



John W. Espenshade

August 10, 2022

John W. Espenshade, 72, of Lancaster, Pa passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 due to complications following a back surgery. John was born in Harrisburg, Pa and was the son of Walter and Margie Espenshade. He was married for 43 years to Joan Espenshade.

John graduated from Elizabethtown College, received a master's degree from Penn State University, and a law degree from Notre Dame Law School. He studied at the University of Marburg, where he was a member of the mensur dueling fraternity, and at the London School of Law. His experiences studying abroad helped cultivate a lifelong affinity for all things German- the culture, language, food, and beer.

John practiced law at Stevens & Lee where he chaired the State and Local Government Group.

He loved "Joanie," his kids, his dogs, the farm, and the beach. He was an avid reader, with a particular interest in European and American history. He held a long-standing passion for PSU football and spent many Saturdays in Happy Valley with some of his closest friends. John was a competitive athlete, excelling in baseball and basketball in high school. His love of athletics and competition eventually led him to squash, skiing, and running. Later in life, he relished the opportunity to break free from work and walk his dogs.

John is survived by his wife and children. Funeral services will be private and held on his birthday, August 17, 2022. To those who wish to honor John in a special way, please make gifts in his name to the Power Packs Project, 1915 Old Homestead Lane, Suite 102, Lancaster, Pa 17601.

Tribute Wall



“ *John W. Espenshade*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *Dear Joan and family,
I learned of John's passing about a month ago and since, have often reflected on our days together in Marburg. Our lives crossed again in South Bend where I was working and he was continuing his education. He was focused and didn't have much free time but for a couple of dinners. I next heard about you and he had a new sparkle in his voice. Since that time I kept up with your lives via a mutual friend.
At this time of year it only seems fitting to think of those who leave us with a void in our hearts. May you be comforted as you continue to mourn.*

Jane Moore - December 21, 2022 at 05:26 PM



“ *1 file added to the album LifeTributes*



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - September 02, 2022 at 02:18 PM

DK

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Doris S. Kiehl - August 17, 2022 at 05:56 PM

ML

“ Joan - I am so sorry to hear the news. Please know if there is anything I can do to let me know. I remember John at one of our board events at the stadium, he was so friendly and supportive of Power Packs. Love to you and your family. Margie Lamberson

Margie Lamberson - August 17, 2022 at 12:23 PM

KS

“ When our children were born, Brian and I knew that we would be missing a Grandpa - his father had passed when we were in high school. Or so we thought. Before we knew it, our trips to Lancaster to visit "Uncle Joan" and Uncle John became anxiously anticipated pilgrimages. There was always excited speculation as to what they would see or do this time, maybe a turtle or maybe Aunt Joan would have an egg hunt. Aunt Joan and I watched from the kitchen windows as Uncle John's stern polished professional melted in those little hands. Helping them over logs on their long treks to see what they could see, checking the pond for critters before they got there so he knew the best spots, sitting and watching as the boys and dogs played in the pool and even sharing his beloved fasnachts when there was a shortage. (He knew you couldn't get real ones in Maryland) No, God made sure those little boys had a Grandpa, but we sure are missing him now. Enjoy your walk, Uncle John. Love, The Snyders

Kate Snyder - August 17, 2022 at 07:59 AM

KR

“ Dear Joan -
Like everyone else, was shocked and very saddened to learn of John's passing. Such an unimaginable loss for you and your children. My thoughts and heart are with you as you cope with the sudden loss of John, your best friend. May all your cherished memories of your well lived life together bring you some comfort as you grieve this deeply painful loss.

With Much Love 💕 ~ Kathryn Riegen

Kathryn Herr Riegen - August 16, 2022 at 03:34 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of John W. Espenshade.



August 15, 2022 at 07:02 PM

MK

“ Dear Joan:

John and I have been colleagues and friends for many years. His level of professionalism has always been admirable. He helped to lead several municipalities out of fiscal distress. His accomplishments are too many to list here! He will be missed. Sincerely, Marita Kelley

Marita J. Kelley - August 15, 2022 at 06:57 PM

TK

“ Joan,
We are so saddened by John's passing and the loss of a true friend. He was always so proud of you and his family and we always enjoyed our lunches together to catch up on both our families. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family through this difficult time.
Terry and Candace Kauffman

Terry Kauffman - August 15, 2022 at 05:54 PM



“ 32 files added to the album Life Tributes



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - August 15, 2022 at 03:11 PM

SG

“ Joan I was so saddened and frankly shocked to learn of John's passing. I met John through Jack Kenneff many years ago probably not long after graduating from Penn State. It was always great running into the two of you and you both do so much in the community. Steven and Lee's advocacy for downtown and the Convention Center along with politics and sports two of my favorite topics always made our conversations interesting. I will miss him.

Steve Geisenberger - August 15, 2022 at 02:30 PM

PO

“ John has always been a professional and a gentleman we both shared many good times on committees and at Rotary. Rest In Peace 🌸

Our deep condolences Joanie ❤️

With love, Scott and Pat Oberholtzer

pat oberholtzer - August 15, 2022 at 01:10 PM

NC

“ I am in shock and filled with sadness with the news of John's passing. I have known him for probably twenty years and he was always a joy to talk to on our visits. He was a caring and loving man who was always kind. He loved his family and always was so proud of Joan's work. My deepest condolences to the family for your and our community's loss. He is going to be missed by a lot of people.

Neil R Clark - August 15, 2022 at 10:23 AM

DA

“ I just learned of John's passing and am shocked and saddened. John and I have been friends for over 40 years and I will miss him terribly. He was the consummate attorney and, more importantly, a kind, caring human being. I will miss our lunches where we discussed "life it's own self" and shared our various adventures (and resulting surgeries). My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. Rest in Peace my friend...

