



John Walter Bauman

January 2, 1948 - January 4, 2026

John Walter Bauman, passed away peacefully on Sunday, January 4, 2026 after a nearly seven-year battle with cancer. He was 78.

A devoted husband, brother, uncle, cat and dog dad, friend, gardener, family historian, spreadsheet guru, volunteer, and animal advocate, John lived a life marked by loyalty, curiosity, and quiet service to others.

John was born January 2, 1948, the second son of Eugene and Jeanette Bauman at St. Joseph Hospital in Flint, Michigan where his life story began – rooted in family, faith, and hard work. From his earliest years, John carried with him the values instilled by his parents and the strength of a close-knit upbringing that shaped the man he would become.

John and his brothers, Tom and Denny, spent their youth walking to Cook Elementary, St. Michaels Catholic School, and Emerson Junior High (uphill both ways, of course) and their summers with family at North Lake and in East Tawas. He attended Flint Northern High School for two years and graduated from Ainsworth High School in 1966. A lifelong learner with a practical mind, John went on to attend Flint Junior College, earning an associate degree in Building Construction in 1968, and later attended Ferris State College, majoring in Building Construction.

In 1970, John proudly joined the United States Army Reserves, where he served for 6 years. He completed basic training and cook school at Fort Ord, California, and achieved the rank of E-5 Sergeant before being honorably discharged in 1976 – an accomplishment that reflected his dedication, discipline, and leadership.

On May 22, 1971, John married the love of his life, Kathy Jo Flint. Together they built a life in Saline that was grounded in partnership, perseverance, and shared purpose. John and Kathy devoted countless volunteer hours to Rentschler Farm - planting, weeding, cultivating, harvesting and packaging produce - and providing educational demonstrations to Saline second graders each year. Their involvement was never about recognition, but about stewardship – ensuring that future generations could experience and appreciate the heritage they so deeply valued. Together, they helped prepare and donate thousands of pounds of harvested vegetables to Food Gatherers for distribution throughout Washtenaw County.

John built a long and successful career in construction and estimating, following in his father's footsteps - beginning as a summer laborer at Sorenson & Gross Construction. He spent 25 years with Townsend & Bottum, starting in Cost Engineering and advancing to Chief Estimator before moving into Business Development. He later worked at Burdco Environmental as an Estimator and Project Manager, and with Black & Veatch in a Business Development role. His career culminated as Director of the Energy Group at Barton Malow, where he was highly respected for his knowledge, integrity, and work ethic. Even after retirement, John continued consulting – never one to fully slow down.

Known affectionately as “Jo-Jo” in childhood and later as “The Legend” by those who admired him, John was steady, thoughtful, and never met a

stranger. A natural conversationalist, he was genuinely curious about people and could strike up a discussion with anyone, anywhere, about nearly anything - much to Kathy's occasional chagrin. Whether the topic was construction, history, genealogy, travel, food, the origin of the word "tips" or the simple stories of everyday life, John listened as much as he spoke. Those conversations often turned strangers into friends and left a lasting impression of kindness, wit, and sincere interest.

Over the years, John was blessed with friends and neighbors who became family. Through shared meals, long conversations, helping hands, and shared interests, these relationships grew into something deeper than friendship. After Kathy's passing and as John's health declined, those same friends and neighbors stepped forward in extraordinary ways - checking in often, sharing meals, running errands, and ensuring he was never alone. Their compassion and steady presence meant more to John than words could express.

John will be remembered for the way he showed up—for his steadfast devotion to those he loved, his generosity of time and spirit, and his genuine interest in the lives of others. His legacy lives on in the many lives he touched and the community he helped build – one conversation, one kindness, and one quiet act of devotion at a time.

John is survived by his brother Dennis (Barb); sister-in-law Teresa Bauman; sister-in-law Kris (Ed) Havlichek; nieces and nephews Jennifer (Brian) Arnold, Jeff (Leslie) Bauman, Chad (Heather) Smeby, Carrie Smeby, Dania (Matt) Nolan, and Kim (Jesse) Spires; great-nieces and nephews Alex and Emmy Arnold; Lily and Dylan Bauman; Morgan, Rachael, and Mitchell Juratich; Abby and Ryan Smeby; Thomas and Bridget Nolan; Maddy (Patrick) Regan; and Mathew Woodfine; and his beloved cat Mookie.

John was preceded in death by his wife of 54 years, Kathy; his parents, Eugene & Jeanette Bauman; his brother Tom Bauman; and his nephew, Bret Bauman. A host of extended family members, dear friends and neighbors join in mourning his passing.

The family extends their deepest gratitude to the compassionate caregivers from Arbor Hospice and Senior Helpers. Their professionalism, kindness, and unwavering support provided John with comfort, dignity, and peace in his final days, and offered immeasurable reassurance to those who loved him. Their care will always be remembered with sincere appreciation.

Cremation has taken place. A service honoring John's life will be held at a later date with close family and friends.

Memorial contributions may be made in John's name to: Friends of Michigan Animals Rescue (FMAR), 51299 Arkona Rd., Belleville MI 48111 or Happy Hearts Feline Sanctuary, 10905 East Pleasant Lake Rd., Manchester, MI 48158.

To leave a memory you have of John, to sign his online guestbook, or for more information, please visit www.rbfhsaline.com Arrangements entrusted to the Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home in Saline.

Cemetery Details

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church Columbarium

910 Austin Road
Saline, MI 48176

Tribute Wall

PW

“ *as a first-cousin, i have retained many wonderful childhood memories of time spent with john and his entire family - especially during those pleasant michigan summers up at north lake - so long ago.*

my deepest sympathies to his surviving family members and friends.

philip witak - January 22 at 08:41 PM

JB

“ *As cousins of the same age, John and I were more like friends who enjoyed time together when our parents were getting together. On several occasions we met in downtown Flint to take in a movie followed by a fun lunch at the old “Kewpee’s” in downtown Flint. We spent endless hours walking the shoreline of Bass Lake looking for frogs and turtles and then fishing in Bass Lake and Lake Huron in East Tawas. Great memories of our childhood vacations. RIP Cuz John. You were a great friend.*

Jim Brown - January 16 at 05:02 PM