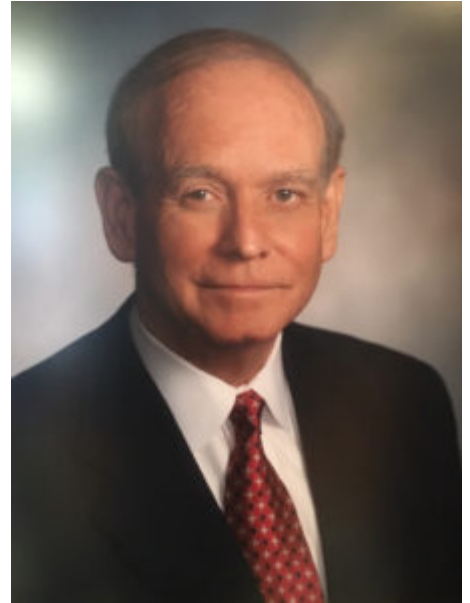


Guestbook

It is with a heavy heart that we share that Robert D. Ray passed away July 8, 2018. Governor Ray proudly served as Iowa's 38th governor and, later in his career, as the 11th president of Drake University, from April 1998 to May 1999. He received his B.A. in business from Drake in 1952, and his juris doctorate from Drake Law School in 1954.



Governor Ray is survived by his beloved wife, Billie, three daughters and eight grandchildren.

Do you have a story to share about Governor Ray? We'd love to hear it.

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74 entries.



wrote on 2018-07-11 at 17:40

Beside every accomplished man is a special woman, Billie Lee. You two were a great team. My prayers are for strength for you in these difficult days. A 1946 graduate of Roosevelt High School



wrote on 2018-07-11 at 15:54

Deepest condolences to the family, Robert was an extraordinary man and I owe him my gratitude for bringing my Taidam community and parents to the state of Iowa. My life would not exist here if it wasn't him, just shows a little love and compassion goes far. We will never forget his name, and I promise I will spend my life honoring him and telling the story of how he brought us refugees to America. He is truly our godfather, and we are heartbroken he is gone.



wrote on 2018-07-11 at 09:52

During a Drake luncheon I was sitting at the same table as the Governor when he was president of Drake. I was wearing a unique label pin that celebrated the diversity of people working together. He was quite interested as he was struck by it's uniqueness. I shared my pin with him as he was his always grateful and thankful self.



wrote on 2018-07-11 at 09:42

Governor Ray was a respected leader and effective ambassador for the State of Iowa. When I moved to Iowa in 1977, I quickly came to admire Governor Ray for his accomplishments and the collaborative way in which he achieved them. What a great

first impression for a newcomer transplanted from the Show Me State. I've been proud to call Iowa my home since then. Thank you Governor Ray!



wrote on 2018-07-11 at 08:42

In 2001, I was serving as Associate Pastor at First Baptist Church of Des Moines. Our senior pastor was on vacation and so I officiated my very first "solo" funeral for Dr. C.L. Smith, a long time professor at Drake University. A day or two after the funeral, I received a very gracious phone call from Gov. Ray expressing his appreciation for the comforting words I shared to honor Dr. Smith's memory . He was so encouraging and it meant so much to me as a young pastor to receive that call. It is a reminder to me that a little effort, a passing encounter, can make a huge and lasting impact on the people around us. I am grateful for his service and legacy. God bless your family with rich memories, comfort, strength and assurance for the days ahead. Most Sincerely, Rev. Janell Bloem, Pastor First Baptist Church, Boone, IA



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 22:28

My son Tucker, first met the governor in 2006 at a political function, Tucker was 11, and was hooked on politics. In 2012, when Tucker earned his Eagle Scout, I took a longshot, dug out the photo of Tuck and the governor, put it , along with an invitation to the Eagle Scout party, and sent it off to the governor's home address. The governor called me shortly after that, and said he would be there. He was, it was wonderful. By now, Tucker is 16, and full on political. Tuck jumped at the chance to talk to the governor about politics. One thing I clearly remember, Governor Ray said he preferred being a mayor over governor, he loved working with the people more. After the party, Tucker sent a nice thank you note to the governor, along with an updated photo of the two of them. He in turn, sent Tucker a wonderful letter back, it's one of my son's prized possession's. Through the years, Tucker has run into the governor several times, (and updated pictures of the two) he is still in awe of the man, and pained that he has passed. I will forever be grateful of the influence Bob Ray had on my son, now a 1st year law student at Drake.



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 21:06

Even with the many accolades that have been shared about Governor Ray's this week, it hasn't begun to scratch the surface of what an amazing man and statesman he was. Governor Ray's was the finest example of governing with honor, humility, and respect for all people. But first and foremost, he always kept his sense of humor. I had asked him for his guidance on a public service project that I was working on. He had to call me with some information early one morning due to his demanding schedule. When the phone rang, my young son got to the phone first. He had just learned about 'Stranger Danger' in school. As I came around the corner, I heard my son tell the person calling "I don't know you. You're a stranger." and hung up the phone. I saw the caller ID and my heart sank. It read 'Wellmark'. When I called Governor Ray back to apologize, he just laughed it off. He said that in his years in politics, he'd been hung up on before.



