



Peter Johnson

August 2, 1940 - June 10, 2021

L. Peter Johnson, 80, was received into the open arms of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on June 10, 2021, at “The Norway Family Farm,” after his courageous 20 year battle with Frontotemporal Dementia, with his loving family at his side.

Peter was born August 02, 1940, in Norway, MI, to his parents Frederick and Lila (Mellon) Johnson. He was a graduate of the Kingsford High School Class of 1958. He graduated from Northern Michigan University in 1962 where he majored in Biology and Chemistry and minored in Education. In addition to his Bachelor of Science degree he later received his Masters in Administration degree from Northern Michigan University in 1988.

A lifelong resident of the area, Peter thoroughly enjoyed his 36 year career as a highly respected teacher, Principal and Superintendent for the students and families of Flivver Nation. The many messages of condolence and tributes honoring his teaching gifts in the sciences from his students and colleagues have been a great source of pride and comfort for the family.

“He was my teacher. built confidence in me, made me feel on a level playing field in a sea of privilege, even in the 70’s. Always there to help you understand the concepts he taught.”

- Wendy Zambon

“In addition to a love of science, your dad’s legacy to me was that no curriculum is more important than the relationship I have with my students. He modeled for me that you always put in the effort to show students you care for them as human beings first! And I have been so blessed by that.” - Karen Pipp Wilson

“You were a great dad. I hope you and the gang have already golfed a round at Augusta, run the dogs and horses on hole 3, bunker jumped a few carts...we miss you, but know you are in a better place. I will make sure your girls are taken care of.” - Mike Walla

In addition to teaching in the classroom, Peter mentored and encouraged many students at Kingsford High School as Ski Team Coach (15years), Activity Director, Boys Hi-Y Advisor and the Sophomore Class Advisor for many years.

His lifelong dedication to excellence in the classroom culminated with his authoring of a book entitled *The Caring Teacher (Tips to Motivate Student Learning)*. Copyright 2008 by Rowman & Littlefield Education. His closing ‘tip’ to the teachers he loved was, “Teach your students that when they serve others, raise a family in a safe and secure environment, encourage by their example, support a cause, pray for the unfortunate, love their neighbor and dream their dream – that is success.”

Peter was a loyal servant to His Lord as Elder of the First Presbyterian Church (Kingsford) and Leader in the Cursillo Movement and Youth Encounter weekends at MaryGrove Retreat Center.

Peter also devoted his time and spiritual gifts as a volunteer to the Dickinson County Jail Ministry for many years.

An avid golfer (with a smooth swing and steady putting stroke), he cherished all of his friends and golfing partners at Pine Grove Country Club for over 40 years. Especially Tom Martin, Dave Siegler and Mike Tomasoski.

Peter is survived by his loving wife Sunny, who God chose for him 53 years ago; daughters, Erin Walla of Kingsford and Jennifer (Nathan Cox) Johnson of Carbondale, CO. Son-in-Law Mike Walla, who he loved like a son. Granddaughter, Rebecca Skrobis of Milwaukee. Grandson, Tyler Skrobis of Milwaukee. Brother-in-law; Pat (Lovelyn) Hughes of Colorado, Sister-in-law; Linda Hughes of Oklahoma. Nieces; Shawn (Jim) Simpson, Angela VanDeVoort, and Shari Hughes. Nephews Brad (Maggie) Hughes, Stan (Deborah) Hughes, Adam (Jennifer) Hughes, and Bud Hughes. Peter was especially proud of his many cousins in the Mellon Family. And Pete adored his faithful dogs, Brody and Beau, who stayed by his side throughout his illness.

He was preceded in death by his parents; Frederick and Lila (Mellon) Johnson, brother; Wayne Johnson, sisters-in-law; Donna Johnson and Bonnie Johnson. Brother-in-law Jerry Austin Hughes. Niece; Shelly Johnson.

A celebration of the life of educator, author and friend, Peter Johnson, will be held on Monday, June 14, 2021, from 6pm-8pm at The First Presbyterian Church Pavilion, 395 Hamilton Avenue, Kingsford, MI. Refreshments and desserts will be served. Parking in the Kingsford High School lot adjacent to the church property is available to all.

