



Jack Frederick Murphy

November 15, 1953 - May 12, 2025

Jack Frederick Murphy, of Fridley Minnesota, passed away on May 12, 2025 at age 71, after a long battle with COPD. Jack is survived by his siblings Mike (Shirley) Murphy, Pat (Carl) Murphy-Osterlund, Dan Murphy, and Nancy Bonanno; the mother of his children and former spouse, Mary Murphy; his daughters Genevieve (Ken) Kewatt and Kelly (Nick Amos) Murphy; and his five grandchildren. Jack was preceded in death by his parents, Donald and Gayle Murphy, and his partner later in life, Joni Beaty.

The second youngest of five siblings, Jack had quite the childhood roaming the Columbia Heights area with a band of best friends and other fellow rascals. One of his first and longest friends, Tim Hudak, was a part of almost every story and a co-conspirator for most of their shenanigans. There were fights, fires, and all the adventures that boys in the 60s could find. Fishing, camping, and exploring were activities he enjoyed from an early age and that he continued into adulthood.

In his teens, he met another lifelong friend, Paul, and also Paul's sister, Mary. At age 21, Jack married Mary and at the end of that year, they welcomed their first child, Genevieve. Another child, Kelly, followed a few years later. It was a natural fit, as Jack grew up in a big family, for him to feel comfortable in Mary's also big, busy family. Most of those siblings also had several children, making for quite the crowd wherever they gathered. There were frequent trips to Sioux

Falls, Murdo, and Pierre, South Dakota, as well as Eau Claire, Elk Mound, and Madison, Wisconsin. All to stay in touch with family members flung across the midwest. The more people spread out, the further he'd go to stay in touch. Family was important to him and he always enjoyed an excuse for a good road trip.

Jack had a pretty diverse work history. He initially enlisted in the Navy and had high hopes of serving like his father, but was discharged for medical reasons. Early in his married life, he worked for a circuit board manufacturer. After that, and for the majority of his career, he was employed by the Soo Line and Canadian Pacific railroads, as a lineman on traveling crews and then later a CAD drafter, designing many of the railroad crossings we use today. His last full time role was as a sidewalk inspector for the city of Minneapolis, keeping those walkways cleared and safe for everyone to use. He retired from the city, but couldn't stay still for long so he worked for a while as a school bus driver for Robbinsdale schools, telling us stories about the young students he transported carefully everyday.

Beyond work and family, Jack was an avid fisherman, gardener, bird watcher, an amateur naturalist, and history buff.

He spent many hours on the water, willing to get up early, stay out late, and hone his technique. He taught his daughters and grandchildren to fish so the whole family could go together. Every fishing outing we kept track of a few categories-first fish, most fish, and biggest fish-so that everyone had a chance to celebrate.

Jack's gardens were always a point of pride for him. Whether it was growing food to eat, adding beauty with bountiful flowers, or keeping indoor plants alive for decades, his green thumb was evident everywhere. He lived by the seasons and worked hard to enhance the world around him.

Part of that world included wildlife, whether it was in his own yard or out in less cultivated places, he watched the comings and goings of birds and other animals with interest. Occasionally interfering on behalf of species that needed help, like bluebirds, but mostly just observing. He earned his divers certification so that he could explore the ocean and see marine life up close. He would casually talk about getting up (way too) close with aquatic predators, giving us all grey hairs.

He was a self-taught student of military history and strategy, with a keen interest in the civil and second world wars. He continued learning about history from every vantage point he could get his hands on. He traveled to many civil war battlegrounds, he read hundreds of books, watched documentaries, and was happy to talk to people about history whenever they'd let him.

He loved a good adventure and was pretty fearless-whether that was storm watching, road trips, or scuba diving-his curiosity about the natural world, and the people in it, never waned.

Memorial service will be held on Friday May 30th, 2025, at Washburn-McReavy Shoreview Chapel (515 Hwy 96 W, Shoreview MN 55126). Visitation begins at 4pm, the service at 5pm. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Audubon Society preferred.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 30. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Shoreview Chapel
515 Highway 96 West
Shoreview, MN 55126

Celebration of Life

MAY 30. 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Shoreview Chapel
515 Highway 96 West
Shoreview, MN 55126

Reception

MAY 30. 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Shoreview Chapel
515 Highway 96 West
Shoreview, MN 55126

Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Celebration of Life for Jack Frederick Murphy in memory of Jack Frederick Murphy



Washburn-McReavy - May 15, 2025 at 09:53 AM