



John Frederick Newman

April 2, 1937 - April 12, 2024

John Frederick Newman passed away peacefully on Friday April 12, 2024 with family by his side. John was born April 2, 1937 to the late John Newman and Catherine Marguerite (Beard) Newman. On January 23, 1959 he married Diane Frances Splitt. John is survived by his wife of 65 years, his daughter Debra Ellison of Manchester, son John (Shawn) Newman of Honey Creek, Iowa, son Robert (Beth) Newman of Chelsea, as well as 7 grandchildren, David Ellison, Lindsay (Daniel) Watts, Michael (Celeste) Newman, Meghan Newman, Emma Newman, Eric (Julia) Newman, and Kristen (Michael) Beneteau, and 3 great grandchildren, Anna Watts, Cameron Watts, and Avaly Newman. He was preceded in death by his parents, 2 sisters, Marge Goddard and Florence Kondrat, niece Carol Goddard, and granddaughter Emily Newman. John proudly served his country as a member of the U. S. Navy from 1957 through 1960. After working briefly for a local surveying company, John went to work for the City of Ann Arbor as a civil engineer and retired as the director of the solid waste department in 2002 after 40 years. John was quite creative, especially in woodworking and made many beautiful gifts for his children and grandchildren over the years. He was happiest outdoors, enjoying fishing, camping, and hiking the mountains in North Carolina. John and Diane regularly traveled the U.S. and especially enjoyed the National Parks, Alaska and numerous trips to Hawaii. Outside the U.S. they also visited Canada, Germany and Italy. John was an avid University of Michigan sports fan and a season ticket holder for many years. He also enjoyed reading,

gardening, and working jigsaw puzzles. John was a God fearing man and a lifelong member of St. John's Lutheran Church of Bridgewater. Friends may join the family for a time of visitation on Monday, April 15th, from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. at the Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home in Saline. Funeral Services will be held privately. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in John's name may be made to St. John's Lutheran Church of Bridgewater in Saline, and envelopes will be available at the funeral home. To leave a memory you have of John, to sign his guestbook or for directions please visit www.rbfhsaline.com.

Cemetery Details

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery

8805 Austin Road
Bridgewater, MI 48115

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 15. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home & Cremation Services
301 E Michigan Ave
Saline, MI 48176
(734) 429-9760
rbfhsaline@hotmail.com
<https://www.rbfhsaline.com>

Tribute Wall

NS

“ It was a privilege for me to work for John Newman for much of my 23 years at the City of Ann Arbor. John modeled the traits of an outstanding department head and public servant. To every citizen, city council member, administrator, staff member and peer director, John was always respectful, listened fully before responding and looked for ways to accommodate requests and suggestions without playing favorites or bending protocols. He had the experience and patience to build partnerships and support for necessary change. The Philippines 4;8 selection from John’s funeral card seems especially appropriate to sum up his approach to others.

I recall many Ann Arbor projects that became standard procedures for the city and beyond during John’s tenure. One example is John’s authorization for a community-wide process to develop an Integrated Solid Waste Policy in 1988 to build a zero-waste economy (in today’s parlance) that set the stage for Ann Arbor’s overwhelmingly voter-supported Environmental Bond in 1990 to expand the city’s recycling, composting, waste reduction, environmental protection and worker safety goals. Among the many awards received for the department’s work, Ann Arbor was recognized in the 1990s by the U.S. EPA as one of the top 20 U.S. communities for waste reduction practices. Another example is John’s support—after strict grilling of staff to provide the research, budget, partners, public support and backup plans-- for banning computers and televisions at Ann Arbor’s municipal landfill based on the environmental hazards of lead and other toxics to groundwater. This local policy had unanimous Council support and soon became a state-wide standard, which led to nationwide (free) computer take-back programs by many electronics manufacturers.

John never let us forget that we were doing serious work with public money. And although he was strict, he had a light touch with his dry humor. I learned much from John Newman’s character and strive to carry forward at least some of his memorable qualities. He will be missed.

Nancy Stone - April 17, 2024 at 04:01 PM

BJ

“ I grew up good friends with John’s son Bob. I spent a lot of time at their home on Harper Dr. John was a great man who raised a wonderful family. So happy for the time I spent with them! Rest in Peace John.

Bob Jenkins - April 16, 2024 at 09:29 AM

JE

“ I was deeply saddened to hear about the passing of Mr. Newman. Please accept my heartfelt condolences during this difficult time. My thoughts are with you and your family, and I hope you find strength and solace in the cherished memories you shared together.

Jennifer Evans - April 15, 2024 at 01:25 PM

MO

“ The Newman family were wonderful next-door neighbors on Harper Dr. in Saline. John spent many hours on outdoor projects with Diane's company and supervision; their yard and landscaping kept to perfection. We missed them after their move to Manchester area. My heartfelt condolences to Diane and all the family. May God's comfort carry you through the days ahead.

Mary Jane Ormsby - April 15, 2024 at 11:54 AM

LD

“ I had the pleasure of knowing John aka Grampy for the last 15+ years and what a joy it was. Though a quieter soul in larger gatherings, his presence alone could warm a room. You could always find Grampy outside, working on anything he could find. Always helping in any way he could without a single complaint. Diane and John made a great team in their marriage. A true example of a loving man and wife. Sending hugs and prayers to the whole family.

Lauren Dunigan - April 13, 2024 at 03:28 PM

KH

“ I had the pleasure of serving with John as a fellow department head for several years for the City of Ann Arbor. I always enjoyed our conversations, and I will remember him as one of the kindest and most decent men I've known. My sincere condolences to his family, friends, and mutual colleagues.

Karen Hart - April 12, 2024 at 08:57 PM

DW

John will be missed in our neighborhood, he was always working in his flower gardens in the summer and we looked forward to all his pumpkin in the fall. Rest in peace John. Our prayers are with your family.

Dave and Martha Wenk - April 13, 2024 at 12:02 PM

JL

John was a kind and well-respected City Department Head, and it was always a great pleasure to interact with John, a thoughtful gentleman who always provided his professional guidance when sought and needed. Thanks you, John, and may you rest in peace. My sincere condolences to your loved ones. Jane Lumm

Jane Lumm - April 13, 2024 at 12:28 PM

RR

John was such a kindhearted soul. He always made me feel so welcome at family and company gatherings. His love and pride for his family always shown through. He will truly be missed. May his memory be a blessing and comfort to his family.

Regina Ropeik - April 14, 2024 at 07:18 PM