



John D. Stanek

December 16, 1943 - July 21, 2016

Traverse City--John David Stanek, 72, of Traverse City, passed away peacefully at Munson Hospice House on Thursday morning, July 21, 2016, after a brief battle with cancer. John faced his abrupt diagnosis with dignity and strength while the welfare of his family remained his primary concern. John was born in Traverse City on December 16, 1943, the son of Gerald F. and Peggy E. (Hicks) Stanek.

John graduated from Traverse City Central High School in 1962. After attending Michigan State University to study horticulture he returned to Leelanau County to work on the centennial farm his great-great-grandfather founded in 1881. On May 29, 1971, John married Pamela Farthing at the Stanek centennial homestead. John was proud to be part of a 5th generation in the business of producing cherries, apples, prunes and peaches on the 850 acres of property his family had acquired in Elmwood and Bingham Townships. Stanek Brothers became one of the largest cherry and apple producers in the area. When John's father established the tart cherry processing plant, Stanek & Sons in 1969, it enabled his family to sell pitted cherries to some of the largest food manufacturing companies in the U.S. A fresh fruit line was later added to their processing plant which accommodated the grading and sale of apples, peaches and prunes to some of the major grocery chains in the nation. John regarded the years he spent creating an agricultural environment conducive to providing safe and delicious food for consumers as one of his greatest passions and accomplishments. In addition to working the farms, John sold Kilby cherry shakers and, representing Hilltop Nursery, sold many cherry and apple trees in Northwestern Michigan. He felt proud to be part of the study with MSU that determined gala apples thrived particularly well in the Northern Michigan region and it made John happy his family successfully grew many galas in their orchards.

John was involved in many organizations in the community. He was a lifetime member and past Exalted Ruler of Elks Lodge #323. He was proud that Stanek & Sons were charter members of the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station. John also served on the Northwestern Regional Airport Commission for 19 years. He was president of the Traverse City Golf & Country Club in 1984. Additionally, John served as a Leelanau

County Commissioner for 9 years and a term as Elmwood Township trustee.

John was an avid golfer and in his younger years he enjoyed downhill skiing. He liked all sports, particularly MSU Spartan events and the Detroit Tigers. Playing gin, joining family gatherings and visiting with his buddies were among John's favorite activities. From the time he was a young man, John held all law enforcement officers in our area, particularly the Michigan State Police, in very high regard. He felt privileged that his affiliation with law enforcement and local politics enabled him to strenuously advocate for all of the people in this region in a way that aligned with his firm convictions. Those who knew John well were aware of his sentimental nature and his tender heart. His contagious laugh will be missed by many.

In his retirement years, John greatly appreciated the opportunity to work as a seasonal employee for the Leelanau County Road Commission. The friendships he made there were very special to him. He also remained active in Leelanau County politics. The area surrounding John's home was a natural haven for birds of Northern Michigan. He enjoyed creating an environment to attract as many birds as possible and birdwatching (particularly of orioles, bluebirds and cardinals) became one of John's favorite hobbies.

John was preceded in death by his parents, Gerald and Peggy; and parents-in-law, Ernest and Juliana Farthing.

John is survived by his wife of 45 years, Pamela, and their son, John J. Stanek; brother, Jerry (Peggy) Stanek; sister-in-law, Rosemarie (Daniel) Carroll; nephews, Jeffrey, Joshua, and Nicholas Stanek; niece, Aynsley Born; and many relatives as well as dear friends.

An Elks Memorial Service and gathering will be held on Saturday, August 6, 2016 from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the Elks Lodge #323, 625 Bay St., Traverse City, MI 49684

Memorial donations may be made to the Elks National Foundation or Wings of Wonder

Cremation has taken place. A private service will be held at Oakwood Cemetery at a later date. Please visit www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com to share your memories and condolences with the family. Arrangements were handled by Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home.

Cemetery

Oakwood Cemetery
1325 East Eighth Street
Traverse City, MI, 49686

Events

AUG 6 **Celebration of Life** 11:00AM
Traverse City Elks Lodge #323
625 Bay Street, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684-2251

Comments



“ I was deeply sadden to hear of John's passing. John was an individual that cared about his community and fought for what he believed. It is never easy to be in public service where hard decisions have to be made. John was always up to the challenge and stood by his convictions. John had a great since of humor and always looked on the brighter side of life. John will be missed not only by his family, but the community that he was eager to serve.

With Deepest Sympathy to the Stanek Family.
Stephen and Lory Cassens

Stephen Cassens - August 04, 2016 at 01:19 PM



“ So sorry for your loss. Thinking of u. God bless. Donna Heimforth

Donna Bembeneck - August 02, 2016 at 10:35 PM



“ molly is following this tribute.

molly - July 28, 2016 at 11:16 PM



“ I am sorry to read about John's passing. I haven't been in contact with the family in years but I still feel close having worked for them a number of times over the years
Great Family Jim Wood

Jim Wood - July 28, 2016 at 08:33 PM



“ We send our most sincere condolences to the Stanek family on your loss of John. He indeed was a powerful force in the fruit industry and in the community. His leadership and services to many organizations was much appreciated. Even though we knew John through our cherry industry contacts, we felt a closer connection with him and the extended Stanek family when his dad Jerry was a resident at our Woodside Village Independent Living apartments. We treasure the memories of our times with Jerry and John, and all the family. May they both now rest in peace.
God bless,
Glenn and Judy LaCross

Judy and Glenn LaCross - July 28, 2016 at 05:57 PM



“ To the Stanek Family: We are so sorry and shocked to hear of John Passing! He was great and a very proud Man! When my Wife and I started Farming Wine Grapes for our Wine operation, John called and said he would like to come out and see what we were getting into? I will never forget that time with us, as he gave us so much information on equipment, how to grow and how to maintain, and we are still using some of his practices to this day. We thank you John, you will be missed!

Sincerely: Dan & Lucie Matthies

Dan Matthies - July 26, 2016 at 10:20 AM



“ Dear Pam and Stanek Family,

John and I graduated from Central High together back in the day. Then I didn't see him again for 30 or 40 years until Pam came to work at BATA where I was employed for many years. Since then, we seemed run into each other several times and he would always stop for a few minutes to chat. He was a very personable guy.

I am shocked to hear of his passing, and my thoughts and prayers go out to you all.

Bill Loveland

Bill Loveland - July 25, 2016 at 08:17 PM



“ Dear Pam, John, and family. We were so sorry to read about the news. John was a Giant in the Community, with the biggest heart we ever saw!! Our prayers to you and your family, I am sure he will be missed tremendously. With our sincere condolences, the Dennis Dorsch family, Lil, Dennis, Dawn, and Jeffrey.

Elizabeth F Dorsch - July 25, 2016 at 03:52 PM



“ I am very saddened, John and I were pals at the Elk's. Just an all around great guy, and I enjoyed his company, I will miss him.. Jim Johnson, Suttons Bay.

Jim Johnson - July 25, 2016 at 02:06 PM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Jean Warmington - July 23, 2016 at 12:45 PM