



## John W. DeJong

January 25, 1949 - December 26, 2022

John William DeJong, 73, of Greenville South Carolina, passed away on December 26, 2022, at Greenville Memorial Hospital.

Born in Oskaloosa, Iowa, on January 25, 1949, he was the son of the late John Andrew DeJong and Pauline Langstraat DeJong. John graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Law and was a member of the South Carolina Bar Association since 1975. Believing that everyone is entitled to a defense, John served as the Public Defender of Pickens County for over 20 years before retiring in 2020.

John's favorite poem, Desiderata, is exactly how he moved through life; placidly through the noise and haste, remembering what peace there may be in silence. When not in the court room, he could be found perusing the aisles of Lowes in his customary weekend attire of sweatshirt and well-worn jeans. His family and friends, the law community, and Lowes will all mourn his passing.

John is survived by his wife Claudia Quinn DeJong, one son Jack DeJong (Martha Ellen), three daughters Jocelyn Strickland (Keir), Teri Martin (Jason), and Shannon Quinn as well as one sister Loretta Moyer Masters and his five grandchildren, who knew him as OGG (Old Grumpy Gramps): Isobel Strickland, Deglan Martin, Andrew DeJong, Chloe Martin, and Mary Page

DeJong. John also leaves behind his dog, Daisy Mae.

Along with his parents, he was predeceased by one sister, Delores Hastings. A visitation will be held on Saturday, January 7, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at Mauldin United Methodist Church, 100 E. Butler Rd., Mauldin, SC 29662 followed by a celebration of his life at 2:30 p.m.

For his grandchildren and the many children throughout his life that would confuse him with Santa, the family asks that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to the Shriner's Hospital for Children, 950 W. Faris Rd, Greenville, SC 29605 or Harvest Hope Food Bank, 2818 White Horse Rd. Greenville, SC 29611.

Condolences may be expressed to the family at [www.thehowzemortuary.com](http://www.thehowzemortuary.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 7. 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

Mauldin United Methodist Church  
100 E. Butler Rd.  
Mauldin, SC 29662

## Celebration of Life

JAN 7. 2:30 PM (ET)

Mauldin United Methodist Church  
100 E. Butler Rd.  
Mauldin, SC 29662

# Tribute Wall

CJ

“ Sorry to just now find out of John’s passing. Quite a few years ago my vehicle was broken into by a group of juveniles during a theft spree. We had their fingerprints and other evidence. The juveniles were pleading “not guilty” until they found out the prosecuting attorney had the same last name as me (plaintiff). They quickly changed their plea to “guilty”. John and I had a good laugh about it. Condolences to the family and those who knew him better than I did.

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**Charli de Joong** - December 08, 2024 at 08:10 AM

RL

“ Mr. DeJong was my son’s defense attorney several years back. He got my son out of some very serious crimes. He was a great attorney and I was always so grateful to him.

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**Rex Lance** - January 07, 2023 at 05:11 PM

RH

“ I previously worked in the Greenville office of DJJ in 1972 and was assigned to the Pickens office in 1978. John came along in 1999 having worked in Greenville and was the solicitor assigned to prosecute juveniles and did so for couple years and somehow just traded places with his friend Bill Godfrey who was the public defender!

John was a great attorney and fought hard for the best outcome for his clients. He was a very caring person. John had this gift of saying the right thing at just the right time to make you laugh just when you needed it.

He would bring his favorite dish at the time to many of our birthdays celebrations and Holliday feasts where the entire juvenile court system and Solicitors office and my office would say thanks and share each others company.

Many luncheons were shared with John by my staff and be.

John would in several occasions run into my office and put in my emergency coat and tie that he had forgotten

It was two exrra sizes to big But good enough for court.

I can still see Hihn driving into the court parking lot in that old green SUV that would be loaded down in the back from his weekend projects. I sometimes placed a little moonshine in a plastic coffee can in the front seat which was never locked. To be honest I'm not sure they would even work. I alwas told John the shine could be used for consumption but I really would prefer him to just pour it in the gas tank as I believed it would truly enable that car to reach 45 mph!

He was the slowest driver I knew.

