



John Charles Hellyer

January 31, 1971 - October 22, 2023

John Hellyer, 52, long-time resident of Minneapolis, MN, passed away peacefully on October 22, 2023 with family at his side. John was born in Chicago, IL on January 31, 1971, but grew up in the small town of Baraga, MI. John had cerebral palsy and was in a wheelchair his entire life. He was a member of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. After graduating from Baraga High School in 1989, he attended Courage Center in Minnesota to learn life skills and how to live on his own. He was captivated by what a big city had to offer him - transportation, shopping, movies, restaurants, concerts, and independence, and so he stayed, foregoing the security of living near family. He was fearless and an inspiration to many, and later in life he worked as a mentor to a young man also affected by cerebral palsy.

John was a self-proclaimed professional smart ass and possessed an incomparable sense of humor. He lived life unapologetically according to his motto "I gotta be me." He enjoyed photography, making videos, attending Comic Cons, listening to heavy metal, watching horror movies, taking the train to the Mall of America, and collecting Funko Pops and Godzilla/King Kong memorabilia.

Preceding John in death are his maternal grandmother, Elizabeth "Peg" Chosa of Baraga, MI; maternal grandfather, Clarence "Buck" Chosa of Baraga, MI; paternal grandparents, Helen "Virginia" Hellyer and Royal Hellyer of Chicago, IL; and uncles, Joseph Chosa and Michael Chosa, of Baraga, MI.

John is survived by his mother, Beverly Hellyer of Baraga, MI; father, John Hellyer Sr. (Yong Cha) Hellyer of Las Vegas, NV; sister, Peggy Hellyer of Baraga, MI; aunts, Joyce Chosa and Amy St. Arnold of Baraga, MI; nephew, Michael Hellyer of Westland, MI; and close cousins, Jennifer Misegan of L'Anse, MI, Jodie Chosa of Zeba, MI, and Ryan St. Arnold of Ypsilanti, MI.

It was John's wish to be cremated and have his ashes scattered in the city he adopted and loved -- Minneapolis. He did not wish to have a service. To honor John, donations can be made to United Cerebral Palsy of Minnesota in his memory. Please go to <https://ucpmn.org/donation>, or call 651-265-7361.

Tribute Wall

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“ John was a goddamn maverick, who turned Courage Center into an important and precious memory for me, instead of just another institution. I don't know how I would have endured it without him (and Bob). John was funny and fearless and smart and creative. He had a Chewbacca growl and a laugh that will echo in my head forever. I'm sorry we grew apart. I'm sorry for everyone that loved him, or just had the opportunity to know him. The world's a less interesting place without him in it.

Shannon King - December 16, 2023 at 06:57 PM