



John M. Kennedy

May 28, 1926 - July 22, 2017

John Michael Kennedy, 91, of Umatilla, FL passed away on Friday, July 22, 2017. He was born on May 28, 1926 in Pittsburgh, PA to Joseph B. Kennedy and Mary Abrams Kennedy (deceased). His father was a member of the Coast Guard and the family moved around from port to port.

His family moved from Alaska to St. Petersburg, FL in 1943 where John was a junior in high school. He was an avid sportsman who actively participated in football, and was a hurdles jumper on the track team at St. Pete High. The mascot was called the Green Devils and he and his classmates still refer to themselves as such.

John was drafted into the United States Coast Guard at the age of 18 and served his country from 1944-1946. He was stationed onboard the USS Breckinridge.

In 1948 John enrolled into the University of Florida's Agricultural program and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in 1950. After graduation he returned to St. Pete and worked at a fertilizer company where he was fortunate enough to be introduced to Mr. John Nelson, an avid citrus grower in Lake County, Florida. In 1952, John was hired by Mr. Nelson and became the production manager for Golden Gem Growers. He continued his career in citrus until he retired in 1996. John was the past president of the Florida Citrus Production Managers Association, the past president of the Central Florida Production Managers Association, and the past president of the Citrus Section, Florida State Horticultural Society.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years: Winifred (Winkie) Collier Kennedy; sons: John Michael Kennedy Jr, Robert J. Kennedy, and Donald R. Kennedy; daughters: Peggy Sue Osgood and Janie R. Rodgers; 10 grandchildren; and 7 great grandchildren; brother: William P. Kennedy; and sister: Marie Christner. He was preceded in death by his brothers: Joseph B. Kennedy, Jr. and Edward R. Kennedy. He was a wonderful father and mentor to his children and family.

The funeral will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, July 28, 2017 at the Beyers Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Chris Haden officiating. In lieu of flowers, an endowment fund will be established in John M. Kennedy's name.

Contributions may be made to Florida Citrus Hall of Fame Advancement Office, Florida Southern College, 111 Lake Hollingsworth Drive, Lakeland, FL 33801-5698. Online condolences may be made at www.beyersfuneralhome.com. Beyers Funeral Home, Umatilla.

Tribute Wall

BB

“ John was a wonderful man, with a kind soul and a ready laugh. A true Southern gentleman, he will be greatly missed by the citrus industry that he made his family - especially those of us with the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame. I will never forget the support he gave my late husband, Alan, and me when Alan was out of work and we had a baby on the way... Much love to your family and prayers in his name!
All my best -
Brenda

Brenda Eubanks Burnette - July 28, 2017 at 02:54 PM

KS

“ We will miss you Uncle John! I will never forget your wonderful humor and great advice.



Ken, Yvonne & Travis Scott - July 26, 2017 at 10:16 PM

EB

“ Love you Uncle John. You were a wonderful, funny and loving man. I will miss you and how you always made me laugh. You are now with those who have passed before you, Grandpa, Grandma, Uncle Joe and Uncle Eddie just to name a few. And YES I am related to you even though I would not drink your orange juice. Just to make you happy I now Love orange juice. 🍊🍊👨🍳



Elizabeth M. Becker - July 26, 2017 at 07:58 PM

TT

“ We pray for the family as the indoor this hard time. For John we celebrate him going home.



The Taylor's - July 26, 2017 at 04:35 PM

GB

“ My heart and prayers go out to John's family. He was a great friend and mentor to me when I graduated college and went to work with Golden Gem Growers. I have fond memories of him and how welcome he made me feel when I arrived at GGG. I will never forget the speech he gave at my bosses retirement party (Gene Beeler) at Pine Meadows Country Club in 1990. I will miss him and think of him often.

Gary Brundage - July 26, 2017 at 11:48 AM

LF

“ With our heartfelt sympathy.



Linda(Zellman)and Jerry Faircloth - July 26, 2017 at 10:26 AM

RP

“ So sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Ronnie and Gail phillips - July 25, 2017 at 08:59 PM