



John Meighan Kelly, Jr.

September 22, 1934 - July 24, 2024

John Meighan Kelly, Jr., of Houston, died on Wednesday, July 24, 2024, in Houston, Texas. Born on September 22, 1934 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to John Meighan Kelly and Joan Audrey Bath Kelly. John was welcomed as the first son after three daughters, Frances (Bob) Mannix, Joan (Wirg) Wirges, and Suzanne Kelly, all of whom preceded him in death.

John graduated from Marquette High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1952 and the University of Notre Dame with a B.S. in Engineering in 1956. John proudly served in the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) throughout his time at Notre Dame.

In the fall of 1955, John's junior year at Notre Dame, he was introduced to a lively young woman through a classmate. Just four blocks apart, they got to know each other playing cards and becoming friends. Eventually, Loretta (Lori) Kazmierczak was John's date to his Senior Ball, beginning a relationship that was full of adventure and joy.

Upon his graduation from Notre Dame in 1956, John began his career in the oil and gas industry at Sinclair Refining Company at their East Chicago

Refinery. John's outstanding work at Sinclair set in motion what would become his lifelong career in this field. Early on he showed a keen understanding of and a passion for the many facets of this complicated industry.

In June of 1957, he was called to active duty in the Air Force. After navigator training, John was a navigator on the KC-97, an aerial refueling tanker, until June 1960, when he was released from active duty. During his time in the Air Force, John developed a deep but reserved patriotism. Throughout John's life, he gathered with his military friends whom he held in great esteem.

Upon John's return from the Air Force, he married Lori on July 2, 1960, and they lived in Hammond, Indiana. Later that year, John was chosen to go to Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela to work for the Sinclair Venezuelan Oil Company at El Chaure Refinery. While there, they welcomed two daughters, Kathy and Susan.

In 1964, John and Lori moved to Great Bend, Kansas, where John worked for Northern Gas Products Company, a subsidiary of Northern Natural Gas. His distinguished service in extracting natural gas liquids and helium from the natural gas pipeline culminated in the position of Director of Company Development. His greatest achievements during that time were the addition of two more daughters, Patti and Margaret. After a short stint in Omaha, Nebraska, he moved to Houston where he became the Vice President of Val-Cap Petroleum, a small propane company. His next move was to form a company, Vanguard Petroleum Corporation with colleagues from Nebraska, Phil Trotter and Tom Garner. He semi-retired in 1990 and enjoyed traveling with Lori and visiting their grandchildren.

In addition to his work in the industry, he continually worked on behalf of the industry as Director of the Gas Processors Association. He received the industry's Recognition Award in 1997 honoring individuals with long careers in the midstream industry demonstrating integrity and cooperative spirit. John's other passions included his church as a volunteer in many capacities, local government, and a community volunteer who drove the elderly. John served on the University of Notre Dame's Engineering Advisory Council from 1982 until 2022. He advised, he mentored, he donated, and he built lifelong friendships with his fellow council members.

John will be remembered for his incredible generosity to many, his humble demeanor, and his quick wit. Everyone who encountered John enjoyed his warm personality and felt blessed to be in his company. And none more than his family whom he loved dearly. He was the original Girl Dad before it was even a thing.

John is survived by his wife of 64 years, Lori Kelly; daughters, Kathy Hendry (Tim), Susan Malmquist, Patti Kelly and Margaret Kelly; seven grandchildren, Kyle Schmitz (Megan), Kelly Boone (Derek), Derrick Schmitz (Miriam), Meghan Timm (Max), Patrick Schmitz (Paige), Will Malmquist and Brad Malmquist (Doris); and seven great-grandchildren, Kinsley and Audrey Schmitz, Cooper and Callan Boone, Sarah and Jordan Schmitz and Clark Timm.

A visitation will be held from 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., with a Rosary at 7:00 p.m., on Friday, August 9, 2024 at St. Theresa's in Memorial Park, 6622 Haskell

Street in Houston, Texas.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, August 10, 2024 with a reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall, also at St. Theresa's in Memorial Park.

