



John L. Decker

August 31, 1935 - August 15, 2016

Arrivederci. Aloha. Ate 'Logo. Adios. Auf Wiedersehen. Sayonara. Farewell to our husband, our father, our brother, our uncle, our cousin, our grandfather, our friend.

Just shy of his 81st birthday, John Leonard Decker was surrounded by his wife Blanche and their two sons John Alan and Mike Keith as he quietly passed away on August 15th of 2016. John and Blanche became true partners in life during their marriage of 58 years. As their relationship spanned six decades, Blanche and John embraced life's moments jointly from the beaches of Hawaii to the snowbanks of Michigan to the swamplands of Florida.

John L. Decker was born into a family of seven children. The passing of his parents' at a young age sent John Decker out into the world to educate himself through academics and exploration of the United States of America. John served two years in Japan by way of the U.S. Army post-Korean War. This experience created an unending thirst for knowledge. John received a Bachelor of Science in geology degree from Grand Valley College, now known as Grand Valley University. John earned a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Education from Western Michigan University. John taught math and science to 7th and 8th graders when he lived in Maui, Hawaii. While at Springhill, Florida John worked as a geologist for the South West Water

Management District.

The Summer of 1975 was the most remembered summer for John Alan and Michael Keith. John Decker decided to drive from Michigan to Anchorage, Alaska in a pick-up truck that had a camper on it with his 15-year-old son John and 13-year-old son Michael. On the return trip, John put the truck on a ferry as they drifted through the Inside Passage in Alaska. During this month long trip, John funded their experiences with cash only as he refused to own a credit card. John enjoyed teasing his son Mike about the time when Mike got too close to a wide moose calf. The moose cow was quick to demonstrate to Mike her resolve to protect her young from his predator ways. Blanche stayed home while their boys experienced this "walk-about-into-manhood" trip with their father. The boys fondly recall their father taking them to beach every weekend early in the morning before their mother rose from her slumber.

John Decker was quite a medical miracle. Cheating death over twenty years ago by receiving a kidney transplant, John mentally pushed his body through "despite the worst medical complications". Illustrating "where there is a will, there is a way". John's transplanted kidney maintained it's functioning until the end. Sometimes when your body is so battered and bruised from ongoing medical issues it surrenders itself without your consent.

John Decker's mind remained as clear as a bell until the end. At the age of 79, John Decker earned the title grandfather when his son Michael and his wife Kristine gave birth to John's only grandchild, Emily Louise Decker. Last Thursday night as John chatted with Mike's family on a phone call, Emily yelled out to John, "I love you!" to which he replied, "I love you too, my granddaughter!" John always called Emily "my granddaughter". During each encounter he had with Emily, John introduced himself by saying "Hey granddaughter, this is your Grandfather Decker."

When it was time to say goodbye, John Decker would say farewell in multiple languages. The last words John uttered to his daughter-in-law Kristine were, "Arrivederci! Adios! Sayonara! Hey you know that Sayonara is goodbye in Japanese. You know that, don't you Kristine? Well... Sayonara."

An educator to the end.

Goodbye. Visitation will be from 10:00-11:00am on Saturday, August 20, 2016 at the Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home in Hamilton (3616 Lincoln Rd./M-40). Following the visitation, there will be a graveside service at Riverside Cemetery at 11:00.

www.langelandsterenbergh.com

Tribute Wall



“ *John L. Decker*

August 31, 2022 at 01:26 PM



“ *"Dear Blanche and family -- We are so sorry to hear of John's passing. I realize that almost two years have passed by, but we just found out. Please accept our deepest sympathy. Dave and Judy Haney, W3SJ & KB3AAM"*

Dave Haney - July 07, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *"Blanche, John, Mike and Kristine, My heartfelt sympathy and prayers to your family. John was a courageous and kind man and I'm so glad I got to know him although later in life."*

Carol DeKorte - August 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM