

John B. Knowles

November 4, 1932 - May 4, 2015

John B. Knowles was born on November 4, 1932, in Hibbing, Minnesota the son of Christopher and Ruth (Bang) Knowles. He graduated from Hibbing High School in 1951 and furthered his education at the U of M Duluth where he received his Business Administration Degree, and transferred to Moorhead State where he received his Bachelor's Degree in Education. He received his Master's Degree from NDSU.

John served his country in the United States Army enlisting in 1953 and was a part of the 82nd Airborne. He was honorably discharged in 1955.

John was united in marriage to Annetta Grosz on June 22, 1957 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead. To this union two children were born.

John started his career as an insurance salesman for Warner Insurance in Fargo. He then went into Education as a History teacher from 1959-1963 in Morris. He also coached football, wrestling, and track. The next year he became Principal in Morgan, Minnesota where he was a counselor and Athletic Director. In 1966, he was Principal at the Junior and Senior High in Elbow Lake and then made his way to Alexandria where he was Vice Principal at Jefferson and after nine years became Principal until his retirement. He enjoyed watching the Vikings, hunting, and his fishing trips with his buddies. He was a member of the Lions Club.

John died on Monday, May 4, 2015. He is survived by his wife, Annetta; son, Scott (Denise) of Hermantown, MN; daughter, Dawn (Mike) Raguse of Lester Prairie; five grandchildren: Tom, Sam, Paul, Sarah, Jacob; one great

grandson, Zander; brother, Richard (Carol) of Shell Lake, WI; four brother-in-laws: Bill (MaryAnn) Grosz, David (Paula) Grosz, Ted (Connie) Grosz, Paul Grosz; many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Elaine Fricke; sister-in-law, Delores Knowles.

Funeral services were held on Thursday, May 7, 2015, 1:00 PM at Living Word Church in Alexandria. Burial was at Kinkead Cemetery. Military Honors were by American Legion Post #87, VFW Post #936, VVA Post 235 and the Minnesota National Honor Guard. Arrangements were with the Anderson Funeral Home. www.andersonfuneral.net

Cemetery Details

Kinkead Cemetery

Alexandria, MN 56308

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 6. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Anderson Funeral Home
659 Voyager
Alexandria, MN 56308
<http://andersonfuneral.net>

Visitation

MAY 7. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Living Word Church
Alexandria, MN

Funeral Service

MAY 7. 1:00 PM (CT)

Living Word Church
Alexandria, MN

Tribute Wall

GL

“*Mr. Knowles, knowing the lack of support at home I lived with, would often call me to his office in the middle of class....."Uh oh, I'm in trouble" I thought.....only to kindly, warmly hug me and ask, "How are things going, Geri? I hear you are working hard, doing well in your classes, but perhaps you need to take it easy?" Always concerned, always encouraging. Told me, "You'll be dangerously successful in life, Geri" He had a huge impact on my esteem, my confidence, and motivation. I'm forever grateful.*

Geri (Larson) Lewis, Jefferson Class of 1976

Geri Lewis - December 04, 2015 at 05:19 AM

MC

“*Hello, I remember being a student at the high school when John was there. Also, i used to babysit your kids a lot. I also sang in the choir with Annetta at the church. I also married a guy named John- we were married 38 years before he died 4 years ago. I met him at Concordia, married him and moved to Maine where I have ever since 1973. I have 3 children and 4 grandchildren. How time flies! I am sorry for your loss.*

Mary Mjolsness Christensen

Mary Christensen - May 11, 2015 at 10:46 AM

SJ

“ Dear Annetta and family, we were so saddened to hear of John's passing away. We will always remember him for his smile, cheerfulness, and friendly nature. It was always fun to see and visit with him. Roger enjoyed his many years of working with him at Jefferson, too, and respected him as an administrator and friend. Our prayers are with your family as you grieve, as well as celebrate his life. Cherish your memories, as he'll always be a part of each of you.

*In Christ's love,
Roger and Sue Johnson*

Sue Johnson - May 10, 2015 at 10:51 PM

JM

“ A wonderful man has passed and we remember him as a fair and caring principal who truly enjoyed the staff and students. He was positive and wanted the best for his schools. Even during conflicts, he got to the bottom of the problem before rushing to judgement. My kids always enjoyed and respected Mr. Knowles often commenting that he was their very favorite principal. We knew John and Annetta as honorable Christian couple, making Alexandria a better place to live.

