



## John "Jack" Waugh

June 2, 1944 - August 13, 2021

John "Jack" M. Waugh, 77, of Topeka, passed away peacefully on Friday, August 13, 2021.

Jack was born on June 2, 1944, in Beloit, KS to Ralph and Eva (Moxter) Waugh. He graduated from Mankato High School in 1962 and went on to college at Benedictine University. Jack enlisted in the Air Force and served in the Vietnam War from 1965 to 1969 and returned to finish his Master's Degree in Education at Washburn University in Topeka, KS.

Jack was a passionate and dedicated educator who touched the lives of many. During his twenty-seven-year tenure as Principal for Shawnee Heights Unified School District, his love for the students was unparalleled. Jack went above and beyond to ensure that every student and family he encountered felt supported and cared for. He made quite a grand entrance to the school grounds each day as he rolled up on his beloved Harley Davidson. His love for Shawnee Heights lived on even after his departure in 1997.

With a strong desire for adventure, Jack traveled to New Mexico and Colorado where he was a principal and educator until he returned to retire in Topeka.

Jack was previously married to Mary Jo Waugh, and had three children from this union, Michael, Jenifer, and Erin. Jack was also fortunate enough to share

a wonderful part of his life with Mary Freeman and her two daughters, Bethany and Drue.

Jack is survived by his daughters, Jenifer Waugh (Dr. Ryan Merkow) of Winnetka, IL, Erin Waugh (Rodrigo Jurado) of Chicago, IL; daughter-in-law, Lisa Schmoller-Berndt of Algonquin, IL; and five grandchildren, Joseph Waugh of Malibu, CA, Jordan and Jameson Waugh of Algonquin, IL, Eva Merkow of Winnetka, IL, and Zoe Jurado of Chicago, IL; his sister, Teresa Perry (Bob); as well as two great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ralph and Eva, his brother, Bill, and son, Michael Patrick Waugh.

The family expresses a very special thank you to the wonderful staff at the Healthcare Resort of Topeka for the love and compassion shown towards Jack as well as the countless staff members at the VA who have assisted with his care over the years. Additionally, his family sends a heartfelt thank you to the dedicated team at Ascend Hospice. The tremendous amount of loving care extended to our father means the world to us.

Jack's final wish was to continue to educate others even after he passed, therefore, he chose to donate his body to the University of Kansas School of Medicine for teaching and educational purposes.

There will be a private Celebration of Life ceremony with family where, at Jack's request, his ashes will be spread at Sky Pond in Rocky Mountain National Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence & Research. The foundation is committed to improving the quality of life for individuals by strengthening our

overall sense of community and fostering equal education opportunity and multicultural understanding. We thank you for your support!

The Brown Foundation, 1817 Foxwood Lane, The Villages, FL 32162.  
T: 352-566-4920 [www.brownvboard.org](http://www.brownvboard.org)

Condolences may be sent online to [www.kevinbrennanfamily.com](http://www.kevinbrennanfamily.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *John "Jack" Waugh*

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January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Lori Meens lit a candle in memory of John "Jack" Waugh*



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**Lori Meens** - October 31, 2022 at 07:20 PM



“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you. Jack was a mentor and real friend to me. When I moved from Ulysses to Topeka to become the Highland Park Head Football Coach, Jack reached out to me even though he was the Principal of SHHS. He wanted to help me and be a mentor to me because we were both high school basketball officials. I never knew Jack until we met to talk officiating. Over the years he even mentored me when I became a high school Principal. Jack was what I call a true friend. John Blazek Lawrence, Kansas*

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**John Blazek** - August 25, 2021 at 12:21 PM

LP

“ I spent 10 years of my childhood growing up in Mankato, KS. We lived on the opposite corner of the same block as Jack. My father, Pete Smith, worked for Jack's father, Ralph. So many memories of Jack and his family. Teresa was my first piano teacher, ( I still have the placemaker from her wedding.) As I read this obituary today, I could picture their house, entering the back door, the steps leading up into the kitchen, and another set leading down into the basement. I remember Jack's amazing singing voice. I remember that when their family was out of town we took care of their dog, Inky. I remember his Grandmother Moxter, what a sweet lady she was. My mother, Zona Smith was good friends with Eva and at one time cared for Teresa's children during the days. The last time I saw Jack was when he brought his mother to Jewell for my parents 50th anniversary celebration in 1990. I thought at the time what a loving gesture that was. What a wonderful family, all of our prayers and love during this time. So sorry for your loss.

