

JOHN W. "STEAMBOAT" VAROSCAK



Of Forest Hills, age 88, died on Wednesday, May 8, 2024. Beloved husband of the late Sara B. "Sally" (Bernstein) Varoscak. Loving stepfather of David (Randee) Green of Fox Chapel. Grandfather of Rachael and Morgann Green. Brother of Dorothy (Edward) Warhol of Manchester, MO, and the late Mary (late John) Simko. Also survived by nieces and nephews.

John is also survived by his loving and treasured friend, Fran Acmovic, Fran's daughter, Sandy (Tim) Thompson, and her granddaughters, Carrie, Jenny and Kathy Thompson whom John considered his bonus granddaughters.

John was a 1954 graduate of Rankin High School and a member of that year's Rankin Jackrabbit basketball team that remained undefeated until the WPIAL final when they lost to Farrell. John received a basketball scholarship to the University of Louisville and was a member of the 1956 National Championship team that won the N.I.T., which, at that time, was the most prestigious of the post-season tournaments.

John served in the U.S. Army from 1958-1960. In 1959 he was a member of the U.S. Special Forces All Star team which won the Council of International Tournament in Brussels, Belgium and in 1960, as captain of the team, won the International Tournament title in Alexandria, Egypt.

John earned his Master's in Guidance and Counseling in 1966 from Duquesne University and in 1968 received his Master's in School Administration from Duquesne. John also attended Penn State University Graduate School from 1970-1971.

For 39 years, John was a teacher, guidance counselor and administrator in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. In 1970 he served as the Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Teachers Education Association, and he was a field representative for the PA State Education Association.

John had been a member of the Forest Hills Lions Club for over 40 years and served as President for three terms. He also was a volunteer with Meals-On-Wheels in Forest Hills.

John and his wife, Sally, were long time supporters of the Penn State Library. They also were Penn State football season ticket holders for over 40 years and staunch fans of Joe Paterno.

John was inducted in the East Boroughs Chapter of the PA Sports Hall of Fame in 2003.

Beside sports and education, John was a polka music enthusiast and enjoyed polka festivals all over the tri-state area.

John's life philosophy could be summarized: Try to make others happy by telling a story or a joke, be a bit generous and always say "Thank you". He also believed that the purpose of life is to matter and to make some difference helping others.

All are welcome on Friday from 2-8 p.m. at **PATRICK T. LANIGAN FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY, INC.**, 700 Linden Ave. at Cable, East Pittsburgh, PA 15112, 412-824-8800 where a Panachida will be prayed on Friday at 2:15 p.m.

John's Funeral service will be in St. Michael Orthodox Church in Rankin on Saturday at 10 a.m., followed by a luncheon/reception.

John will be laid to rest with Military Honors in Homewood Cemetery on Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Michael Orthodox Church, 147 Third St., Rankin, PA 15221.

Send condolences post-gazette.com/gb