



## Robert William Aho

December 27, 1952 - April 30, 2025

Robert “Rob” William Aho, age 72, of Columbia, Missouri, died Wednesday evening, April 30, 2025 at South Hampton Place after a lengthy illness, with his loving wife of 44 years by his side.

Born in Cadillac, Michigan, he was the son of the late Paul and Miriam (Johnson) Aho. Rob spent most of his childhood in Iron Mountain, Michigan, where his family moved when he was just a toddler, graduating from Iron Mountain High School in 1971. From there, he went on to complete a Bachelors of Science in Biological Sciences from Michigan Tech in 1974, and a Masters of Science in Wildlife Ecology from University of Minnesota in 1978.

While living and working in East Lansing, Michigan, Robert sang in the choir at University Lutheran Church, where he met Lynn Fraedrich, who became his wife on July 26, 1980. In 1985 Rob and Lynn moved to the Baraga, Michigan area.

Anyone who knew Rob has heard a story (or two or three) about his adventures in Michigan’s wild and wonderful Upper Peninsula. From his childhood in Iron Mountain, to his graduate school research on Isle Royale, and his time living and working on the shores of Keweenaw Bay, Rob spent countless hours exploring the natural world. As the Michigan DNR wildlife biologist for the western UP, Rob worked closely with communities and

individuals to decrease human-wildlife conflict, and found quality rehabilitative care for injured animals. Throughout his career he presented well over 1,000 talks to local organizations, schools, camps, and state park guests; and it was not uncommon to see Rob on the television, being interviewed for segments on wildlife and natural resources. He inspired adolescents through his work with the Michigan Tech Summer Youth Program, guiding backpacking trips on Isle Royale and in Porcupine Mountains State Park, and teaching a campus-based course on wolf ecology. Many will remember him for his work with Mooselift and Mooselift II in 1985 and 1987. He spent an immeasurable amount of time monitoring the moose population in Upper Michigan, from both land and sky. Rob retired from DNR in 2009, with 32 years of service and countless stories left to tell.

Rob enjoyed music, spending a combined total of 60 years in various church and community choirs, playing trombone in both high school and college ensembles, and as a member of Bells on the Bay, a local handbell choir in L'Anse, Michigan. He spent much of his free time as he did his work time, in nature— hunting, fishing, boating, backpacking, and more. Rob also had an interest in family history and genealogy, connecting to his Finnish roots.

Rob was a member of the Ottawa Sportsmen's Club and served on the Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp Board. He was a lifelong Lutheran, and served diligently as church treasurer and council member at United Lutheran (L'Anse, MI) for many years. Rob also assisted local congregations who were without clergy, providing worship leadership and preaching as an authorized lay minister. Most recently, Rob was a member of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Columbia, Missouri.

Rob is survived by his wife, Lynn Fraedrich Aho of Columbia, MO; son Karl Aho (Karen) of Stephenville, TX; daughter Anne Cox (Stephen) of Columbia, MO; grandchildren, Cora and Oscar; siblings, Bruce Aho (Barbara), Gary Aho

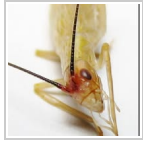
(Patricia), Ardis Koski (John), Kristine Aho, Julie Aho; many nieces, nephews, extended family, and friends.

The family wishes to express sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff of University Hospital, South Hampton Place, and St. Croix Hospice.

Friends are invited to join the family for a memorial service at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Columbia, MO on May 22 at 10:30 AM Central, with a luncheon to follow. The service will also be available via Zoom (<https://tinyurl.com/raho522> Meeting ID: 5734495674 Passcode: 65203).

In lieu of flowers, donations in Rob's memory may be made to St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, the Food Bank of Central Missouri, or Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp.

# Tribute Wall



“ 2 files added to the album photos



Nancy Collins - January 30 at 02:10 PM



*Rob was my Grandma Ilona's 'cousin's boy' . She arranged for me to communicate with him because she knew I loved moose. Rob allowed me to accompany him one day on one of his monitoring trips. We found a female and her young calf! I often think about the sight of the young one trying to follow mom by climbing over a fallen tree that was laying above the ground because of branches under it. The little moose got stuck for a moment, belly on the log, with front limbs in front of the tree and back limbs behind. A fond memory because of Rob.*

Nancy Collins - January 30 at 02:16 PM

BA

*Thanks for your personal story Nancy. I have memories of visiting your family in Tipler, WI.*

Bruce Aho - February 14 at 03:40 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album photos



Bruce Aho - June 05, 2025 at 08:08 AM

JG

*Even though we worked in different districts we were both members of the Wildlife Society and attended functions for that as well as divisional meetings. I always enjoyed talking to Rob.*

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**jeff greene** - June 23, 2025 at 05:02 PM

DK

*Rob was my first DNR supervisor when I was a work study student at Rose Lake Wildlife Research Station. He was always kind and friendly. Over the years we bumped into each other and had a nice friendship. Rest in peace Rob.*

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**Dennis Knapp** - June 23, 2025 at 06:58 PM