



Gerritt Blauvelt

April 6, 1940 - April 9, 2025

Gerritt (Gary) H. Blauvelt of Baltimore, MD, died (or, as Gary might have preferred, “shuffled off this mortal coil” or “kicked the bucket”) peacefully on April 9, 2025, after a brief illness. Born in Abington, PA, on April 6, 1940, he earned a BA from Haverford College in 1962 and an MAT from Harvard University in 1963. He taught English at Friends School Baltimore from 1963 until his retirement in 2004. After moving to Roland Park Place (a retirement community in Baltimore) in 2007, he taught a weekly poetry class – more than 750 sessions. He made many friends at Friends School, at Roland Park Place, and on his twice daily walks through Hopkins/Homewood and Roland Park neighborhoods. Gary will be remembered for his love of music, movies, and poetry, and for his sense of humor.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Gary’s memory can be made to the ACLU (<https://www.aclu.org>), Planned Parenthood (<https://www.plannedparenthood.org>), or Friends School Baltimore (<https://www.friendsbalt.org>).

Tribute Wall

JR

“ My alarm is set for five in the morning. Instead of sleeping I find myself writing late at night, in much the same way I used to in high school when working on an essay and trying my hardest to impress the man whom my close friend has just told me has died. Collectively, and over time, my teachers and coaches at Friends School had as much influence on my development as my parents. But among them all, Gary Blauvelt stood apart. Many times over the years I thought about sitting down and writing him a letter to tell him how much he inspired me. I would have told him how eagerly I used to look forward to his classes and the passionate discussions he seemed so effortlessly to facilitate. He introduced me to great works of art—fiction, poetry, film—some canonical, some lesser known, and taught me how to read them closely. He taught me to write and through his comments how to make my writing better. Sometimes I would rearrange my schedule just so I could take one of his classes. I went to college thanks in part to the recommendation letter he wrote for me. While there I majored in biology and psychology but took more classes in English than in any other subject. I was always chasing after that feeling I used to get in his classes and never found it again. I can honestly say Mr. Blauvelt was the finest English teacher, or professor, I ever had.

Jack Ruehsen '86

Jack Ruehsen - April 22, 2025 at 10:06 PM

JC

“ When I started at Friends, everywhere you looked legends roamed the halls. Gary stood out even among that group. I am proud to have called him a colleague.

Josh Carlin - April 12, 2025 at 05:13 PM

MA

“ I have maintained a friendship with Gary since my high school days, and one image of him that will always be with me is the way he would snap his fingers, tap his foot, and smile blissfully when he put on a record/ tape/CD for me to listen to. He was a mentor, a friend and an inspiration.

I will miss his humor, his smile, his laughter, and the joy he shared with all who knew him.

Maggy Young '72

maggy - April 12, 2025 at 09:09 AM

AH

I remember that too, Maggy. Amazing how it sticks after all these decades.

Abe Hollande - May 06, 2025 at 08:53 PM

MA

“ 1 file added to the album Gerritt Blauvelt



maggy - April 12, 2025 at 09:06 AM

JE

“ *Into my heart an air that kills*

*Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows;
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?*

*That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.*

- AE Houseman

*Rest in Peace Mr Gary...thanks for introducing to me to the extra
dry martini and unforgettable literature.*

jenny - April 11, 2025 at 11:46 PM

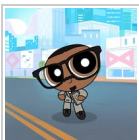


“ I was such an anxious kid. I was 13 years old my freshman year of high school. I remember walking into his English class so excited, because I had been told that he was such a legend. My first paper on Joseph Conrad’s “The Secret Sharer” earned me an A/F from Mr. Blauvelt — and I was confused and mortified. He promised me if I spent a week with him after school and let him show me how to express my “A level ideas” into “A level communication” - he would change my grade. This happened, followed by a 4 year mentorship. Through “Being And Nothingness”, “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty”, “Death of a Salesman”, and “To The Lighthouse” — he molded my love of expression through short stories, plays, and poetry. He was perhaps one of the first teachers to make me consider the arts as a way of life.

He protected misfits and outsiders. He held us to high standards and didn’t treat us like children. I work in the arts now and think of him often as a catalyst. I’m forever indebted to him.