Dave Ashworth

David Ashworth - August 15, 2022 at 09:56 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of John W. Espenshade.*



August 15, 2022 at 09:21 AM



“ *John was always so kind to me. I am a receptionist at Stevens & Lee and would talk to John alot to help direct his calls to other people in the firm. I will miss hearing from him. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Linda Ford*

linda ford - August 15, 2022 at 07:40 AM



“ *John’s legacy of professional contributions to Lancaster County will live on for many years to come. A man of quick wit, quick to smile, and an amazing intellect. It is so sad that he was not able to enjoy the comfort of a well-deserved retirement. Our hearts go out to his family at this time of loss.*

Darcy Pollock

Darcy Pollock - August 14, 2022 at 05:09 PM

BM

“ John was a former boss of mine during my career as a legal secretary in Lancaster in the 80's. He had a wonderful personality. I visited he and Joan at their home in town many years ago. I also enjoyed his company at the Ferko Christmas parties. I believe he was also involved as a leader in Boy Scouts. Sending prayers to his family. RIP John.



Beverly Martin - August 14, 2022 at 04:15 PM

CH

“ I was fortunate to cross paths with John over the decades, always a vibrant and dedicated advocate. I wondered why I hadn't heard from him about attending the upcoming senior lawyer lunch. He was our sponsor at the Hamilton Club when we resumed those lunches this year. John told and enjoyed some great stories about the “old days” practicing law. Having said that, he was right on top of current legal events and always involved with what was going on. He told me about the terrible time he was having with his back over many years. I am so sorry that his attempt to improve that condition ended this way. He will be missed not only within the legal community but by his many public and private sector clients.

Christina Hausner - August 14, 2022 at 03:45 PM

DK

“*Joan: My deepest sympathy to you and your family. John and I worked together for many years, John as the Lancaster County Solicitor and I served as the Lancaster County Chief Clerk. We were in communication on a daily basis to discuss County business. John always put the County first. He was such a gentleman and was extremely intelligent. I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to work with John. The citizens of Lancaster County were fortunate to have John serve as their County Solicitor. RIP, John.*

Doris S. Kiehl

Doris S. Kiehl - August 14, 2022 at 02:46 PM

JB

“*I was very shocked to say the least that my friend John had passed. We met in 1991 as we hired him through Steven and Lee as our attorney for the Hempfield School Board. John was an exceptional attorney for us and was an awesome person. Over the next ten years I got to know John very well and loved to talk Politics, History and Sports. I met Joan and she was an awesome wife and mother. John loved his family so much. He talked about them all the time. You won't find a better person and friend as John. There is so much I could say about him but want you to know although he has departed this Earth but now is in Heaven. Those of us who are his friends will see him again and be able to talk to him. May Jesus bless his soul and give Joan and the family the strength to deal with his loss knowing that Jesus will take care of him. Joan although he is gone cherish all those great memories you had with him. They will help you deal with his loss*

Jeff Butch

Jeffrey Butch - August 14, 2022 at 02:32 PM

WB

“ John was a special person, I enjoyed talking sports and politics with him. I enjoyed many lunches and dinners with him and Ted at Hamilton Club. He will be missed Condolences to the family which he loves very much.

Willie Borden - August 14, 2022 at 01:21 PM

LR

“ Dear Joan and family:
I was stunned and heartbroken to learn of John's passing. Words fail me at the moment. He was one of the great ones. I knew John personally and professionally and always enjoyed and learned something being around him. He was an enthusiastic participant in the Dave Schwanger occasional lunch bunch, as I called it. I was honored to call him my friend. RIP John Espenshade.

Larry Roskos - August 14, 2022 at 10:19 AM

LK

“ Dear Friends: This is a stunning loss to our community. John was quite significant in all pursuits that he touched, and he always made you feel important when he talked with you. My greatest compliment was us being mistaken for each other by the court as we stood in line waiting our turns in Argument Court. I and the community will miss him greatly. So sorry for his wonderful family.

Larry Keating - August 14, 2022 at 09:36 AM

SH

“ Oh Joan,
We are so very very sorry...
With a big hug,
Stefanie Valar and Ed Hauck

Stefanie Valar & Ed Hauck - August 14, 2022 at 08:37 AM



“To forget a friend is sad. Not everyone has had a friend”. -The Little Prince

I had a friend. And he will never be forgotten.

We met 25 years ago - introduced by someone who thought we should meet because we were both “Domers” (a term used affectionately and perjoratively to reference Notre Dame grads). Shortly thereafter, we became law partners.

John was a progressive thinker and, yet, in some measure he was a throwback - a believer and practitioner of traditional values. He practiced law at the highest level. His keen insights and incredible intellect served his clients well. He brought his “ A Game” every day - and his ethics were impeccable.

John’s joie de vivre impacted everyone around him. In his memoir, Rory referenced the annual baseball trips - all the more enjoyable and memorable because of John’s participation. A loving husband, a dedicated dad, a brilliant professional and a kind and decent man. We have truly lost a great one.

Janine and I express our heartfelt sympathy to Joanie and the entire family.

Chris Cicconi

Chris Cicconi - August 12, 2022 at 01:26 PM

RR

“ I am heartbroken to learn of the passing of my dear friend John. We became friends thru an annual baseball trip whereby we visited a new stadium across the country each summer. John was everyone’s favorite person on the trip because he really knew baseball but he also knew how to have good clean fun. John was the kindest, most decent and caring person I have ever met. We have not done the trip in about 10 years and I am now remorseful that we haven’t. My thoughts and prayers go out to Joanie, David and Porter. I know you know it already but you had a great one in John Espenshade. RIP.

Rory Ritrievi - August 11, 2022 at 09:00 PM