



John J. Van Gels

September 15, 1943 - April 12, 2020

John J. Van Gels, beloved husband, father and grandfather, and loved by many, passed away April 12, 2020 surrounded by his family. John was a retired Boeing Company Executive, pivotal figure in the Aerospace world and St. Louis Community advocate. John was well respected throughout the Aerospace and Manufacturing community for his tireless work ethic and ability to drive success into all his endeavors. John will truly be missed by all.

Survivors include, two sons: Christopher [Kimberly] Van Gels and Richard [Lynne] Van Gels; thirteen grandchildren: Nicolle, Lattina, Ashley, Trinity, Trent, Wolfgang, Kaylin, Rylan, Collyn, Nolan, Gracelyn, Brooklin, Addilyn Van Gels, and John Plys; one sister: Marilyn Collier; one brother: Donald [Susan] Van Gels. He was preceded in death by his parents: William and Eileen [nee Duvall] Van Gels; his beloved wife of 58 years, Ina [nee Dominick]; and one son: James Van Gels.

. A Celebration of his life will be held at a future date. Services are private at Bellerive Garden's Cemetery.

Any memorial contributions may be made to The St. Louis Area Foodbank.

www.valhallafunerals.net "V"

Cemetery

Bellerive Garden's Cemetery

740 N. Mason Rd

Creve Coeur, MO, MO

Comments



“ Known John Ven Gels for long time and he is one of the true pioneers in Aviation. Rick,
Please accept my sympathies and pass it to your family.
Jay Jayatilake.

Jay Jayatilake - April 22 at 09:14 PM



“ My thoughts and prayers are with the VanGels family in the loss of John ! He was not only a great leader but a good friend and co-worker for many years. Always made me smile.

Judy Ciaramitaro - April 21 at 05:41 PM



“ I'm very sorry to hear about the loss of your Dad. Your dad was a strong and dedicated leader and mentor to many. He made a huge imprint at BDS and brought the best out of everyone. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

With Sympathy - Pat Sandoval

Patricia Sandoval - April 21 at 01:34 PM



“ Chris, Rick and family, my deepest condolences for your loss. John was a great leader, boss, mentor and a legend at Mc Donnell Douglas and Boeing. I was so intimidated by him when I first met him as a young engineer and then grew to admire him so much as a boss and as an individual. I learned so much from him. He always spoke openly and to the point. I will always remember: "Pass not mistakes, receive no mistakes"; "Trust but verify". He wrote my recommendation letter in support of my nomination for my Masters degree and told me to "Go get them" with a big smile. I owe John so many things and for that I will always be very grateful. God bless him. Rest in piece big John.

Adriana Ocampo.

Adriana Ocampo - April 21 at 12:30 PM



“ To the VanGels family, please accept my sincere condolences for your loss. John was a pivotal role model and mentor throughout my career at Boeing. His discipline, work ethic and love of people placed him among the iconic leaders of his generation. We owe so much to him and Ina for their love and support. I will cherish the fun times we shared, the lessons in leadership and the importance of true friendship. May he rest in perfect peace.

Norma Clayton - April 21 at 08:08 AM



“ My heartfelt condolences to your family. I'm sure a lot of people have told you how wonderful your father was. He truly was a man that listened to people. We were in the building 33. Auditorim years ago, and I had asked a question about service anniversary, policy. His staff did not want me to ask this question and thought it would annoy John. I asked about having ice cream since it wasn't common policy for everyone, John said, I can't imagine an anniversary without ice cream. He was always a straight shooter and didn't brush off people with bogus information. You knew if he told you something, it was the true story, like it or not. He will always be remembered as a legend in the aerospace industry. We will all miss this great guy.

Steve Wise - April 20 at 05:52 PM



“ I always enjoyed working with John. Straight shooter, insightful, street smart and a great sense of humor. Follow his leadership example in pursuit of manufacturing perfection.

Travis Durand - April 20 at 04:11 PM



“ My condolences to Chris and Rick and your families. Your father was a great man who I will never forget as a boss, as a mentor, and as a friend . I pray that God will comfort you and your families during this difficult time of loss.
God Bless,
John Tracy

john tracy - April 20 at 02:53 PM



“ John was very hardworking and respected by his coworkers at McDonnell/Boeing. He was heavily involved with the shop floor employees. He was responsible for initiating HPWO (HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK ORGANIZATION) at the company. He always spoke to me in high regard. So sorry to hear this. RIP my friend.

Sonya Kennett - April 20 at 02:24 PM



“ Chris, Rick and family, I would like to express my heart felt condolences. JVG was a good man. Him and his wife were very personable and a delight to be around. He will be greatly missed. St. Louis McDonnell Douglas/Boeing is a much better place due to his leadership. God Bless.

Anthony "AC" Cartwright

Anthony Cartwright - April 20 at 10:37 AM



“ Chris, Rick, I am sorry to hear the news of your Dad's Passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you, and your family. John was an Inspirational Leader for McDonnell / Boeing team, and truly cared for the many leaders he influenced. He will truly be missed by all...

