



John Willard Champine

February 14, 1946 - July 2, 2021

Just a small-town boy, born and raised in south Fairmont, John Champine lived a cosmopolitan and full 75 years, until he quickly succumbed to a rare cancer while at home on July 2, 2021.

Born 1946, John was raised with a small town life, surrounded by lakes, farms, good neighbors, and using the "correct" names for items like pop and hotdish. After graduating from Fairmont High School in 1964, he attended the University of Minnesota, and though a gifted violinist who was offered a music scholarship, he graduated with degrees in Theater, French, English, and History. By 1968, he had "the good sense" in his words, to marry Lynn, his love of 55 years. They put down deep roots in the Twin Cities, as they raised their children, Nathan and Natalie, and cultivated a large circle of friends.

John started his long career in the then nascent computer industry at Sperry Univac. In various roles, he rose quickly from programming data cards, to being a Teacher in computer education and ended as Manager in the software development division. Sperry offered him far-flung fun opportunities working in El Paso, TX (White Sands Missile Range), South Africa, London, until settling back in Burnsville and later Prior Lake. He also was extremely proud of his later supercomputer work with Cray Research, and roles with NASA's Jet Propulsion Labs, Datacard, Vital Images, and finally retiring from Thomas Reuters. John was an early member, and later chair, of the U of MN's Computer Science Department Advisory Board.

His hobbies were myriad, including boating, golf, cards, photography, debating

current events and politics, seeing airshows and WWII warbirds, and travel, especially taking cruises. He loved ancestry and finding origins to his and others' family tree. Long-term residents of Prior Lake, John and Lynn later became true snowbirds wintering in Arizona, spending time with many new friends.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Genevieve; father, Ashley Floyd "Ted"; and brothers Charles and George Champine. He is survived by his wife, Lynn; Son, Nathan (Adrian); Daughter, Natalie (Charles) Rhoden; and the grandchildren who called him 'Papa' - Julian, John, Connor and Genevieve. He also leaves behind numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and dear friends. All will miss his kind soul, stories, laughter, and the many fun days hosting and entertaining in their Prior Lake home.

Visitation will be on Friday, July 16 from 4-7pm at Holy Trinity United Methodist Church in Prior Lake. Funeral services will be on Saturday, July 17 at 11am at Washburn-McReavy, Dawn Valley Chapel in Bloomington, MN. Memorials are preferred and will be distributed by John's family in his memory.

Cemetery Details

Dawn Valley Memorial Park (Bloomington)

9940 Bush Lake Road
Bloomington, MN 55438

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 16. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Holy Trinity United Methodist Church
16150 Arcadia Avenue
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Chapel Service

JUL 17. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Dawn Valley Chapel
9940 Bush Lake Road
Bloomington, MN 55438
(952) 941-7686
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

Tribute Wall

MR

“ I first met John in the 1990's as a customer of Cray Research at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne in a very innovating program called Parallel Application Technology Program with JPL, LLNL, LANL, Pittsburg University and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne. His great professional & personal qualities always impressed me. Since then, we always stayed in contact, becoming friends out of the business relationship, both as Snowbirds in Phoenix AZ, where we shared some very good moments. Since 2020, I have not been able to travel to the U.S. due to the travel ban Covid19 from Europe and we kept pushing back our next meeting every 6 months, last time in April 2021, so sad it will never happen again!

I will always remember John as a fine person and perfect gentleman, full of spirit and life. Too sad to see you go my friend, I will miss you dearly!

All my condolences to your nice wife and family,
Michel Reymond
Switzerland



Michel H Reymond - July 23, 2021 at 10:04 AM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Willard Champine.



July 15, 2021 at 08:07 PM

“ John, we miss you; and you will be in our memories until we join you. Our friendship with you dates to late 1993 when Bill joined Cray Research. Together Bill and you led and nurtured a world partnership to explore an entire new path in supercomputing. That winter we were newcomers to the Twin Cities and literally knew no one. You and Lynn took us under your wings and made our daughters and us part of your family. Memories of our fun times together golfing, boating, cruising, playing cards, enjoying our mutual love of fun food and solving the world's problems will be with us for the rest of our lives. Over the years our love and respect for you, Lynn and your two wonderful children has only grown. Among our fondest recollections are those of Nathan and Natalie's weddings, our Caribbean cruise and especially our 21 days together cruising the Mediterranean.

You and Bill travelled our country-- indeed the world-- together. It was soon obvious to us that you had the unique gift of making lasting friendships wherever you found yourself. You didn't have to work at it: you just had a personality that made people want to be your friend. Terry says that this is in part because your friends knew that you cared about people and that they soon realized that they and their thoughts were genuinely important to you. Although you and Bill only worked together for three years, the two of you came to share dozens of lasting friendships around the world-- which mainly came down to you. Making friends and Bill coming along for the ride.

John, you were naturally good at whatever you did. You were athletic, strong (Bill thought of you as a pillar of strength), had talent as a musician, and were self-taught in many of the arcane fields of computing technologies. You always landed on your feet and jumped wholeheartedly into each new opportunity to learn and contribute something new.

Even the past decade when your great health began to let you down, you accepted each new challenge with determination and

kept your great attitude about life up to the very end.

Our memories of speaking to you on the night of your death as you called us to thank us for being your friends will always be a reminder of how to live the rest of our lives.

John, it is we who must say thank you for numbering us among your many friends. We will always be the better for having the good fortune to be your friends.

Terry and Bill Camp

Bill and Terry Camp - July 15, 2021 at 09:59 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of John Willard Champine.*



July 13, 2021 at 02:17 PM

CT

“ Dear Lynn, Nathan and Natalie,

I'm so saddened to hear that John has passed. I have such fond memories of him and our Butternut Circle adventures. He was so kind. I remember he walked Sparky in the circle and most impressionable moment was when he rescued Drew from my high school car starting on fire. His memory will live on with many of us and I hope that brings you peace.

*Much love,
Christin (Running) Tackett*



Christin Tackett - July 12, 2021 at 10:46 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of John Willard Champine.*



July 12, 2021 at 02:37 PM