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 18:52

He was a great governor of Iowa he was a very good man and one of the best governor of the state of Iowa. Sorry for his loss to his family and the great state of. Iowa Ellen Meier



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 17:50

Bob Ray, along with Mary Louise Smith, shaped my life as a young adult and Republican. Their values , hard work and patriotism had a huge impact. I will never forget venting about some political situation and particularly going after one individual on the opposing side when the Governor said, "And Diane they say the nicest things about you!" It was his way of saying to be aware that there are two sides to every issue and you need to understand the other side. It was also his way of saying that we shouldn't take differences too personally. Wish his spirit would enlighten the country today. He was a great gift to Iowa and to all who worked with him.



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 16:55

Governor Ray was a remarkable and caring human being and statesman. He truly represented the best of the "Greatest Generation" and this Great State, that we call Iowa. You left

all of us a wonderful legacy.



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 14:02

As a little girl, my dad introduced me to Mr. Ray at the Cedar Valley Engine Show near Charles City, Iowa. He was very kind. My dad had met him at a business conference in Des Moines, and he wanted me to meet Mr. Ray. I will be praying for the Ray family.



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 12:53

Governor Ray was such a wonderful role model to all. I had the honor of working for him for two years, and he was the epitome of class. I have fond memories of my years there . He is someone who will never be forgotten and holds a special place in our hearts. Iowa was lucky to have him as their leader!



wrote on 2018-07-10 at 10:30

I personally owe this man a deep gratitude for having the faith in me and giving me a start in a 26 year radio career. Though we hadn't spoken in person for years, I thought of him often for his genuine caring , generous spirit and willingness to communicate to anyone at anytime. Even at 4AM for an ice cream cone as long as Billie gave her blessing!



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 21:52

Gov Ray is a great mentor and role model for the minority and international students. He spoke at the 2008 Iowa Youth Leadership International graduation ceremony and presented the graduation certificates to the leadership program students from China, India, and Iowa. Gov Ray will be never forgot for his inspirational spirit, passion and love!



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 21:00

My biggest account a few years back was Century Theatres at Jordan Creek. It was a grand opening celebration. Governor Ray (retired of course) and his wife Billie were there. Myself , a friend , Governor Ray and his wife Billie happened to be the first ones waiting outside the theater. They started a conversation with me, the conversation actually lasted quite some time. Never met a more down to earth friendly couple. So genuine and kind. It's no wonder he was such a good governor.

It's because he was a great man. Billie you were pretty awesome too. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 19:17

As one of the handful of Troopers who had the honor and privilege to serve on the Governor's Security Detail I accompanied Governor Ray to Atlantic City New Jersey to attend the National Governor's Conference in 1981. One evening all the Governor's were dining at a restaurant at the top of the Empire State Building. I took up a position outside of the dining room along with all the other security officers from the various states in attendance. Governor Ray emerged and told me to come inside and have a seat at his table for dinner. I replied that I didn't think that security officers were supposed to be allowed inside with the Governor's and other dignitaries. Gover Ray replied "I don't care I want you to eat and it doesn't look like you're getting any food out here. We have room at my table so come inside". I had a seat with him at the table and the Governor introduced me to the others seated as "My Trooper".



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 17:56

I was a senior at Monticello High School when lawmakers were trying to pass a law to change the drinking age from 18 to 19. I wrote a letter to Governor Ray to express my opinion. One day at school, I was called to the office. I was nervous because I was never sent to the office and didn't know why I was going there. To my surprise, the secretary told me I had a phone call from Governor Ray. He thanked me for writing him and told me to continue my interest with what lawmakers are working on. He explained why he wanted this law to pass. Even though the drinking age was changed to 19 shortly after that phone call, I still admired Governor Ray. That he would take the time to call a 17-year-old that couldn't vote yet was pretty impressive to me. I also appreciated his interest in education. Too bad current Republicans don't have the same values as Governor Ray. He cared about people no matter who they were. He was a classy guy.



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 17:29

It was my honor and pleasure to work beside Governor Ray when I was on the council in West Des Moines. He was a mentor with many accolades for what was being done in our community and he always made me feel like I was the most important person of the day. I loved his one hour meeting agendas and his smile when he isn't sure we were on the right track. It isn't often you meet person who can change you mind with out you realizing it is happening. Billie and I worked together on the Zoo board so I had the opportunity to enjoy The Governor at many events. Most important to me however was his opening our state to other citizens from other countries who wanted to be free. He was the magic man who gave Iowa the true name of Heartland.



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 16:20

Farewell to a great man, a powerfully inspirational speaker and a beloved governor. May your journey to your next life be a peaceful one.



wrote on 2018-07-09 at 16:17

I was so very sorry to hear of his passing...many years ago we actually played tennis together several times at the Waveland Courts....he was the nicest man and we always had so much fun! Sending prayers of comfort for the family.... Mary Lou Fitch
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