



John E. Smith Jr.

November 10, 1939 - January 2, 2025

John E. Smith Jr., a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and educator, passed away peacefully on January 2, 2025, after a long illness. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1939, he grew up with a love for learning and a deep sense of community that would define his life.

A 1958 graduate of Penn Township High School in Butler County, Pennsylvania, John went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Clarion University and later a master's degree in education from Indiana University. His passion for teaching led him to Union High School in Rimersburg, Pennsylvania, where he dedicated nearly 32 years to educating and inspiring seventh and eighth grade students in Geography and Earth Science.

Beyond the classroom, John's love for sports and coaching left a lasting impact on countless young athletes. He coached various teams, including Little League baseball, Junior Varsity Girls Basketball, and Junior High Football. He also served as a referee for boys' basketball and was a dedicated football and basketball scout for Union High School.

John found joy in many hobbies, from playing chess and gardening to reading and spending time with family. A devoted Pittsburgh sports fan, he cheered passionately for the Pirates and the Steelers. Summers were often spent camping throughout Pennsylvania, tubing, and enjoying the great outdoors. His faith was the cornerstone of his life, and he was known for his kindness, generosity, and willingness to help anyone in need. His caring heart touched the lives of many, and his legacy of love and service will endure.

John is survived by his devoted wife of 60 years, Dorothy Jean Smith of Clarion, Pennsylvania, as well as his seven children, fourteen grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren. His memory will forever be cherished by his family, friends, former students, and all who were fortunate enough to know him.

The Robert V. Burns Funeral Home in Clarion is handling the arrangements. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 10, 2025 at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Clarion with Rev. Michael Polinek presiding.

Previous Events

Mass of Christian Burial

MAY 10. 11:00 AM (ET)

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
715 East Main Street
Clarion, PA 16214

Tribute Wall

JS

“ I remember a class when Mr. Smith had to leave the room briefly, and he turned to us and said, " No talking while I step out for a moment. " The next moment was when Missy H. yelled across to me, and said "Hey!" Just then our teacher came back and knew we were talking. He gave each of us a writing assignment. I knew, without a doubt, he was an educator that used fair

J. S. - January 13, 2025 at 06:55 PM

SH

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Shaina - January 06, 2025 at 09:58 PM

MA

Great family.....

Mary Ann - January 08, 2025 at 01:58 AM

AG



Amanda Giles - January 11, 2025 at 08:41 AM

SG

“ I'm very sorry for your loss, Goose and your entire family. May light perpetual shine upon your Dad, today and always. XO Maverick

Sarah Greene - January 06, 2025 at 08:01 PM

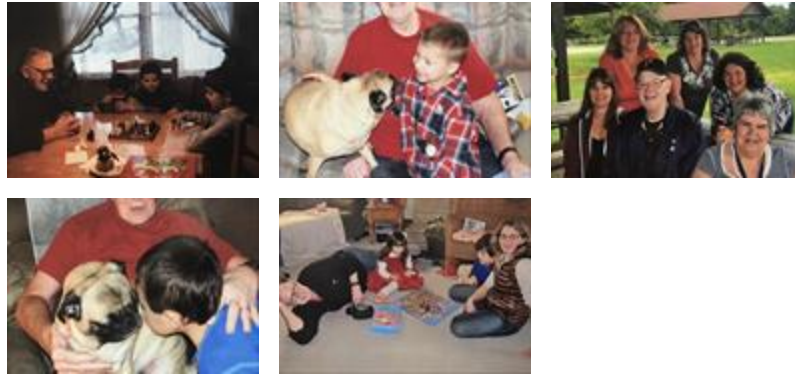
DA

“ Many memories from my years at Union High, as my teacher & coach. My sympathy to fellow classmate, Jeff & the entire Smith family.

Dayna (Taylor) Armagost - January 06, 2025 at 12:30 PM

Jl

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



jill - January 06, 2025 at 11:43 AM

AG

“ You were the best Grandpa a girl could ever ask for. without your influence I wouldn't be who I am today. I will forever hold all the memories close to my heart. I am thankful I got to have you as a teacher and wasn't always the favorite student.. lol All the summers going to state parks or just listening to Polka music dancing around the house in Lawsonham with Grandma and you. We made a million memories and I am forever grateful and appreciative for them all. I always get call a daughter to you guys and I always say nope that is my grandpa. I see your past students and they tell me so many stories about you. especially coaching them. They all are so proud to have had you as their teacher. Today is a lot harder than when I found out you passed. I love you and watch over us all. until then....xoxox snooty face...



Amanda Giles - January 06, 2025 at 10:58 AM

BS

“ Mr. Smith was one for the ages. Very kind, funny, and caring teacher. He made geography fun. I remember the dance he would do with the yard stick about "latitude is fat-itube and it goes around.. longitude is long-itude and it goes up and down." My prayers and condolences to his family.



Brenda Shimmons - January 06, 2025 at 10:40 AM

JC

Than you, Brenda. Azimuth was another amusing lesson. Your heartfelt comments mean very much. May you be blessed with more fond memories from UHS.

J. L. S. C. - January 11, 2025 at 07:16 PM

P(

“ Mr. Smith was an awesome teacher and I enjoyed learning a lot from him , my deepest sympathies to his family .

Pam (Zellefrow)Barger - January 05, 2025 at 08:32 PM

JG

“ Mr Smith was my 7th grade S. S. Teacher. I remember he was a very kind man. He was always smiling. I don't ever recall any disrespect from any student towards him. He treated you as he expected to be treated. Wonderful soul!
John Greenawalt

John Greenawalt - January 05, 2025 at 08:07 PM

JS

Dearly beloved, Thanks so much for the heartwarming comments. Sing a *new* song.

J. S. - January 13, 2025 at 06:58 PM

AM

“ He was my teacher and basketball coach in 7th grade. I loved playing for him, because he was tough but you knew he cared. My condolences to his family, especially my classmate, Jill. RIP

AJ Meeker - January 05, 2025 at 07:48 PM

LB

“ Thoughts and prayers for the Smith family. We were backyard neighbors and he taught all of the Boltz children in high school.

Laurie Boltz - January 05, 2025 at 04:51 PM

JS

Thank you, Laurie. Growing up in a rural town had benefits. We learned many life lessons in our humble little corner of the 🌍. Take care. We hope y'all know how to get where you're going with what you learned in geography and map reading. GPS may NOT always do the job.

J. S. - January 13, 2025 at 07:02 PM