



John Prentice Denio

March 24, 1922 - November 23, 2017

TRAVERSE CITY - John P. Denio (Jock), age 95, of Traverse City, MI passed away peacefully on Thanksgiving, November 23, 2017 at the Munson Hospice House. Jock was born on March 24, 1922 to Fayette & Lucy (Shannon) Denio in Lincoln MA where he grew up with his 3 older sisters Lucy, Tean & Julie.

Before completing his BA at Amherst College & his Master's in Education at Boston University, he served during WWII as a medical technical in the US Army Air Forces 830th MAES (flight 12) on the Cairo-Karachi route. After beginning his teaching career at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge MA, he moved to MI in 1961 to become headmaster of Brookside School Cranbrook for over 20 years. He moved permanently to Traverse City in 1994 with his wife, Sue, after retiring from his book business: Children, Naturally. He continued to stay active in the community including work with the Grand Traverse Land Conservancy and hosting a Saturday radio program about jazz on WNMC when he was in his 80's. He faithfully volunteered at the library, attended the Traverse Symphony Orchestra, & went on special outings with the devoted assistance of the caregivers at The Crystal Penny for the past few years & to whom the family wishes to extend their deepest gratitude. He is survived by his wife Suzanne (Sue) McCort Denio, Traverse City; daughters Anne (Bob) Wiley, St Petersburg, FL; Kitty (Nick) Jospe, Rochester, NY; Amy Denio, Seattle, WA, four grandchildren: Geoff, Kristen, Alexandra & Christophe; and in-laws Joe (Nancy) Muha & their children Beth Karczewski, Bill & Todd Muha.

A celebration of life is planned for 2:00 pm on Saturday June 9, 2018 at the First Congregational Church of Traverse City. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to The Civic Strings Ensemble Program of the TSO: 300 E. Front St, Ste 230, TVC 49684, or to the Peninsula Community Library Building Fund at 2699 Island View Rd, TVC 49686.

Events

JUN **Celebration of Life** 02:00PM

9

First Congregational Church

6105 Center Road, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

Comments



“ Light from the Darkroom
for my father, John Prentice Denio, 1922-2017

Light spills on the negative,
captures my father's face,
the wide smile lines,
the 1947 wool ski jacket,
his hands on wooden poles—

a pause in his life that shouts
carpe diem! This is before
down jackets, goggles
even before instamatics.

Less clear is my memory
of my father 70 years later
under the straw panama hat
his caregivers insist he wear.
As he was slipping
into the softness of old age
his speech became syllables
holding all the guests of the years.

Our one shared sentence made
his eyes light up—
I LOVE YOU
I would say, and he would say
I love YOU and our eyes would connect
as we pointed to each other.

On my last visit, as I wheeled him
outside in the garden,
I heard him reciting like a prayer
thank you for my life.

I hold now this gift of gratitude he modeled,
repeat, as did he, over and over,
feeling his presence right next to me,
Thank you for my life.

Thank you for my life.

(by Kitty Jospé)



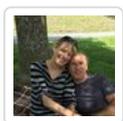


“ May 28, 2018: This morning I saw the name John P. Denio staring out at me from the obituary page of the Record-Eagle. Could this possibly be the Jock Denio I met 65 years ago at the age of 8 - my first summer at Camp Aloha Hive of the Aloha Camps, Inc. on Lake Ely, Fairlee, Vermont? As I read the beautifully written obituary, I knew instantly that it was Jock. He and wife Anne Denio headed the "Tripping Department" at this young girls' summer camp and led me on my first mountain climb - up Mt. Black, near Jackson, NH. That day was the beginning of many wonderful adventures the Denios treated us to - whether it was hiking along Connecticut River, climbing one of many of Vermont & New Hampshire's mountains or overnight camping trips to fantastic sites. They taught us to identify trees, plants, ferns, make successful cooking campfires and to appreciate that beautiful part of New England. I remember that both were musical and think Nancy played the violin, plus both were great tennis players! Each summer, 3 darling toe-headed sprites - The Denio Girls - Kit, Ann, & Amy - came to camp with their parents where they were adored by all the campers and the staff, and as they grew up, they too became 'Hivers'. As I read about Jock's life with Sue in Traverse City, I am so sorry that I was unaware that he had settled there in retirement. I am, however, not surprised that in his later years he continued to be a generous 'giver' to the community and organizations he was associated with. Will always remember him as a gentle man, so very bright, with a lovely & quiet sense of humor. Can still picture him in the driver's seat of The Grasshopper, one of the tripping trucks, waiting for us all to pile in and be off to one place or another in the Green or White Mtns or along the Connecticut River. These 'grasshopper' trucks were dark green with a cab front - but the rear carrying area was like an enormous open air van that had canvas flaps that could be lowered for inclement weather. We'd hop in with our backpacks filled with any needed gear and the famous trail lunches of cheese, triscuits, chocolate and oranges. Loved those! After all these years, my memories of Jock & Nancy feel as though they happened just yesterday. They were exceptional people at an exceptional camp for young girls where independence, thoughtfulness, kindness and learning about others was the path we all followed. Such a great place with earnest and dear people like Jock Denio! As I close, I am sorry to not have known that Jock was only 40 minutes north of my husband and me in Beulah, Benzie County. Wish that Dan could have met Jock and I had had the time to browse through those 6 years at Hive, and to know of all the he had experienced after the years I outgrew camp - though I did come back to be a camp counselor during my college years, but the Denios had retired.

My thoughts are with this lovely family who hold Jock's fine legacy...giving you incomparable memories.

With best wishes from an Aloha Hive Camper (H: 53,54,55,56,57 & A: '58-'59)
Bonnie Keeler Smith
P. O. Box 62 - Beulah, MI 49617

Bonnie W Smith - May 27, 2018 at 12:08 PM



“ So lovely to see these words! I'm glad to have your address and have mailed a card to you.

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:29 PM



“ I came to Brookside just as Jock was leaving in 1982. I just remember him as a very dear person and so kind. I worked in the Brookside office, and worked with Sue for a couple of years before she left as well. Fond memories of a wonderful human being.

Norma Borsheim
Sr. Admin. Asst
Brookside School

Norma Borsheim - February 26, 2018 at 12:29 PM



“ Dear Norma, Thank you so much. My Dad and Sue were a remarkable couple! We celebrated my Dad's 85th birthday at Brookside -- I always loved that he and Brookside were born the same year -- 1922! With all good wishes, Kitty (daughter #2)

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:25 PM



“ During the years Jock was headmaster, I used to head to Brookside after classes at Kingswood to spend time with my mother, Barbara Matson, in her classroom. When at Brookside, I had the opportunity to meet then get to know Jock. It was clearly evident how deeply he cared about every student as well as every teacher and member of the staff. My memory of Jock is of a rare leader and gentleman who combined high levels of emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, along with sharp intellect. He touched so many lives through Brookside, including mine. I remain grateful and send my heartfelt condolences to Sue, Amy, and all in Jock's family.

Susan Depew - December 10, 2017 at 03:36 PM



“ Dear Susan, thank you for your kind remarks. Kindly convey our gratitude to your mother as well. I would like to send you a card, but do not have your address. Could you email it to me? kjospe@gmail.com. Thank you so much.

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:06 PM



“ I will always be grateful for our Brookside experience. My admiration and respect for Jock's educational beliefs and leadership continues. Thoughts and prayers are with Sue and his family.

Ann Schwandt

Ann Schwandt - December 07, 2017 at 11:45 AM



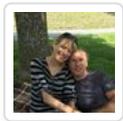
“ Dear Ann, We are indeed comforted by your kind condolences. I would like to send you a card, but do not have your address. Could you email it to me? kjospe@gmail.com. Thank you so much.

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:08 PM



“ Your beloved Jock was a true gentleman and an ardent friend to libraries. We had many a good conversation at Peninsula Community Library and I valued his ideas and opinions. It was a privilege to have known him. Julie Maxson, Retired Director PCL

Julie Maxson - December 06, 2017 at 11:34 AM



“ Dear Julie, Thank you so much. I know how much he enjoyed being a "friend" to the PCL! He would be so pleased to know of the new premises being planned. I have spoken to Vicki, and did donate a copy of my book (delivered 6/8) which has a tribute poem to my father (p. 25), in his memory. With all good wishes, Kitty

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:10 PM



“ 15 files added to the tribute wall



Kitty Jospe - December 03, 2017 at 01:19 PM



“ I can't download the video Christophe took of Gramps in May-- but imagine him saying, "Greetings from Gramps to all my Grandchildren. Have a happy day and make the world a better place for everyone to live in. Amen." That sums up his philosophy, as he certainly demonstrated how important caring, respect for all living things, curiosity are in creating a vibrant and loving community.

Kitty - December 03, 2017 at 01:25 PM



“ How true—that describes Jock perfectly. Love the pics. Fun!

barbara Matson - December 05, 2017 at 04:30 PM



“ How fortunate I was to be at Brookside under Jock's wing as a first year teacher. We quickly moved beyond colleagues to dear family friends. My daughter Lily and I spent countless summers at Sue's and Jock's Traverse City home. When they became Uncle Jock and Aunt Sue we knew our bond would last forever.
My sympathies to all who feel his loss.

Janey Coates

Janey Taylor Coates - December 11, 2017 at 05:24 PM



“ Janey, how lovely to see you yesterday. Thank you for coming. Please do tell me your address. My email. kjospe@gmail.com
Love,
Kitty (daughter #2)

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:31 PM



“ Kitty Jospe is following this tribute.

Kitty Jospe - December 02, 2017 at 06:02 PM



“ Jock was the epitome of a Headmaster—a true intellectual who cared deeply about “his” students and staff. He taught all of us so much over the years that he served as our leader. He will always hold a special place in my heart. My thoughts and prayers are with you, Sue and Amy. God bless you both.
Barb and Chuck Matson

barbara Matson - November 30, 2017 at 11:18 PM



“ Dear Barbara, Thank you for these words. I wrote an obit for Cranbrook quoting Herbert B. Moore, director at the time of his retirement:
"Jock is leaving a school that bears his imprint in every aspect of its programs and in many areas of the physical plant. But most important, hundreds of boys and girls have profited from the education he and his faculty have so carefully and caringly offered."

You were one of those "pillars" at Brookside. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers. They mean so much to my sisters and me. Kitty

Kitty Jospe - December 02, 2017 at 05:57 PM



“ I first met Jock when, having just read an article about something called dyslexia of which I had never heard and which sounded a lot like one of my children, I went to talk with him at Brookside.
It turned out that the man who'd written the article was someone Jock had studied with and knew well.

Of course we became fast friends right away and by the end of my visit he invited all three of my children to attend Brookside promising that the one with dyslexia would receive his special concern. This began a long friendship for me and my husband with Jock and years of the most special education my children could have found anywhere.

Teddy Lawrence Sandoe

Frederica lawrence Sandoe - December 03, 2017 at 12:23 PM



“ Dear Teddy, Forgive me for not responding sooner... This is such a heart-warming story and I thank you for sharing it. My Dad would have smiled, just as he does in the picture of this obituary. With all good wishes, Kitty (daughter #2.)

Kitty - June 11, 2018 at 01:35 PM