Thank you, Mr. Blauvelt — the coolest in the game of changing lives. I’m sure the iPhone grammar is giving some cringe up there, but hopefully a laugh, too. 🙏

Shruti Kumar - April 11, 2025 at 10:00 PM



“ I am the artist I am today because of him.

David Thomas - April 11, 2025 at 06:54 PM



“ He introduced me to one of my favorite authors, Barbara Kingsolver, in his class “Being and Nothingness.” My favorite literature class ever. He touched so many lives.

Hilary Ruley - April 11, 2025 at 12:42 PM

RS

“ Epic

*I have lived in important places, times
When great events were decided, who owned
That half a rood of rock, a no-man's land
Surrounded by our pitchfork-armed claims.
I heard the Duffys shouting 'Damn your soul'
And old McCabe stripped to the waist, seen
Step the plot defying blue cast-steel—
'Here is the march along these iron stones'
That was the year of the Munich bother. Which
Was more important? I inclined
To lose my faith in Ballyrush and Gortin
Till Homer's ghost came whispering to my mind
He said: I made the Iliad from such
A local row. Gods make their own importance.*

Patrick Kavanagh

Thank you, Mr. Blauvelt.

Rob Summers - April 10, 2025 at 09:07 PM

AR

“ As a former student, performer on the Friends School stage (with Gary holding court off stage right with the stage crew), and for a short time extended family member, I have many fond memories of Mr. Blauvelt/Gary. He was a gifted teacher, with high (one might say "great") expectations of his students, and he helped all of us to appreciate film, literature, and tight, expressive writing. Holding his family in the Light, and smiling, knowing that he is undoubtedly teaching a seminar on Dickens or the short story, or mid-20th century film in heaven. Rest well, Gary.

Ann Ramsey - April 10, 2025 at 07:31 PM

DG

“ Mr. Blauvelt was a most beloved teacher at Friends. He was an icon of the school and I am grateful to have been his student. He changed the world and the lives of so many. RIP! ❤️

Dr. Anita Gadhia-Smith - April 10, 2025 at 04:47 PM

CA

“ Mr. Blauvelt was one of the best teachers Friends ever had and a great lover of film and jazz. He will be sorely missed!

Charlie Achuff - April 10, 2025 at 01:32 PM

TB

“ A year or two ago, but I distinctly remember the celebration of Gary's 50th birthday at Hilda Imhoff's home in Bolton Hill. At some point, there were 20 or 30 of us gathered in the living room and Gary was being presented numerous gifts. One by one, he accepted each gift with just the right expression of appreciation and the perfect one-liner to crack up his uber appreciative audience. It was an absolutely extraordinary display of grace and stage presence, and I'll always remember it when I think of him.

Tom Buck - April 10, 2025 at 11:54 AM

AM

From kindergarten through 12th Grade, undergraduate and graduate engineering school, and graduate business school, Gary Blauvelt was the single most influential and effective teacher I ever had. Thankfully, I told him this many years before he passed, but I wanted to say it one more time out of appreciation. An absolute legend of a man, with a one of a kind personality and sense of humor. He will be sorely missed. Rest in peace, Mr. Blauvelt.

Arsh Mirmiran - April 10, 2025 at 08:09 PM

FH

Among the many memorable and inspiring teachers I was fortunate to have at Friends, Mr. Blauvelt stands out. He was a demanding, inspiring, and insightful teacher, and such a funny, kind man. I will remain grateful to him and think of him when I write, and when I reread poems I first encountered in Hyacinths and Biscuits.

Frannie Hochberg - April 11, 2025 at 10:45 AM

MA

I have maintained a friendship with Gary since my high school days, and one image of him that will always be with me is the way he would snap his fingers, tap his foot, and smile blissfully when he put on a record/ tape/CD for me to listen to. He was a mentor, a friend and an inspiration. I will miss his humor, his smile, his laughter, and the joy he shared with all who knew him.

Maggy Young ,72

maggy - April 12, 2025 at 09:02 AM

MA

Sorry this is on here twice... My computer skills are lacking.
Maggy Young

Maggy - April 13, 2025 at 11:34 AM