I am honored to have had John as my friend. I will miss him and recall our times together often

Rocky Harden

Retired DJJ

Pickens SC

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rocky harden - January 06, 2023 at 03:40 PM

NN

*Johnny was my cousin. He and I were the two youngest cousins of about a hundred on the Langstraat side of the family. Always loved going to the family farm in Iowa when we were little and bringing the cows to the barn for milking and playing in the haymow of their beautiful barn, riding bikes down the bumpy orchard hill, going snipe hunting and so many other amazing memories. He and his sister, Loretta, called me the "city slicker".*

Naomi DeJong Nelson - March 13 at 01:57 PM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of John W. DeJong.



January 06, 2023 at 12:48 PM

GC

“ So sorry to learn of John's passing. John and I struggled through the University of Tennessee Law School together. Thoughts and prayers are with his family during the days.

*Judge Gordon G. Cooper*

Gordon Cooper - January 05, 2023 at 04:24 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John W. DeJong.



January 04, 2023 at 03:11 PM

GR

“ I knew John in high school. He was always kind and easy going. He will be missed.

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**Glynn Raines** - January 01, 2023 at 06:37 PM

JH

“ John was a kind and loving gentleman. I had the privilege of knowing him when I worked with the court system. He truly loved his mother, he visited daily when she was in the nursing home while his sister vacationed. John will be missed by many people whose lives he touched.

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**Jan Hudson** - January 01, 2023 at 07:19 AM

BR

“ I am so sorry to hear about the passing of John! As a victims advocate we were courtroom enemies but he was always kind to me and I loved our friendly banter. John had a true passion for his work. His courtroom theatrics will never be matched nor his heart for playing Santa! Rest in Peace my friend! Condolences to his family.

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**Brittany Roper** - December 31, 2022 at 07:31 PM

RW

“ I am an attorney who had cases when I was a baby lawyer many years ago with John. He was a fine lawyer and wonderful person (and possibly mentor who didn't necessary know he was mentoring, but was teaching all the same). He will be missed. Sending love and prayers to family. — Becky Wray

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**rebecca wray** - December 30, 2022 at 08:35 AM

BU

“ I worked at The Pickens County Court House while employed at the Pickens County Sheriff’s Office and had the pleasure of knowing and working with John. He was a fantastic man who believed that every person accused of a crime had a right to be represented by a competent and caring Attorney. And he was that competent and caring Attorney. Privileged to have known him. RIP John!

Ben Underwood - December 29, 2022 at 09:54 PM

MC

As an investigator with the Pickens County Sheriff's Office, I spent a lot of time in court, especially Juvenile court with John. He was an intelligent, caring person who brightened the lives of all who knew him. I was proud to call him friend. John was never an adversary in court. He was a friend seeking justice. I will miss him.

Mike Constance - December 30, 2022 at 04:36 PM

CH

“ I am a retired law enforcement officer and I have fond memories of John. He was a fair attorney and treated everyone with respect. When you defend some of these folks sometimes you don't have a lot to work with. It's easy to go after the officers credibility. He would always fair with the officer. Don't get me wrong he would defend his client to the max! I liked him a lot. RIP my friend.

carl Hudson - December 29, 2022 at 08:10 PM

TQ

A lovely and gentle man. So easy to talk with and a shining light to his grandchildren. He will be so missed. ❤️❤️

Tammy James Quinn - December 29, 2022 at 10:11 PM

TG

“ John was a good friend, whom I always enjoyed visiting with when I served as pastor of Easley Bible Methodist Church. Our prayers are with his family, praying that God will give them comfort.

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**Terry D Going** - December 29, 2022 at 07:26 PM

RM

LIKE GLEN RAINES ABOVE, I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL AT BOB JONES ACADEMY WITH JOHN AND WE REMAINED GOOD FRIENDS THROUGHOUT OUR CAREERS. I WAS JUST LOOKING YESTERDAY AT THE INCORPORATION PAPERS THAT HE DREW UP FOR MY COMPANY IN 1981. I REMEMBER HIS FATHER WORKING AT CASH & CARRY, I REMEMBER HIS MARRIAGE IN SPARTA, TENNESSEE. MARTIN AFMAN WAS IN HIS WEDDING. MARTIN AND I WORKED TOGETHER FOR 30 YEARS AND WE TALKED OF JOHN OFTEN. I HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF OUR FRIEND JOHN. MAY HE REST IN PEACE.  
RANDY MATHENA

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**RANDY MATHENA** - July 21, 2023 at 03:42 PM