



J. Michael Johnson

October 2, 2015

J. Michael Johnson died, Friday, October 2, 2015 at the age of 70 after a short illness. He was born to wonderful parents, Louis and Carrie Johnson, as the youngest of eight children. He spent a wonderful youth on a farm and graduated from Shade High School. Upon receiving a BS in Engineering Mechanics from the Pennsylvania State University, he was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. While serving on Destroyers in Newport, RI, he met and married Gloria, his lovely wife of 46 years, and the greatest blessing in his life. Later as Chief Engineer of a destroyer in New York City, their daughter Laura was born; and while attending the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA, where he received a MS in Mechanical Engineering, their son Brian was born. Michael and his family spent the next five years living in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard where he was a Ship Superintendent and Docking Officer. After three years in Washington at the Naval Sea Systems Command where he was designated an Engineering Duty Officer qualified in Submarines and two year in Pearl Harbor at the submarine base, he concluded this Navy Career with four years at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in CA where he held several positions. Michael retired from the Navy in June of 1989 as a commander. Returning to the East Coast, he accepted employment at Electric Boat Corporation in Groton, CT. After doing some engineering work on the design of SEAWOLF Class Submarine, he spent seven years of the planning manager for design of VIRGINIA Class Submarine. In 1999, he and Gloria returned to Portsmouth, VA where Electric Boats assigned him to work at the

Newport News Shipyard, assisting in the design of the FORD Class Aircraft Carrier. In recognition of his distinguished achievements, Michael was named a Centennial Fellow by the Pennsylvania State University in 2006. Retiring from Electric Boat in 2009, he and Gloria remained in Virginia and continued a busy life involved with their families and grandchildren, as members of the Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Chesapeake, serving on the Board of his Homeowners Association, consulting, volunteering, gardening, and traveling. High on the list of interests was Penn State football. He started attending games when his brother Ray was a student there, and in the spite of Navy assignments, there were very few years that he did not attend one or more games. However, the joy and focus of his life has always been his family; as a child with his seven siblings, as a young father, and an elderly grandpa.

He is survived by his best friend and favorite artist, Gloria Estelle Schaffer Johnson; his wonderful and loving daughter Laura and her husband Jon Reagan, CDR USN (ret) of Portsmouth; his talented and loving son Brian and his wife Liz, of Little Rock, AR; and seven superb grandchildren; Michael Reagan, Peter Reagan, Elizabeth Reagan, Charlotte Reagan, Abigail Reagan, Timothy Reagan, and Louis Johnson. He is also survived by his sister Vanda Sweet of Anchorage, AK and two brothers, Ken Johnson and his wife Barbara of Vienna, VA, Tom Johnson and his wife Judy of Williamsburg, VA.

A celebration of his life will be held at the Aldersgate United Methodist Church on Wednesday at 1 PM with visitation to take place one hour prior. Interment will be at Albert G Horton Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to United Methodist Family Services of Virginia. 3900 W. Broad Street. Richmond, VA 23230. Phone. 804 353-4461 x1733.

Cemetery Details

Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery

5310 Milners Road
Suffolk, VA 23434

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 7. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Aldersgate U. M. Church
4320 Bruce Road Chesapeake, VA US
Chesapeake, VA

Service

OCT 7. 1:00 PM (ET)

Aldersgate U. M. Church
4320 Bruce Road Chesapeake, VA US
Chesapeake, VA

Tribute Wall

AF

“ *Al Lamperelli and Family purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of J. Michael Johnson.*



Al Lamperelli and Family - October 07, 2015 at 12:51 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of J. Michael Johnson.*



October 06, 2015 at 02:16 PM

“ Mike is and will be a guiding influence in my career and life. I met Mike in a meeting in Groton CT in 2000 and at that time he mentioned he was working in Virginia, I simply commented Virginia is God’s country. Shortly after the meeting Mike visited my desk to tell me about a Virginia job posting and asked if I would be interested. I applied and quickly started my Virginia journey with a job offer as an engineer in planning the Ford Class Carrier Program.

My start was rocky and my relocation in July 2000 almost didn’t stick. I was struggling with life issues in CT but Mike guided me as I embarked on my journey. I had a lot of firsts with my journey on a job that was only supposed to last 3 years. I quickly bought a house in October 2000 and can remember the day I received a wonderful house warming gift from Mike and Gloria, a Johnson original watercolor of a cluster of grapes ripening on the vine. He already knew me too well and may have been sharing visions of the growth to come!

I spent 9 years under Mike’s supervision learning much more than I thought; this growth wasn’t apparent to me until I left Virginia to work in Pittsburgh PA. My relocation to PA was smoother, although I got the nickname Billy Three Times from another guiding leader of my career and my life. Shortly after his retirement, Mike and Gloria came to PA for a Steelers game, a retirement gift from the EB team at Newport News. We shared a wonderful dinner and I felt like a kid talking to my parents about how well I was doing and maybe you don’t need to worry about me anymore. In time I grew into the employee Mike was guiding me to be and helped Westinghouse refine their planning tools, with a small team we brought EB to Westinghouse. It was an extremely fulfilling time of my career but life in PA took over and I lost contact until I relocated back to Hampton VA, almost back to the same seat I had left years earlier. Mike was consulting with EB and we quickly reconnected, I did get to see Mike and Gloria especially around the holidays when I would have a Christmas gathering or during the summer when we would just sit in their backyard and talk gardening.

I did get to see Mike very recently and I shared one of the best days of my life. I told Mike that I had recently moved out of that first house to share life with my lovely bride Melissa. He asked if it was the lady I met years ago in VA and joked with me that he thought marriage would never be a part of my life. I replied yes, she is that lady; he then reached out from under the blanket to shake my hand.

There will be many more firsts to come helped by the fact that Mike and Gloria have been a guiding influence in my life and part of my growing Virginia family. My parents are moving to Hampton Virginia to be closer to this life and start their fulltime Virginia journey. The watercolor prominently hangs in our new growing home. Most powerful of all for me is that his guidance, friendship, and handshake will be with me forever.

Thanks Mike, you will be missed. Thanks Gloria.

Bill Freudenberg

William E. Freudenberg - October 05, 2015 at 02:53 PM

KP

“*Mike and I worked together for many years and through out those years I always regarded Mike's advice and thoughts as some of the best in the submarine industry. He was a pioneer in the development and implementation of the modern day Submarine Engineering Planning systems and was always called on when programs needed help to stay on track or needed to improve. I have lost a good friend who I will always think about and will use his experiences in my guidance to people new and old in the industry. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all in the Johnson family. Kevin & Deb Poitras*

Kevin Poitras - October 05, 2015 at 11:37 AM

SI

“ I worked for Mike when he was the manager of Planning in Groton, CT. He was the best boss ever. My sincere condolences on your loss. He will always be remembered in highest regards.

Sharon Ivey

Sharon Ivey - October 04, 2015 at 05:18 PM

JD

“ I went to school with Michael and we graduated together. I am so sorry to hear of his passing and want to extend my deepest sympathy to his family and friends. May he rest in peace. God Bless him.

Jeanette Luszczek Dilicchio

Jeanete Luszczek Dilicchio - October 04, 2015 at 09:00 AM