



John Edwin Richard Volckmann

February 22, 1936 - September 28, 2024

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John Volckmann passed away peacefully at his home in Woodside on September 28th. He bravely battled Parkinson's for over 10 years with humor, little complaint and looked for the silver linings and lessons...just as he'd always done with challenges in life.

Born February 22, 1936 in East Orange, New Jersey, the first of 3 boys born to Solveig (Kolstad) and Herbert Volckmann, he grew up on the east coast, but moved with his family to Norway (his mother's country) when he was 10 years old. The family lived in the countryside on a family farm where John attended school from age 11 to 13. He quickly adapted to the new culture, learned Norwegian, skied to school, milked cows and generally enjoyed life there. No doubt this adventure contributed to his lifelong quest for "roads less traveled".

The family returned to the U.S. and after high school graduation from Bridgeton Academy he enlisted in the U.S. Airforce where he received training as an electronics technician stationed primarily in the Far East. When he completed his military service, his experience in the Air Force equipped him to work for Sylvania Electronics Systems as a technician in the Ballistic Missile

Early Warning System (BMEWS) department which later led to his work on some of the first US satellites. He left Sylvania to attend the University of Denver where he received his BS in 1964. Upon graduation he was recruited by the CIA and spent the next several years as part of the National Reconnaissance Office.

In 1969, John received one of the Federal Government's achievement distinctions, the National Institute of Public Affairs Awards, which afforded him the opportunity to attend Stanford University. In 1971, he concurrently completed graduate work in the Public Administration Program and his M.B.A from Stanford Graduate School of Business. After graduation he determined the Peninsula would be home and set out to build a career in Silicon Valley real estate forming J. Volckmann & Associates in 1976. He went on to develop shopping centers, office buildings, industrial buildings, multifamily residential developments and consulted on real estate investments for corporations and private investors. John's son, Blair, proudly took over and continues to run the legacy family business.

In 1981, he met and married the love of his life, Cheryl, and lived in Atherton and Woodside raising three children, Jennifer, Lindsey and Blair. While he deeply enjoyed his work, he loved his family more and they were always a priority. He loved seeing Jenny, Lindsey and Blair grow and thrive and took great pleasure in talking with them about their work, goals, the importance of giving back and of having a Faith. Every Christmas his children would ask him what he wanted and he would always say..."the gift of your time." In later years John (or Pops as the grandchildren called him) liked to reminisce and tell stories of his past adventures in business and life. Within our family he earned the title "most interesting man in the world". But more importantly, as he reflected on the good times and the difficult ones, he would always smile and say "I've had the usual amount of struggles in life, but far out-weighting all of them are the many blessings....the greatest of which are Faith, Family,

Friends, Good Health (until Parkinson's), and "attempting to be at the right place at the right time."

He had a zest for life and a passion for travel, fun with friends, good food, golf and an appreciation for each moment. He also had a very strong faith and was a member of Menlo Presbyterian Church for 45 years. Over the decades, John was privately very active in charitable fund raising and board participation and felt strongly about giving back and helping those in need. Out of this belief came his willingness to sit on Boards such as Hidden Harvest in the Coachella Valley and his long-time commitment to Job Train in East Palo Alto which was particularly close to his heart. He was on their Advisory Board for many years.

John leaves behind his loving wife of 43 years, Cheryl; daughters, Jennifer (John) McDevitt, Scottsdale, AZ; Lindsey (Conor) Irvine, Tiburon, CA; son, J. Blair (Rosalind) Volckmann, Mill Valley, CA; 4 grandchildren, Taylor and Riley Irvine, Spencer McDevitt and Vivienne Volckmann; brother Steven (Jane) Volckmann, Peoria, AZ; nephew Justin (Michelle) Volckmann, Glendale, AZ; sister-in-law Rosemary Volckmann, Sedona, AZ; and former wife, Sybil Becker, Kittery, ME

John Volckmann Job Train Donation (<https://fundraise.givesmart.com/f/50pp/n?vid=18ayd6>)

Tribute Wall

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“ We have so many fond memories of John's gentle and kind spirit. He always had a smile and humor, even during the difficulties of his illness. We loved meeting him walking in Woodside, and somehow he always infused the conversation with gratitude for his wonderful family and for God's lovingkindness. He will be missed! Our heartfelt condolences to your family. Love, Patty and Eff

Patty and Eff - October 14, 2024 at 01:13 PM