



John O'Brien

January 25, 1932 - October 24, 2012

John "Jack" Edward O'Brien, 80, of Gainesville, Virginia, former General Counsel of NASA, passed away Wednesday, October 24, 2012.

He was born the only child of John Edward O'Brien and Mabel Rooney O'Brien on January 25, 1932 in Newburgh, New York. He graduated from Niagara University in 1953 and went on to earn a Doctorate of Law from Georgetown University School of Law in 1957 after serving two years in the Army. After a brief period in private practice and at the Department of the Navy, he joined NASA in 1962. He served in several capacities at NASA before becoming General Counsel in 1985; he oversaw all legal matters related to the Space Shuttle Challenger explosion in 1986. He worked briefly for the law firm Steptoe & Johnson before returning to NASA in 1989 as Deputy Assistant Administrator. He retired from NASA in 1992.

Jack leaves behind his beloved wife of nearly 56 years, Ann Lydon O'Brien; daughters Catherine O'Brien Sapourn, Mary O'Brien Evers, Margaret Ellen O'Brien, Patricia O'Brien Chakeris, and Teresa O'Brien Christoph; son John Michael O'Brien; eleven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and many other family and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents and his daughters, Ann O'Brien Leone and Joan O'Brien Stretton.

A public viewing will be held at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Gainesville, VA

at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, October 29; a mass of Christian burial will follow at 11:00 a.m. A private burial will take place on October 31. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project at woundedwarriorproject.org or by mail at P.O. Box 758517 Topeka, Kansas 66675

Tribute Wall

TC

“ Love you, Dad, and will miss you always.

#8

Teri Christoph - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

SH

“ Our sincerest sympathy to the entire O'Brien family. Our hearts and prayers go out to you at this time. Love, strength and prayers - Sue & Alan

Sue Ciminelli Heffernan - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

PC

“ I will miss you dearly, Dad. Your absence will leave a huge whole in our lives. Love you, Dad. #7

Patty Chakeris - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

PO

“ Dad I love you so much and will miss you more than words can say

Peggy O'Brien - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

MS

“ I will miss you so much Grandpa Jack. There are too many awesome memories to list. I'm glad that my mom has been reunited with her father. Looking forward to joining you and mom in our Father's kingdom.

Matt

Matthew Stretton - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

AS

“ I know how deeply we feel for the loss of a loved one; especially that of a parent who guides us through our trials and tribulations of growing up. One who nurtures us and stands by us when we fall and helps us to rise above the hurts.

My sympathy and wishes for a better tomorrow are with you and your family during these difficult days.

Andrea Goldman Swaringen - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

ME

“ There are no words adequate enough to explain the loss I feel. You gave me life, you gave me laughter, you gave me security, you taught me to do the right thing, you gave me the gift of faith. Thank you for being my Dad. Rest well in Christ's eternal light. And now it is my turn to tell you...safe home, Dad. I love you always - Mary

Mary Evers - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

DM

“ I enjoyed working with Jack at the Knneddy Space Center. My condolences to his family.
Dick

Dick Mundy - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM

ST

“ John O'Brien

Sumara Thompson-King - March 29, 2013 at 01:59 PM