In lieu of flowers, and since his daughters completely dropped the ball as far as becoming scientists, a memorial scholarship fund has been established to support girls pursuing degrees in the S.T.E.M. education fields. Memorial gifts can be mailed to:

DACF –Peter Johnson Scholarship Fund
220A East Hughitt Street
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

The family has honored and entrusted the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home with the arrangements.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 14. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
395 Hamilton Avenue
Kingsford, MI 49802

Tribute Wall

DD

“ I enjoyed having Mr Johnson as a teacher. He made learning fun, and always had a smile and a great sense of humor. He will be missed.

Dacia DeRidder

Dacia deridder - July 28, 2023 at 01:24 AM

DW

“ Cannot think of the years my children spent at KHS without thinking of the positive influence of Peter Johnson on their lives. The example he set for them and for all of us will carry on throughout the generations to come. My condolences to Sunny and all of his family. *Dodie (Dallapiazza) Wagner*

Dodie Wagner - June 20, 2021 at 10:55 AM

CN

“ Dear Johnson family.... I am so very sorry for your loss. Mr. Johnson was the most influential teacher I had. He believed in me and gave me the confidence to be the best I could be. He wrote me a letter of recommendation for college that, to this day, 46 years later, I treasure. For years after I graduated I would go to visit when I was home. He not only taught me biology he taught me how to be a good person, by the way he treated all his students. I worked as a scientist for 30 years and tribute my love for science to him and Mr. Fiorucci. Your family has been favored to have such an exemplary person. He rests now and is free. May you continue to be comforted by the memories and love you shared. *Cathy Carollo*

Cathy Neumann - June 17, 2021 at 08:47 PM

“ There are so many wonderful, treasured memories of Pete that it would be impossible to share even a small fraction. Pete began his teaching career at Kingsford High School when I was a sophomore. While I didn't have him as a teacher, I do remember him in that role. Others have shared the positive impact he had on their lives in the classroom, the school halls and more.

When I came back to Kingsford High School as a teacher, I got to know him as an admired professional with so many skills to share, the most important of which was to be yourself and be genuine with your students. He was much more than a fellow teacher, serving as a mentor and friend over the years of our careers. He became my boss when he served as principal and instituted many helpful ideas which made a teacher's life easier. Then he became my boss at another level when he became superintendent. He touched all he encountered in those roles from his beloved students, their parents, fellow teachers, office staff, custodians, cooks...all who contributed to making the school a positive place for learning subject matter... and more importantly learning intrapersonal skills which helped make everyone's life better and more meaningful. We all grew because Pete was there to lead us by example and love.

I was also blessed to serve with him as an elder at the First Presbyterian Church, on many Cursillo teams at Marygrove and sharing experiences with church youth groups with both Pete and Sunny. They both have been an inspirational team in so many endeavors in the church and the community.

There is no doubt that Pete now basks in the love of God and Jesus in heaven, and he certainly heard the words “Well done my good and faithful servant” as he passed through heaven's gates on Thursday.

Prayers continue for Sunny, Erin, Jennifer and other family members who also played such an important role in caring for Pete over these past years. Their love continued to shine through as they provided for his needs.

Pete will be missed, and Pete will never be forgotten.

Bill Cummings

William J. Cummings - June 14, 2021 at 01:54 AM

TD

Thanks for sharing

Tangerine Dupuis - June 14, 2021 at 11:38 PM

 Jeffrey Michaud

“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Jeffrey Michaud - June 13, 2021 at 11:42 PM

DD

“ *I enjoyed Peter's biology class. He was an excellent instructor and he really cared about his students. I remember how he stood by the wooden door of his classroom between periods to greet students. He always had a welcoming smile. What a wonderful man. He was appreciated and will be missed.*

Dacia Deridder - June 13, 2021 at 09:09 AM

CS

“ I feel the same way as a lot of kids who went to KHS--Mr. Johnson was a favorite teacher. In addition to wanting to follow the example of my father, John Calo, Mr. Johnson was the reason I wanted to pursue a career in education. I wanted to be that kind of teacher--the kind of teacher who really made a difference in their students' lives. But you can also add “Matchmaker” to the list of Mr. Johnson's other accomplishments. I tell our kids that he's the reason their dad and I got together in the first place.

Anyone who had Mr. Johnson as a teacher will probably remember the many Senior pictures he had posted on the wall above the blackboard. As a Junior or Senior, I remember hanging out in his room and there was one particular picture that caught my attention. It was the picture of a boy who had graduated the same year I became a freshman. I remember staring at that picture and mentioning to Mr. Johnson how handsome I thought this guy was and Mr. Johnson would follow up with, “and he's a very nice guy, too.” Seven years later I married that handsome, nice guy. And Mr. and Mrs. Johnson came to the wedding.

