



John C. Pukas

SEP 2, 1953 - JAN 7, 2024



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John C. Pukas

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John Pukas, 70 of Clearwater, FL passed away unexpectedly but peacefully at his home on January 7, 2024. John was born on September 2, 1953 in Pittsburgh, PA, the son of Kostanty and Frances Pukas who preceded him in death. John graduated from Slippery Rock University and began a lifelong career dedicated to teaching science. He made each lesson unique and fun with creative demonstrations and zany experiments. But more than that, he cared deeply for his students and inspired them through his guidance to make good decisions and to reach high. Their success and love for John is a testament to his devotion to them. John had a big and generous heart and he deeply loved his family. He was a steadfast companion to his Aunt Georgia McKnight who survives him. He is also survived by his sisters Monica (Dominick) Gambino and Denise (Steven Graham) Herdman, both of Pittsburgh, PA and their daughters Gabrielle Gambino of New York, NY, Stephanie Gambino (Richie Sun) of Pittsburgh, PA, Kelly Herdman of Houston, TX and Molly Herdman of Glasgow, Scotland. In addition, John included his “adopted” sister Cheryl Gambino of Detroit, MI and her son, Luke Gambino of Pittsburgh, PA as part of his family. He also held a special place in his heart for a Great Dane name Moose. As an avid jewelry designer, John showered his family with cherished handmade jewelry gifts throughout his life. John was a history buff and a collector of fun and fascinating things. He enjoyed trivia nights with his friends, exotic plant gardening and most of all, Pittsburgh Steeler football. His friends and family will treasure his memory and will forever hold him in our hearts.



Events

John C. Pukas

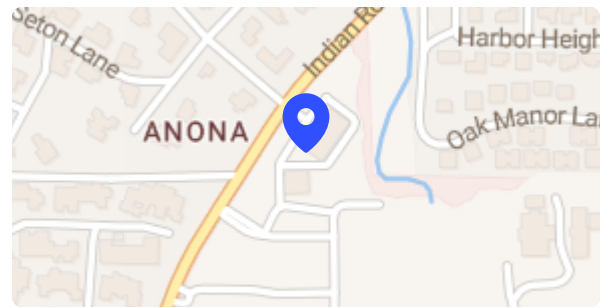
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Graveside Service

 **Saturday**, March 9, 2024

 11:00 AM ET

 **Serenity Gardens Memorial Park**
13401 Indian Rocks Road, Largo FL 33774





Tribute Wall

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BB

Bob Beck posted:

I just read about John in Slippery Rock's newsletter. John belonged to the Phi Sigma Epsilon Fraternity. He was our brother and he will be missed. Sleep well, John, sleep well.

July 20 at 4:11 PM

JR

Jeannie Rivera posted:

I just found out today that John had passed away. I am so sad as I found this obituary when I searched for his name in an attempt to find his contact information so I could reach out to him and reconnect—I last saw John 35 years ago when I first got married and had returned to FL for a visit. I was a student of John's way back in 1983 in Tampa, and he was also our tennis coach. Looking back, I know I didn't appreciate all that John did for me as one of his students. He helped me take the tennis lessons that I so badly needed (I was an awful player) and spent his own time and gas money carting me and other players from Tampa to Largo since all of our parents worked, and we never could have made it the lessons without his help. The ride to and from Largo were full of great conversations, music and corny jokes. I'll never forget that he was the first person I ever heard say "YUGE"! Thank you, John, for your kindness, friendship and fond memories. I was an annoying teenager you liked me anyway. May you rest in peace, Mr. Pukas. My condolences to his family and his many friends.

April 25 at 6:57 PM

BW

Britt Warden posted:

As a education student I interned in his science class at Largo Middle School. He was kind enough to be my videographer/photographer for our wedding. His teaching style was unparalleled in my opinion. His enthusiasm for sharing knowledge was infectious. I was honored to call him a friend.

February 13 at 11:31 AM



Tribute Wall

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Gerry Andruszko posted:

I was so saddened to hear the news of John's passing. I had the privilege of working with John at Largo Middle School for many years. He was always so excited about teaching science in a hands on way. I can remember his egg demonstration every year. The students would secure their eggs in all kinds of protective coverings and drop them from high elevations. A practical lesson that made science come alive. He always went out of his way to speak with me. Even after retirement when we met in Publix we would stop and chat about our days at LMS. He was a loyal friend and would do anything for you. When my son was getting married John did a video for the rehearsal of his youth and his future wife's. John was a man of many talents and he shared his latest accomplishment of finishing school accrediting him for his Jewelry business. Each day seemed to be another day for him to grow in an expanse of knowledge. He will be missed but not forgotten. He left a legacy of genuine kindness and brotherly love. Deepest Condolences to his family. Gerry Andruszko

January 16 at 6:56 AM



Adam And Karen Bonsignori posted:

My wife Karen and I will truly miss John, one of our closest friends. Anyone who knew John knows that it would be impossible to sum up his incredible life in a mere paragraph or two. John led such an amazing life that someone should write his biography- and then it should be made into a movie! John was a very caring and dedicated teacher and an inspiration many of his fellow teachers and students. John was always friendly, outgoing, loyal, trustworthy, hard-working, and dedicated to his craft. John was an expert on tropical plants; his backyard [in bloom] was a sight to be seen- simply spectacular. Thanks to John's mentorship, I ended up with over 50 gorgeous tropical plants/trees on our property in Clearwater. I will miss all the good times we had going to plant shows, all the meals we shared, and all the good conversation we had over the 13 years I knew John. The last thing I want to say about John is that he had one of the best hearts of anyone I've ever known. If you're one of John's friends or family, I'm preaching to the choir, you know what I'm talking about! John was generous beyond reproach; Karen and I will treasure the many gifts he gave us over the years. We love you and miss you, John. You're always in our hearts.

January 12 at 12:36 PM



Anonymous sent a Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet to the Pukas family.



January 11 at 4:32 PM



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Cathie Mullins posted:

So sad to hear this. I worked with John for several years and my son had him as a teacher. He had a great way of explaining things to the students and got along well with most kids. Really a great man. Rest in peace, John. You'll be missed.

January 11 at 2:31 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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