



## John Simon Gillis

March 21, 1937 - April 7, 2024

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of John S. Gillis. He was born to Rita and Simon Gillis on March 21, 1937 in Washington DC. His family then moved to Buffalo, New York where he resided for the next 21 years.

He went on to Stanford University and earned his Bachelor's Degree, graduating with Great Distinction. This was followed by Cornell University where he earned his Master's, and finally The University of Colorado where he received his Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. After his time in school, he joined the United States Air Force and taught at the Air Force Academy for four years. He married Mary Ann Wesolowski in 1959, and they went on to have three children, Holly, Mark, and Scott, each of whom they loved dearly and who returned the love. Daughter Holly, and her husband Dowell, went on to have two children of their own, Tyler and Kelly.

John was passionate about travel and athletics. He loved both watching and playing sports. Baseball was his favorite and he played during his time at Stanford. During the course of his life, he also ran 98 marathons in the US and several more abroad, travelling all over the world to do so. He and Mary Ann visited and lived in many different countries including four years spent in Australia and three years in India where John worked as a psychologist and gave many talks and presentations to the medical community in their area. His

wife and family were happy and willing travel partners, and many others were enticed to the call of adventure with him. His sisters say that when he was young, he loved the idea of travelling, and he was able to live his dream travelling the world.

Eventually he and his family settled down in Oregon, a place John had always loved. He and Mary Ann were able to watch their children grow up and enjoy the wildlife and greenery of Oregon together for more than 25 years. John would especially enjoy watching the large herds of deer that would travel through their backyard.

John was a kind, giving person, and will be greatly missed. Anyone wishing to share thoughts or memories with the family can do so at [www.McHenryFuneralHome.com](http://www.McHenryFuneralHome.com).

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

APR 17. 12:00 PM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church  
501 NW 25th St.  
Corvallis, OR

## Graveside Committal

APR 17. 2:00 PM (PT)

St. Mary's Cemetery  
Corvallis, OR

# Tribute Wall

LN

“ I learned today of John's passing. I was John's student at OSU in the late 1970's. He was my mentor, teacher, friend, and eventually a colleague. We co-authored a paper together in the early 1980s, and John helped me gain admission to the graduate program at Texas Tech in 1981 (he was at OSU by then). We all have influential people in our lives who are pivotal in our futures. For me, John was one of those in the best way imaginable. Without John's mentorship, I would likely not have become a psychologist. RIP John. You will be missed.

Larry W. Norton, PhD

---

Larry Norton - July 16, 2024 at 10:59 AM

JC

“ Hi Mary Ann,

I will miss seeing you and John at Starbucks. Always such fun chatting with you two. When I would see you I would get John's drink ready (2 espresso shots with nonfat milk and a pastry). Please come by when you can Mary Ann.

John always had great stories, really enjoyed hearing how he got Ron Fairly (Los Angeles Dodgers star) out when he pitched at Stanford (told that one several times).

John is someone you don't forget.....it was a great pleasure knowing him. Hope to see you Mary Ann.....let me know if you need anything.

Joe Charbonneau

---

joe Charbonneau - April 28, 2024 at 11:21 PM

KA

“ John Gillis was one of the first people I met after arriving in Corvallis in 1976, and he was always one of my favorites: extremely intelligent, with a great sense of humor and an instinct for recognizing nonsense. His adventures were legend (a marathon on Baffin Island!), and the stories about them lively and amusing. I send condolences. I'm sorry to hear he's gone.

Kerry Ahearn

---

Kerry Ahearn - April 27, 2024 at 03:12 PM

PS

“ I could share many memories of my brother, Skeeter. Most however take place in Buffalo where we grew up. My sister Kathleen and I were tasked with “doing dishes” after dinner every night , Skeeter too but he entertained us while we worked. He could tap out a tune, we had to guess it. He would sing a song and leave out words , we had to guess. He would tell us stories. In fact he used to write stories of all kinds. Always adventure ones but some thought provoking. He proceeded to live a life of adventure. God bless him and welcome him home. I'm Peggy Gillis Sporer

---

Peggy Gillis Sporer - April 16, 2024 at 09:08 AM

PS

“ My brother, Skeeter was a great friend and brother. My memories are many but one was how he would entertain my sister, Kathleen and I while we did the dishes. He would play a tune on a fork and pan or make up stories. He hated to wash or dry the dishes. But he made our job go faster. He loved to tell us adventure stories.

---

Peggy Gillis Sporer - April 15, 2024 at 12:39 PM

KS

“ Prayers and and love are sent to the family of my brother John (Skeeter). Our childhood years in Buffalo New York created a loving bond for our family. May he rest in peace.

*Kathleen Seiler*

---

**Kathleen Seiler** - April 10, 2024 at 07:13 PM