped to organize CALL's annual Trivia Bee.

Gavin Spence also excelled at music. Early on, he transferred his high school talents as a clarinetist to the church folk choir, and, for the past twenty-five years, he has sung with the Holy Family Church choir. It is there that he has been immersed in a vibrant faith community that sustained him, his family, and his dearest friends.

But most of all, Gavin was a devoted husband to his wife, Gerry, for more than 48 years; over the course of their lives together, the two showed boundless commitment to their family and community. Gavin Spence is survived by his three children, Heather Spence of Tampa, Florida, Greg Spence and wife Anna of Elba, Alabama, and Patrick Spence and wife Christy of Birmingham, Alabama. He is also survived by five grandchildren, Harrison Spence, Will Spence, and Caroline Spence of Birmingham, and Bert Oggs and Sam Spence of Elba, Alabama. He is also survived by his sister Leslie Hensler of Buffalo, Texas and numerous nephews and nieces.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the American Cancer Society, which he supported in memory of his wife Geraldine Riley Spence. For fond memories and condolences to the Spence family, please visit [www.shcolumbus.com](http://www.shcolumbus.com).



**Funeral Home**

**Striffler-Hamby Mortuary**

4071 Macon Road Columbus, GA 31907  
(706) 563-2372

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