Ken Abram - April 20 at 07:57 AM



“ John not only was a big guy, he had a big heart. He and my sister had a wonderful marriage. Rest in peace, Blessings.

Pat Dewart - April 19 at 06:31 PM



“ Kim, Chris, and all of the JVG Family... so sad to hear of John's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you all the Sunday morning. He had a big passion for the McDonnell Douglas/Boeing team that I'm sure was rooted in his faith, family, and friends. Know that we are thinking about you all in our prayers Greg K





“ I am saddened deeply by this news. My thoughts and memories of John are a remembrance of the leadership strength that often showed itself with intuitive wisdom capable of navigating the complexities of a large organization. John was truly an inspirational leader capable of balancing business and people acumen like no other. I will always remember the impact he had on me personally and the people around him. God bless his family members as they grieve the loss of a great man who will be missed by all of us - we morn with you.

Mark Vilbert - April 18 at 07:53 AM



“ Truly another heart felt moment in the Van Gels family. John will be truly missed by all as he was a legendary person to be around and loved by all. I have many memories of John and the entire family as Jimmy and I were nearly inseparable in our younger years. John always had a good story to tell at family gatherings based on his many travels.
God Bless,
Pam and Gary Pfister

Gary and Pam Pfister - April 18 at 07:51 AM



“ Chris and Patricia Rudolph purchased the America the Beautiful for the family of John J. Van Gels.



Chris and Patricia Rudolph - April 17 at 11:55 PM



“ Rick, Chris, and family;

I'm very sorry to learn on Sunday about the loss of your Dad. I always had the utmost respect and admiration for your Dad's leadership. Your Dad was such a dedicated leader, mentor, sponsor, and an advocate for so many leaders across the Operations and Supplier Management team. He made a strong imprint on BDS and we were all the better because of your Dad's leadership. Everyone enjoyed your Dad's humor during our site leadership meetings. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

With Sympathy,

Chris Rudolph

Chris Rudolph - April 17 at 11:41 PM



“ Rick,

I was so shock to hear the news of your Dads passing. I know he was your rock. John was a great dad, husband and grandfather. My thoughts prayers are with you and your family..

I think about him always. Production Operations has not been the same after he retired. He is a legend and will never be forgotten. We miss his Leadership and knowledge.

Sending Prayers

Trish Rike

trish rike - April 17 at 08:23 PM



“ We are so sorry for your loss . I met VanGels as a young female mechanic on the Long Beach flight ramp. He was so personable, funny, smart and dedicated to me/everyone in the working world and made us all better. At each step in my career after, he helped me and others around me with his amazing knowledge and 'motivation' to be better. he made Boeing just work.. He helped us all to help and support each other with clear and concise goals to achieve without politics.. I missed him so much when he retired and miss him even more now. I would love to hear the 'hug'em or mug'em' reply direction; or his stories about the families parrot.. He was the most strategically Smartest Operations leader Boeing has ever had (in my 25 years) ..he remembered my name as a young mechanic and supported my development at every step with a personal touch that was just his.. I know he is now helping the Angels work smarter, not harder, in guiding all of us.. Missing you and sending many hugs to Family VanGels- Mary (Wolf) Finnell and Kelly Finnell



Mary (Wolf) Finnell - April 17 at 08:21 PM



“ Rick and family,
So sorry to hear about your Dad’s passing. I worked at Boeing Philadelphia in Operation’s and he was Great OPS leader throughout the company and well respected by all!!!
With my deepest sympathy,
Joe McCann

JOE MCCANN - April 17 at 08:02 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of John’s passing. He was an outstanding leader. His photographic memory let no one pull anything over on him. St.Louis performance and employee engagement excelled under his leadership. Many great memories of John. God bless and prayers for the family.
Kevin and Rhonda Kestler

Kevin Kestler - April 17 at 07:44 PM



“ Chris I am so sorry to hear of your Dads passing. I had a lot of respect for him. When I was a team leader at Boeing we may not of always agreed but we had respect for each other and we never let it stop the progress. He was a very good leader. I know you have a lot of good memories, just hold on to them. We will keep you and your family in our prayers.
With our deepest sympathy,
Kevin & Mary Creech

Kevin Creech - April 17 at 06:11 PM



“ My wife and I are sorry for your families loss and want to send our condolences.

We knew your father for a number of years he was very well liked and loved by so many.

Tim & Sherry



Tim Randall - April 17 at 10:05 AM



“ Chris and Kim, and Rick. I'm saddened to have heard of your pop. It was 1988 the first time I was at your house across from FHN and I encountered John. After work, he relaxed in his chair, he breathed, and we didn't bother him.

Amazing to have seen him "soften" as the years passed, but he was a man to look up to. And he certainly loved your mom! So sorry for your loss.

Chip

Chip - April 17 at 12:27 AM