Linda (Smith) Perdue  
Albuquerque NM

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Linda (Smith) Perdue - August 23, 2021 at 09:44 PM

AM

“ Erin,

*Your dad was a great man and cared not only about what happened with the school but students as well.*

*I remember a time my parents were going through divorce. My dad and his new wife Renee showed up. The two of them wanted to give me this card and note. However, your dad didn't want them to upset me. He wouldn't allow them to bring this to me. They could leave it in the office and were sent on their way.*

*The card and note were later delivered to me.*

*He had me come to his office and made sure I was alright.*

*We talked a little while and when confident things were fine, sent me back to class.*

*I remember another time when my mom was struggling with some things and went to both Jack and Mary. She wanted to know if it would be okay staying with them until things were figured out.*

*The two were very receptive and took me in, making sure again things were alright.*

*Your dad was always there with a smile, joke, hug, encouragement and to listen.*

*I appreciated the support over my years at Shawnee Heights. Your dad will forever be missed but not forgotten.*

*May the grace of God be with you all today and always.*

*Love and blessings*

*Ann Michelle Mickey*

*Class of 1994*

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**Ann Mckey** - August 15, 2021 at 10:52 PM

HV

“ So sorry for your loss. I am Helen Suter VonDemfange and I grew up at Cawker City and my Mother was Mary Moxter John's Grandfather Moxter's sister. I never got to meet him as he had passed away before I was born but got to meet his Grandmother and she was such a sweet lady and I always enjoyed visiting her and his parents. I have lived in Topeka since 99 after I retired.  
Helen Suter VonDemfange

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**Helen VonDemfange** - August 15, 2021 at 09:50 PM

FM

“ One of the most motivating teachers I ever had. Jack's sincerity in teaching always came through. Our common passion to ride Harleys endeared me. Great Guy, excellent teacher and a wonderful human being.

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**Frank Main** - August 15, 2021 at 08:56 PM

JK

“ RIP Jack.  
Nothing but good memories of you at SHHS, and fondly remember running into you a few times in Colorado. 🕯️

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**Jim Kilmartin** - August 15, 2021 at 11:12 AM

SB

“ Dear Erin,

*God bless you and your family. I'm sorry for your loss. Your dad will be remembered by our staff as one feisty veteran! It was my privilege to care for him. And my joy to know you from back in the day. God bless you.*

*Best wishes,  
Sara Pantos Busby*

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**Sara B.** - August 15, 2021 at 09:12 AM

MD

“ I was a student at Shawnee Heights and Jack was my Most favorite principal. I was one who was in trouble a lot with my mouth mostly always speaking my mind. One particular day I recall. I was called into the hallway by him to discuss a tiny matter of which he assured me he was sure I didn't have anything to do with but he need to talk with me about it. Well as you can guess I did have something to do with it and he already knew the circumstances that surrounded my failure in judgment shall we say. He sat me down talked everything over told me that I had left him absolutely no other choice but to give me ISS even though what I had done should of got me OSS . I thanked him and walked down the hall to the classroom for ISS . He said” now you take a seat and I want you to know this won't be tolerated and I'm disappointed that you would act this way . You have such a bright future ahead of you . I can only hope you change your path. “Man I felt so bad about letting him down . I sat down and I don't think I was in the room 30 minutes and darn if he wasn't at the door asking me to come to the hallway again. I thought aww man now what did I do ? He said “walk with me “. I thought boy I must be in some terrible trouble . I walked around the whole school that day waiting for him to tell me what else I had done. All at once he said” you know I really appreciate the fact you told the truth and you were defending another student.“I also like how you tried to solve a problem with your words first . “ I wanted you to know I have pride knowing you are a student of mine “I may not have liked the end result of your actions but your intentions were honorable”. “ Now go back to class .” Smiling from ear to ear he stood at his office door and watched me walk to math class . I have never forgotten what he said to me or how he treated me that day . We became friends after I graduated and I think the world of him . I'm so very sorry for your loss .