Jerry and Jane McCrery

Jane McCrery - May 09, 2015 at 10:21 AM

JP

“ So sorry to see that John is gone. He was the principal at Jefferson while I was the school nurse there. He had a high regard for students, always had a smile, and was a good listener. He will be remembered by many. Judith Peterson RN

Judith Peterson - May 07, 2015 at 06:32 PM

IB

“ I have always had so much respect for Mr Knowles. He was a man of integrity and that taught discipline as well as love and kindness now later in life. We know God welcomed Him Home but he will be greatly missed (I know my dad enjoyed his visits with him too!). My deepest sympathy to Annetta and family!

Ingrid (Thompson) Bentley - May 06, 2015 at 10:19 PM

JB

“ I was privileged to work as an administrative assistant at Central Junior High School where John served as principal. John was a top notch, class administrator. He was fair with students and students and staff always knew where they stood with him. One might not always agree with him, but he was not a fence sitter. He impressed upon all of us who worked with him that students and parents were our "customers" and we were there to take care of them. He truly cared for kids. He was a hands-on administrator because he understood that everything in the school revolved around the schedule and he was an integral part of developing that schedule every year. He fostered a family spirit at Central. We all worked hard but we also had fun and John was right in there with us. He loved his family and was so very proud of all of the accomplishments of his children and grandchildren. John visited us often at Discovery Middle School after his retirement and we looked forward to seeing him and giving him hugs. Though the last few years have been very challenging and difficult for him physically, he was not a complainer. His mind remained sharp and his wit remained quick in spite of his body failing him. If that's possible, Heaven became a little better, livelier place on Monday when JBK entered. Eternal rest grant unto Mr. Knowles, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen

Jan Breun - May 06, 2015 at 08:22 PM

JR

“ I didn't know you personally John but you served your country honorably in the United States Army in the 101st Airborne. This says a lot about a man when he sets aside his own plans and dreams to serve his country. God Bless you soldier and take you home where there is no sorrow or pain and give you rest until you can be reunited with your friends and family once again and share in all that our God has in store for us.

James L. Ruether U.S. Army ret. - May 06, 2015 at 05:56 PM

DB

“ It was a pleasure to work with John when he served on the Planning Advisory Commission/Board of Adjustment Board for Douglas County. He took pride in all that he did.

Rest in peace

The Staff at

Douglas County

Land and Resource Management Department



Darla Barker - May 06, 2015 at 04:17 PM

MA

“ Great guy, just ever make him mad.

Mary - May 06, 2015 at 02:26 PM

MA

Oops never

Mary - May 06, 2015 at 02:26 PM

RM

And now I can confess, my brother was smoking on the bus! May you rest in peace.

Renee Mohawk - May 06, 2015 at 09:48 PM

AN

Nobody greeted you better in the hallway of Jefferson, than "J.B." His classic, "shoulder massage" was the most intense wake-up, while at the same time his joy (most of the time) of being at school was contagious. Thanks for helping a "young kid" know he was safe every day, and that someone noticed him. Rest well, J.B.

Anonymous - May 08, 2015 at 07:43 AM

JD

“ I have a lifetime of memories of John Knowles. He was the asst principal at Jefferson that walked the halls and talked to all of us and kept us in line. He was the man who hired me when he was principal at Central and walked the halls and was still keeping us all in line. He would stop in the pool at least once a week to see how our class was going and what we were up to. He is the only person I know who could whistle at a pep rally or homecoming or a school assembly and you could hear a pin drop. He was thought of enough by his students he was the speaker at our 20th class reunion. If you were a student or a co-worker of Mr. Knowles, you will never forget him. On May 4, 2015 a whistle was heard in heaven and there was silence and then a Voice announced "John Knowles is here".



Julie Jackson Drexler

Julie Drexler - May 06, 2015 at 12:43 PM

BB

“ My favorite memory of Mr. Knowels~when my 2 boys were in Jr high they occasionally had to visit Mr. Knowels office. Thankfully it was never anything really serious but he would call and start every conversation with this "Hello mom this is Mr. Knowels. I have (one of my boys) in my office with me and just wanted to let you know." He was so pleasant and kind. My boys really liked him and thankfully they grew up to be wonderful husband and fathers. Thank you Mr. Knowels for helping and showing you kindness to so many kids.

Brenda Cordes-Barker

Brenda Barker - May 06, 2015 at 11:29 AM

SF

“ Without John and my Dad I would have never finished high school.I am blessed to have them in my life.John would ask me daily if I was behaving. He was good at reading between the lines.Lots of Respect for this MAN.I finish highscool in 1982.Steve Fagen

Steve Fagen - May 06, 2015 at 10:36 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John B. Knowles.