Mr. Johnson, thank you for being the kind of teacher who inspired others to follow in your footsteps. You made us feel special, wanted, encouraged, cared for. May you now reap the rewards of your labor! And to Sunny, Erin, Jennifer and the rest of the family, I'm so sorry for your loss. Mr. Johnson will never be forgotten!

Cece Smith - June 12, 2021 at 05:07 PM

 Tammy Sauld

“ Mr. Johnson was my favorite teacher. He influenced me to pursue the field of nursing through his teaching of biology and general support. He was an amazing presence not only in his classroom but throughout the halls of KHS. My prayer for support and healing during this difficult time for family and friends. Tammy Stearns Sauld (class of 1983)

Tammy Sauld - June 12, 2021 at 09:44 AM

WB

“ *Mr. Johnson was not only a great teacher. He was a great mentor to me. He taught many of us young men at KHS, that life is more than just making money and earning a living. It was about giving back to those in need and less fortunate than ourselves. While I was also a Biology student of his, I was not exactly a stand out in the classroom. Bringing in deer livers to dissect got me the extra credit needed to pass with a D, LOL. But I was also in Hy-Y and served as the Class of 75 President. Mr. Johnson’s advice and guidance from Hy-Y has given me a lifetime of helping others and those less fortunate. A lifetime of many wonderful memories worth much more than money could every buy. Thanks Mr. Johnson may you Rest In Peace now and enjoy the many rewards of a good and faithful servant of Christ.*

William Billy Burke

William Burke - June 11, 2021 at 10:25 PM

DH

When Faith and I first moved to Iron Mtn , (1971) Pete and Sunny were one of the first to have us over for dinner. Very nice! We had met them at Immanuel Baptist Church when Grant Richison was our Sunday School teacher and pastor. Later, Faith taught at KHS until we moved to Denver. I was a therapist at Dickinson- Iron Mental Health Center. Always very much liked Pete. We will all be reunited in Glory with our Lord. Prayers go out to Sunny and family.

Dr. Steve and Faith Hart - June 12, 2021 at 06:06 PM

DH

Sorry. Steve and Faith Hart

Dr. Steve and Faith Hart - June 12, 2021 at 06:08 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Peter Johnson.*



June 11, 2021 at 01:44 PM

PK

“Where to begin? The Johnsons and Styberski family across the road were like one. We shared not only caring, but daily life. Every Christmas morning, Lila and Fred would come over to have coffee, fruitcake and light breakfast, while Pete and Wayne and us kids shared our gifts. New skates, new skis, toboggons, sleds, and on it went. Ski hill made by the boys, including Pete, Wayne Gene, Leonard, and Elmer Fink. So many memories of beautiful families, love, and sharing each day in some way. My heart is heavy for not seeing Pete more often, but I had moved to Texas for almost 40years, and did get to see him several times.

Pete and I shared our love of horses, and he allowed me to ride Flicka. his pinto. The ride of my life occured, as Flicka knew an accomplished rider: I wasn't it and she galloped full speed home cutting corners, into the barn, back out of the barn and then to the feet of Lila and Fred, as I slid down her neck to their feet. "You gotta tighten the reins", Fred said. I told him that I was just hanging on, as she had me under control.

Trips together in the UP, roasting marshmallows, hot dogs, baseball games where I was the extra. There is no end to the memories. I have become forgetful, but can without any trouble remember memories of life and joy. I call it God's love bag, the heart. Amazing, and so precious , a gift of God.

My sincere prayers are with Pete's family, in this time of sorrow. But tears are the best cleanser ever. As a retired RN, I would say to let them fall, and make a mirror of love.

God bless you all. Sunny, I don't have your number, but would like to do a Bible reading at the service if possible. I'll check in.

Patsy (Styberski) Kuhl

Patricia Kuhl - June 11, 2021 at 01:28 PM



Patsy, this is her daughter Erin. Her number is 906-282-1777. Your beautiful words moved her to tears. We all remember and live your family ❤️

Erin Walla - June 11, 2021 at 06:48 PM

OW

“ *I graduated in 1971 and Mr. Johnson was my favorite teacher! He always made time for his students, it was a pleasure to be in his class. Sincerely, Ossie H. Weinert*

Ossie H. Weinert - June 11, 2021 at 01:01 PM