



Robert F. Gathercoal

September 20, 1960 - April 8, 2014

Robert F. Gathercoal, 53, of Stayton died Tuesday, April 8, at Salem Hospital.

Bob was born on Sept. 20, 1960, in Portland. He was the son of Forrest “Spike” and Joan Baines Gathercoal. He was a longtime member of First United Methodist Church in Corvallis. He played drums in the Church Folk Choir and enjoyed playing in the family band with his parents. During his youth, he enjoyed swimming, studied martial arts and was an avid reader.

Bob graduated from Corvallis High School and received his bachelor’s degree from Oregon State University. He earned a postgraduate degree in law enforcement from Western Oregon University. He had a distinguished career in law enforcement as well as the U.S. military.

Bob married Kristi Breshears. The couple has three children, Alexander, Eden and Brendan. Bob was a devoted husband and father, adored by his children, who called him “Daddy Bob.”

Bob served with the Silverton Police Department starting in December 2001. During his career with the department, he held the positions of Patrol Sergeant and Senior Officer. He was awarded the Silverton Police Department Medal of Valor in 2009.

Bob began his law enforcement career in 1992, when he started working for the Linn County Sheriff's Office. He was employed by the Oregon Department of Justice in the Child Support Program from 1997 to 1998. He then accepted employment as a Police Officer with the Myrtle Point Police Department from 1998 to 2001.

Bob Gathercoal honorably served over 21 years in the military. He began his military career with the Oregon Army National Guard in 1977. He served with the National Guard until moving to Active Duty in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1980. He served three years, attaining the rank of Sergeant of the Guard in charge of a security section of Marines, attached to the Marine Security Guard on board the USS Holland.

Starting in 1987, Bob served an additional four and a half years in the 101st Airborne Division, obtaining the rank of Staff Sergeant. He served as Assistant Brigade Operations Sergeant for more than a year, and throughout his deployment to Saudi Arabia and Iraq in support of Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

In 1992 Bob continued his service in the U.S. Army Reserves. He was attached to the 104th "Timberwolf" Division, working five years as a Drill Sergeant and Senior Drill Sergeant. He earned five separate titles of Drill Sergeant of the Year, finishing second in the Division Drill Sergeant of the Year competition in 1997. He completed his assignment as the First Sergeant of a Reserve Drill Sergeant Company.

Bob was awarded the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, Award of Merit, Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, five Army Achievement Medals, Air Assault Badge, three Army Commendation Medals, Army Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, and two Army Reserve Components Achievement Medals.

He is survived by his wife, Kristi Gathercoal; children Alexander, Eden and Brendan; his mother, Joan Baines Gathercoal; and his sister, Susan Jean Thayer.

Bob was a caring police officer and a devoted family man who will be remembered with great love.

A celebration of life is set for 11 a.m. Saturday, May 31, at First United Methodist Church in Corvallis. Private inurnment will take place at Oak Lawn Memorial Park. The family requests memorial donations in his name be directed to the United Methodist Church Music Fund or Heartland Humane Society in care of McHenry Funeral Home, 206 N.W. Fifth St., Corvallis, OR 97330.

Tribute Wall

GD

“ I served with Robert in 1/101st during Desert Shield/Storm. It doesn't surprise me that he chose being a Police Officer as a profession because he always seemed to care about others. Sad to discover he passed away at such a young age, his reward is in Heaven!



Guy Duquet - June 24, 2025 at 10:12 AM

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“ Bob was a great Police Officer! I knew him well! He was always there for me! Not only as a police officer but also as a friend! I found out through my children of his passing. I was in shock and I cried. I am so upset that I didn't know he was sick and didn't get a chance to say goodbye. I'd like to know where he is buried so I might go and pay my respects. After all, he did call me his friend on more than one occasion. If someone could please tell me where he is so my children and I have a chance just to say goodbye please? Please contact me by email at bmypuma@aol.com. Please and thank you! Cori, Sarah,&Amanda

Cori, Sarah,&Amanda - August 11, 2015 at 10:59 PM

GD

I served with him in the 101st and can testify to his unwavering mindset to safeguard others so it doesn't surprise me of his choice to become a police officer.
Guy Duquet aka Q

Guy Duquet - June 24, 2025 at 09:50 AM