The Rite of Christian Burial will follow at a later day at Cedar Grove Cemetery, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Donations may be made to the St. Joseph Scholars Program/St. Joseph Engineering Scholarship, University of Notre Dame. Funds will help provide Engineering students opportunities to pursue scholars access to opportunities like summer study abroad, summer research experiences and internships or the possibility to attend professional meetings or conferences, which they would not normally be able to afford. Please contact Notre Dame Development Office, 1100 Grace Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556 or visit <https://give.veto.nd.edu/give> and reference the St. Joseph Scholars Program.

Tribute Wall

MA

“ *My deepest condolences to the Kelly Family.*

An new angel has joined the ranks - John Kelly Jr.

A bright ray of sunshine 24/7. A funny, caring and loving husband, father and friend; a gentle giant with a beautiful soul. Shine on John Kelly Jr. , spread your wings and fly.

I honor you my dear friend. It was a true blessing and privilege to have met you and laugh with you so many times over the past few years.

Your A'Bouzy family will forever miss you as well.

12 oysters, 1 burger and a deliciously cold, heavenly bottle of Rombauer will always be on standby and ready for action at A'Bouzy.

We will continue to smile, and remember you always.

With love and respect,

Marco Aguillon

Marco Aguillon - August 10, 2024 at 09:17 AM

JK

“ My deepest condolences to my dear, dear longtime friend, Margaret Kelly on the death of her father. Having heard and shared over many years, wonderful stories about John, from his daughter, I felt that I knew him and of him. The loss of a wonderful father and friend is keenly felt ! Rest in Peace.

Judie Kahn - August 08, 2024 at 06:09 PM

RM

“ "JK" was a special boss and friend who we will miss dearly. His infectious smile, funny stories and endless energy made him a joy to be around. Although we moved from Houston, we always think of the fun times with fellow "Van guardians." Our thoughts and prayers are with Lori and the girls at this time..Wishing your family peace and love from Andy and Randi

Randi mumma - August 07, 2024 at 02:12 PM

BO

“ I cannot think about John without a smile coming across. my face...the warmth, the enjoyment of having spent time time with him. the integrity. We were Air Force crew mates, roommates, and then friends throughout our lives. One can not ask more. God bless your sole John Kelly.

Bud Osteboe - August 05, 2024 at 11:26 AM

KH

“ Kathy Hendry lit a candle



Kathy Hendry - August 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Always remember to forget
The things that made you sad.
But never forget to remember
The things that made you glad.”

“Don’t grieve for me, for now I’m free!

I follow the plan God laid for me.
I saw His face, I heard His call,
I took His hand and left it all...”

May God hold hold him close in Heaven.

Lori, your girls should know, we loved John. He was very special
and we loved seeing you both in the restaurant. Your joy, humor and
love for life was shared with all of us, all the time. He will be missed.
We will cherish the time serving you. Thank you all for that
friendship and including us in your extended family of friends.

Michael Shine - August 03, 2024 at 04:54 PM

CF

“ I appreciate your dad and mom so much. They never fail to make
me laugh, encourage me, and support us at the restaurant through
some pretty tough times. I'm really going to miss him!

Chris at Frank's - August 03, 2024 at 12:07 PM

MB

“ As John arrived in heaven Jesus stepped out to meet him. They instantly recognized one another. Jesus dries his eyes and said to John, welcome home.

Lori and family were so blessed by the person John, a husband, a father, a best friend, a confidante.

John graced a room with his Irish presence, his words of wisdom, endless laughter, and a feeling of our happiness. Every adventure with John led to a cherished memory. Rest in Peace dear friend.

Our world is a better place because of you.

You always did what was appropriate and practical for the person you were with. There weren't two kinds of people in the world for John, nor three, nor ten! Just people!

John was gentle, generous and an architect of genius, a "he" who felt his joy and your joy deeply.

Rest in peace friend! You had a good run! Our world is a better place because of you.

Mary Beth - August 03, 2024 at 10:05 AM

RB

“ Sincere condolences to the family. I am so very sorry for your loss. May God provide the necessary peace and comfort to your family and friends during this difficult time. Please remember these words of encouragement from the Bible: “Jesus plainly told her: I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life.” —John 11:20-25.

R Bell - August 02, 2024 at 10:14 AM