



John Kenneth Steffen

January 7, 1944 - November 4, 2025

John Kenneth Steffen

John Kenneth Steffen, 81, of Minneapolis, passed away November 4, 2025. A memorial service will be held on May 16, 2026 at 2:00PM at Mount Olivet Church in Minneapolis. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at the church. For those unable to attend the service in person you will be able to attend virtually at: <https://mtolivet.org/live/>

He was born January 7, 1944, in Mankato, Minnesota, to Richard "Dick" and Vivian Steffen. John grew up in Moorhead, Minnesota, where his father had established a successful office equipment business under the name Steffen's Office Equipment after completing his service in the Navy. An avid athlete for his high school team, the Moorhead Spuds, John was on the wrestling team and played on both offense and defense for the football team.

John was the first in his family to attend a four-year college. He earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Carleton College in 1966, where he met his future wife, Susan Marie Peaks. His love of philosophy continued at Brown University, where he earned his master's degree in 1968, initially planning to become a philosophy professor. But John was practical at heart. Following his service along with Susan in the Peace Corps in South Korea, John learned two important lessons: he appreciated a daily newspaper, and he confirmed he needed to pursue a different career than teaching philosophy.

John and Susan married on August 27, 1967, beginning a partnership that would span more than five decades. He attended the University of Minnesota Law School and graduated magna cum laude with his JD degree in 1973.

After graduation, John joined Faegre & Benson (now Faegre Drinker) in the firm's tax group. He was promoted to partner and later served as head of the tax group for many years. Throughout his distinguished legal career, John assisted the corporate group on tax issues relating to many major transactions, including those by which Dayton Hudson ultimately became Target Corporation through the disposition of its department stores. He also represented clients in tax disputes with the IRS, earning a reputation for his expertise and dedication.

An enthusiastic golfer, he and Susan rarely missed an opportunity to play a round together or compete in tournaments at the Headwaters Country Club. He was a devoted and involved father and grandfather, and loved spending time with his family at their beloved lake cabin every summer, where they built a community of lifelong friends. John was also an avid outdoorsman - as a young lawyer, he and another associate would sneak in some fishing at the break of dawn before showing up at the law firm; and he would keep duck calls in his car to practice while stuck in traffic. For decades, every fall John would take part in the cherished tradition of a group pheasant hunt in South Dakota.

John is survived by his brother, Paul R. Steffen (Jeannette) of Thousand Oaks, California, his nephews Michael Steffen (Jessica) of Carlsbad, CA, David Steffen of Thousand Oaks, CA, and niece Sarah Steffen of San Diego, CA; his daughter, Elizabeth Steffen Scheler and her husband, David, and John's grandchildren children, Jack and Emily; his daughter, Christine Steffen and her partner, Matthew Keith, and their son, Peter.

Upcoming Events

Visitation

MAY 16. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church (So. Mpls)
5025 Knox Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55419

Memorial Service

MAY 16. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church (So. Mpls)
5025 Knox Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55419

Tribute Wall

MC

“ On behalf of the Moorhead High School Class of 1962, we would like to extend our deepest sympathy to John and Susan's family, extended Steffen and Peaks Family and especially to Elizabeth and Christine. Prayers to all during this difficult time.

Moorhead High School 1962 Class - January 06 at 02:29 PM

DB

“ Dick Brennan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Kenneth Steffen.

Dick Brennan - November 22, 2025 at 03:31 PM

DB

“ Dick Brennan purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of John Kenneth Steffen.



Dick Brennan - November 22, 2025 at 03:31 PM