May 06, 2015 at 07:40 AM

RO

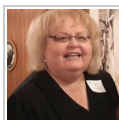
“ Where do I start? When he poked his head out the door at Central to shut down a ruckus? When he frog marched a few of us to his Office for some impromptu counseling? How about his announcement at rehearsal for graduation that Santa Claus was that reality was coming? John was one of a kind and kept a lot of us grounded.. Rest in peace John. Job well done!

Rob - May 05, 2015 at 10:17 PM

RO

Santa Claus was dead.

rob - May 05, 2015 at 10:20 PM



None of us believed him that Santa Claus was dead; but very few took a Sr skip day that he was trying to shut down! Great man!

June Eye - May 06, 2015 at 01:20 PM

BH

“ Even though I didn't know John very long, he left a lasting impression. I kind of thought if him as a grandparent. I will miss him dearly.



Beth Halterman - May 05, 2015 at 09:50 PM

KW

“ I have so many memories of John that I will cherish forever. I only knew him a few years but he had a very big impact on my life. I feel privileged to have got the chance to know and care for him. He truly was a wonderful man and I will miss him deeply. Rest in peace John. God bless your beautiful soul.

Katie White - May 05, 2015 at 04:49 PM

HR

“ *He was a great man I will deeply miss*



Hattie Rix - May 05, 2015 at 04:32 PM

AC

“ *John showed great courage on a daily basis, never heard one complaint from him while taking care of him. He always said that he was doing "just fine" and had that wonderful smile on his face. He will be missed greatly!*



Amanda Johnson CNA - May 05, 2015 at 03:15 PM

TD

“ *I have many memories of "Mr. Knowles" throughout high school at Jefferson... some not that pleasant due to my own acting out, but all of great respect for the man. John Knowles had a great impact on me.... thanks for the discipline and role modeling, Sir...*

Todd Dougherty - May 05, 2015 at 02:07 PM

SC

“ *Sarah Larson CNA lit a candle in memory of John B. Knowles*



Sarah Larson CNA - May 05, 2015 at 10:25 AM

SC

Thank you for always putting a smile on my face everyday. I will always miss you saying "you bet cha", and "put it on 28". You have shared many memories with me about your life and those Amazing fishing stories. You truly are a inspiration to me and many others. May you rest in peace my Friend..

Sarah Larson CNA - May 05, 2015 at 10:32 AM

RR

John was a dear friend - ever since we first met when his wife, Annetta, became my college roommate. We spent special times with their family - visiting Minnesota, vacationing on Lake Michigan. They visited us in Florida and we enjoyed our time in Alexandria eating the delicious fish John grilled for us. He was a fun man - always ready to enjoy life. We are grateful for the memories and pray God's peace on his family.

Ruth (&Dan Rinker, Orlando, FL)

Ruth Rinker - May 05, 2015 at 10:00 PM

BG

“ John was such a dear man, with always a kind word. He would always ask me, " where is your better half"?, when he saw me. When he saw Kevin, he would ask him, "where is your better half"? That always made me smile. Dawn, I know you and the family will miss him, but know that his is with his lord and savior now resting or fishing.

Love, Kevin and Becky Grimm

Becky Grimm - May 05, 2015 at 08:08 AM

RB

“ Rose Stier Bullick lit a candle in memory of John B. Knowles



Rose Stier Bullick - May 04, 2015 at 10:59 PM



RK

John Knowles was a great guy who knew all his teachers very well and gave his full support to them. He was also a good friend to teachers spouses. A true and genuine guy, with a hearty laugh and always a "true friend" to all his friends and family.

Our sincere sympathy goes out to Annetta and the entire Knowles family. John Knowles will be deeply missed by us all...

Rog & Carol Kirsch

Roger Kirsch - May 05, 2015 at 08:19 AM



GR

John Knowles was the type of guy that when he said something, he meant it. He didn't play games. He said it like it was and I, as a teacher, appreciated him and respected him for that. He also knew how to have fun and people enjoyed being around him. An all around great person. Rest In Peace, John. Prayers to his family.

Greg and Pam Hoidahl

Greg - May 06, 2015 at 09:05 AM



JF

Mr. Knowles was a stern but fair man. He really did connect with students. Especially the students that needed to be connected to. He understood us. He understood the times and the culture of the early 70's. He was a true educator. I think we all knew at the time that he had a job to do and we respected him for that. I for one benefited as a young man by knowing Mr. Knowles.

John Flint - May 06, 2015 at 09:46 PM



When I look back on my years in high school, I will always fondly remember Mr. Knowles. I seemed to have spent a bit of time in his office. Sometimes it was at his request when I needed a little discipline, sometimes it was at my request when I needed a little advice. He was always ready to hand out both, often at the same time. He earned respect from students and I think we all gave it to him. He truly was a great man.

Ann Loose - May 07, 2015 at 10:48 PM