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Mickey Duncan - August 15, 2021 at 03:25 AM

RH

*Thank you for sharing that story. That is just one of many stories. I imagine each one of us who were exposed to Jack as an educator has a story to tell. Yours almost brought me to tears. A true educator!*

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**Renaë Hansen** - August 15, 2021 at 06:14 PM

SC

*Jenifer and Erin  
I was so sorry to hear of Jack's passing - sending lots of hugs to you both.*

*Shirley Carpenter*

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**Shirley Carpenter** - August 17, 2021 at 04:11 PM

MA

“ *Erin and Jenny,*

*I'm so sorry to hear of your dad's passing. I'll never forget the time I convinced a foreign teacher that we needed to go on a field trip to Chicago to see the Bulls play. She sent me to Mr. Waugh's office to ask permission, so off I went. It got me out of class, so whatever. He sat there behind his desk and listened to me explain why we needed to take a Spanish class to Chicago, from Kansas, to see a Bulls game, and why that was a good idea. I was struggling to keep a straight face, but I got through most of my pitch. I think he played along for a while, but he was getting impatient. Finally, after about 7 minutes of me rambling on, he leaned back in his chair and started laughing. I joined in with him, but as soon as I got that first chuckle out, he yelled, "Get the hell out of my office with this nonsense!" That was almost 30 years ago, and it still makes me smile. RIP, Mr. Waugh.*

*Matt Hornbaker*

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**matt** - August 14, 2021 at 11:16 PM

BH

*We will keep Jack's family in our thoughts and prayers. He was an outstanding educator who dedicated his life to helping students to become a better person and succeed in life it was a great experience to have taught under his leadership. Jenny spent lots of time with our daughter Cassie. We have many good memories of the Walh family Mark and Bev Henry and the Henry family*

Bev Henry - August 15, 2021 at 09:39 AM

MC

*“ Rip in piece my friend. It was my honor to officiate with Jack. God Bless.*

Mike Custenborder - August 14, 2021 at 08:27 PM

BW

*“ Jenny and Erin, I'm so very sorry to hear of your dad's passing. I have great memories of him as a great principal and also as a terrific dad to all of you. Sending you love and many hugs. Beth Weishaar*

Beth Weishaar - August 14, 2021 at 07:25 PM

EW

*“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album*



Erin Waugh - August 14, 2021 at 06:35 PM

JH

“ I’m so sorry for your loss, Erin. I remember your dad fondly as a wonderful principal at Shawnee Heights! Wishing you and your family peace during this time!

*Ryan and Jennifer Hill*

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**Jennifer Hill** - August 14, 2021 at 06:10 PM

RF

*The Flanner family (Rev. Don, Joy, Lowell & Jennifer send our prayers & condolences to you and you family. I was Pastor at Tecumseh United Methodist Church from 1992 til 2000. Both Lowell & Jennifer are Shawnee Height's grads. I recall meeting & appreciating your dad as a dedicated & caring principal & educator. Lowell graduated in 1996 and has fond memories of Jack. Lowell was the half-back & defensive corner back on the team when they almost defeated Salina Central at Salina for the KS 6A football championship. Keep those good memories of your dad in your heart & he will continue with his education dreams. May you all have know the peace which passes all understanding during this time if loss.*

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**Rev. Don Flanner** - August 14, 2021 at 07:14 PM

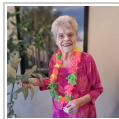
RH

“ Jennifer and Erin, my deepest thoughts and prayers are headed your way.

*Rita Hulsing*

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**Rita Hulsing** - August 14, 2021 at 01:15 PM



*Erin and Jennifer my thoughts and prayers are with you tonight. Deep love and hugs from me to you*

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**Rose Anne Gardner** - August 15, 2021 at 12:05 AM

TW

*our prayers are with you Erin and Jennifer*

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**Thomas J Walsh** - August 15, 2021 at 05:58 PM

RG

*Prayers for the entire Waugh Family. Jack hired me create a successful wrestling program. He hired the late Mike Ford to be Head football coach. We love your Father. He just wanted us Coaches to create positive environment. Mike, Jennifer, Erin I was fortunate to be involved with at school n athletics. Mary Jo class act and always supporting us Teachers. Mary Freeman your wonderful personality and enthusiasm was so cool, give a hug to your daughters. It was my pleasure to serve as a Shawnee Educator for Mr. Waugh and I will cherish that time. Our three children are SHHS graduates, Brenda n Coach offer our love & prayers at this difficult time for Jack s family.*

*Robert M. Gonzales*

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**ROBERT GONZALES** - August 15, 2021 at 07:29 PM

JA

*I officiated high school football with Jack. Always professional on the field and jokester off. Enjoyed every game we worked together. "Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him..."*

*John Anguiano*

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**John Anguiano** - August 16, 2021 at 09:30 PM