



Mr. John W. Kohler

September 14, 1931 - September 7, 2024

John W. Kohler, a beloved husband, father and grandfather, passed away just days shy of his 93rd birthday. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him, and remembered for his warmth, wry humor, and unwavering love and support for his family and friends.

John was born in rural Minnesota, to Lester and Ruth Kohler. Ruth owned the Luxury Café, where John developed his lifelong sweet tooth. John and his older brother Bob enjoyed lots of family time with Ruth's 12 siblings, and lots of cousins, spending summers at the family farms. From a young age, John and Bob worked to help their mother.

John demonstrated a strong work ethic early, leading his own silo crew at just 15, and building silos as far away as Iowa. After high school, John and a friend went to the West Coast to "make their fortune." They did not make their fortune, and came back as far as Minneapolis to look for work. They shared a room at the YMCA, and had paid \$1 deposits on a key for each of them. After ten days, they had to turn in one of the keys to get the deposit back so they could afford to eat Thanksgiving dinner at White Castle. They flipped a dime to see if they would join the Air Force or the Navy, and John won the toss. They were inducted into the Air Force in December, 1950, and almost 24 years later, John retired as a Lt. Colonel.

John started as an electronics technician. He was accepted into the Aviation Cadet program and earned his commission as an officer, becoming a navigator in B-36s and B-52s. He was stationed in Fort Worth, TX, when he

met another young Air Force officer, Pat Wiley, at a club called Suite 225. John went home that night and told his friend that he'd met the woman he was going to marry. And marry they did, just a few months later. They were happily married for 69 years and raised three daughters, Ann, Amy and Kristen. John's distinguished Air Force career took him all over the world, from North Dakota to Morocco, Texas, Ohio, California, Thailand, Hawaii, and Okinawa, before retiring in the New Hampshire Seacoast. John bought a small business, and enjoyed his hobbies of hunting and fishing, and playing the stock market. In 1987 he retired again, and relocated back to his hometown of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, where he and Pat rejoined a tight-knit community of friends, some of whom he had known since kindergarten. John's quick wit, broad knowledge, and genuine interest in others made him an easy companion. John loved the quiet beauty of their lake home, his time hunting and fishing with friends, visiting with his brother Bob and Bob's family, and having his children and grandchildren visit.

In 2015, John and Pat moved to Alpharetta, Georgia, to be closer to their daughter Amy. This move gave us all more cherished family time, from Sunday dinners, to special occasions. Kristen and her adult children Ivy and Jack, as well as Ann's daughter Marina, all came for John's 92nd birthday and for Gavin and Maria Hudnall's wedding in 2023.

John was predeceased by his mother Ruth Kohler, his brother Robert, and his daughter Ann Kohler Oliver. He is survived by his devoted wife of 69 years, Patricia Kohler, his daughter Amy (Jarrett) and his grandchildren Sarah and Gavin (Maria), his daughter Kristen (John) and grandchildren Jack and Ivy, and by his granddaughter Marina Oliver, as well as his nieces Rene' Noonan (Bill), Vicki Kirkhorn Barton, (Bruce) and nephew Jeff Kohler.

John was cremated and his ashes will be interred with military honors at the Georgia National Cemetery, 1080 Scott Hudgens Dr., Canton, GA 30114 on Thursday, Nov 14th at 1:00 p.m.

Cemetery Details

Georgia National Cemetery

1080 Scott Hudgens Dr
Canton, GA 30114
(770) 479-9300