



John Donovan

December 31, 1957 - April 14, 2025

"O Captain! My Captain!"

John Donovan was a loving father to Alanna (Rob), Damien (Emma), Adrian (Bonnie), and Liam (Carter); and grandfather of Miles, Finn, and Rae, and a 4th grandchild on the way.

John was a proud 3rd generation University of Michigan alum and practicing attorney, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. After receiving his JD from Case Western Reserve, where he served as editor of their law review, he returned to Napoleon to work alongside his father. John dedicated his practice to helping people through some of the most vulnerable times in their lives, serving them with his kindness, integrity and intellect.

John was a gifted photographer - from the night sky to butterflies. He was a master gardener and cook, delighting in daisies and heirloom tomatoes. If he wasn't visiting Middle Earth, his nose was buried in other classic works of literature, or binge-watching films or drama series, or rocking out to U2, Talking Heads, or Yes. He was a keen observer of all things celestial and was known to pack a tent and his family in the car to travel long distances to enjoy the splendor of a solar eclipse.

A blend of Mr. Spock, Pee Wee Herman and a dash of Gumby, John danced

quirkily to his own drum. He had a strong mind, a big heart, and a whacky sense of humor, once notably illustrated by his portrayal of Eagle Eye Fleagle in a production of Li'l Abner. He could be seen around town with a mischievous grin, sporting different shades of green, and his long stocking cap in the winter. In his passing, he added another light to the Milky Way.

John was preceded in death by his father James, mother Rose Louise (Zbylot), brother Jim, and former wife Merry Jakary, and his decades-long colleague Sandy Crandall. In addition to his four children and grandchildren, John is survived by his sister Mary Beth and her family, the extensive Jakary clan, and his lifelong friends Mark Knopper and Kathy Germann.

A celebration of life is forthcoming. Memorials may be given in his honor to the Red Cross, ACLU, or PEN America.

May Cirdan greet you with love and the Grey Havens let you sail peacefully into the arms of Valinor.

Tribute Wall

TB

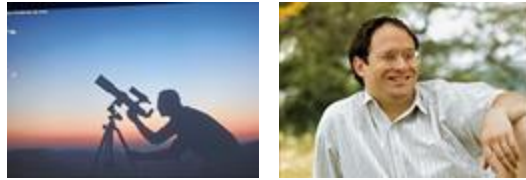
“ *There is a candle burning and more to light at Saint Mary Parish in Remembrance and for Family...*



Todd (+Pat) Brink - May 01, 2025 at 08:24 PM

TB

“ *Thanks for sharing nice picture I zoomed in on a bit from legacy...*



Todd (+Pat) Brink - May 01, 2025 at 08:17 PM

PC

“ *So sorry to hear of John's passing. As his neighbor, he always had a wave for us when we drove past.*

Paulette K Carpenter - April 26, 2025 at 03:42 PM

KG

“O Captain! My Captain!”

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For a lengthier obit & info about memorial donations, go to legacy.com

Kathy Germann - April 26, 2025 at 09:19 AM

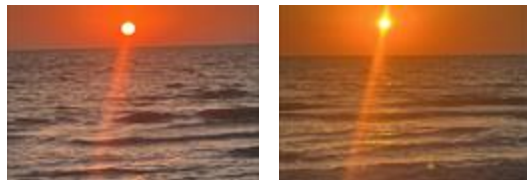
JR

“So sorry to hear this news. What a caring person. I am going to miss the chance encounters when seeing and talking to him at the teal barn at the end of my parents' road. It was such a joy to spend those moments catching up. He will be missed.

Jim & Diane Rosebrock - April 23, 2025 at 01:31 PM

GG

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Gregg GERKEN - April 23, 2025 at 01:15 PM

MK

“ While walking across the orange grout spaced tile
A scant memory of Pharaohs sailing the Nile
Someone shatters the silence with “The pope is dead.”
And all awake from their bed.
--Jonh Donovan 2003, from "Transmigration for Erica"

Mark Knopper - April 23, 2025 at 12:01 PM

VD

“ Thoughts and prayers for all of the family! 🙏🙏🙏
Vicky (Schwaiger) & Bruce Delventhal

Vicky Delventhal - April 23, 2025 at 02:38 AM

JM

“ So sorry to hear this. John was a very sensitive and unique person.
Rest in peace now.

Julie Madsen - April 22, 2025 at 01:09 PM

KV

“ So sorry to hear this. Our sympathy goes out to Joh's family. Kevin
and Tammy Vajen

Kevin Vajen - April 22, 2025 at 11:22 AM

TB

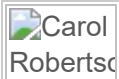
I've noticed more obituary and memories on a website using "legacy" fyi

Todd (+Pat) Brink - April 29, 2025 at 01:10 PM

TB

“ *Condolences to family.*

Todd (Patricia) Brink - April 20, 2025 at 02:05 PM



Prayers for your Family..

Carol Robertson - April 22, 2025 at 12:03 PM

TB

Dear Carol (?) Robertson, a note from Todd and Pat Brink: We are saddened that our friend John has died. I am a bit puzzled that a seeming comment left with our Condolences may have been intended directly for John's loving family (if you get notice of this comment to your comment). Condolences...

Todd (+Pat) Brink - April 29, 2025 at 01:16 PM