



John R. Whaley

June 4, 1953 - October 18, 2021

John Robert Whaley, USN (Ret.), 68, beloved step father and friend to many, passed away peacefully on Monday, October 18, 2021 at his home in Old Town, FL due to natural causes.

John was born on June 4, 1953 in Huntsville, AL, son of James R. Whaley and Hazel Whaley.

After serving in Vietnam, John found his home on St. George Island off the Florida Panhandle in the late 1970s. John harvested and served oysters in his own famous oyster bar named The Whale's Tail. John went on to become a dive instructor in Apalachicola. He married and raised two stepsons as his own, who he passed on his passion for fishing and diving which forever shaped their lives. John made many lifelong friends there, who he spoke with weekly for the remainder of his life.

In the mid 1990s, John earned his Captains license and began chartering yachts in the Bahamas and later in south Florida, a career that he would enjoy for the next 20 years. John enjoyed telling tales of his high seas adventures catching marlin and island hopping with the locals. He worked out of Deep Water Marina and lived on the Apogee sailing vessel.

By mid-2010s, John returned to the panhandle to work as Chief Engineer for a

government contractor out of Tyndall Air Force base. Shortly after John purchased his dream home in 2017 in Mexico Beach, only to be leveled by Hurricane Michael along with the Air Station. From there, John lived his next adventure in Key West where he served as Chief Engineer on a 192ft vessel until his retirement in 2020.

John found his final home in Old Town, FL, along the Suwannee river, where he had plans to charter a boat of his own.

John will forever be remembered by his engaging personality and the impact he had on everyone in his life. The passion he brought to every relationship in his life will never be forgotten.

He is survived by his stepsons Ryan Soberay and Adam Soberay. He is preceded in death by his parents, brother Dana L. Whaley and sisters Karen Herring and Lisa Whaley

Celebration of Life event details to follow..

Arrangements have been placed under the care of the Rick Gooding Funeral Home Cross City Chapel, with locations in Cross City 352-498-5400 and Chiefland 352-493-0050. Please sign the online guest book at rickgoodingfuneralhomes.com

Tribute Wall



“ *John R. Whaley*

October 08, 2023 at 10:03 PM



“ *John R. Whaley*

January 30, 2023 at 01:26 AM



“ *John...*
ap·o·gee
/ˈapɛjē/
the highest point in the development of something; the
culmination.....
"the point in the orbit of the moon at which it is furthest from the
earth.
There you will dwell
We will all remember you well...
Missing you with love, Susan

Susan S. Pruett - January 10, 2022 at 08:57 AM



“ *You ain't here, but you ain't gone! There is no such thing as*
closure... your energy lives on! I know you are dancing in the
clouds, and I'm forever blessed to have experienced your beautiful
spirit. You were loved by so many, I knew you were one of the good
ones right away.

Sea Gypsy - October 27, 2021 at 06:55 PM

JA

“ We met in 1990 on the Apalachicola waterfront you loved to work and play on! You became one of my dearest friends and over the years and your travels, we ALWAYS stayed in touch! You called me 2 days before you passed to let me know you were heading to Apalachicola to visit ALL your people and we made plans for oysters and conversation! O’ Captain, My Captain, may you always sail the gulf and ride the winds...All my love, Jackie

jackie - October 25, 2021 at 08:01 AM

MM

“ Marcie Mitchell lit a candle in memory of John R. Whaley



Marcie Mitchell - October 25, 2021 at 05:00 AM

JP

“ John was a beloved part of our family. We were looking forward to seeing more of him with his move to Old Town and will miss him greatly.

Janis Piotrowski - October 23, 2021 at 11:59 AM

JB

Janis, please tell Kenny how sorry I am for both of you because I know you were truly his best friend! You and your Dad were the dearest to his heart.

Janet Brady - October 27, 2021 at 02:08 PM

CC

“ I am so sorry to hear this, I know John from St George Island & his amazing smoked mullet! RIP John
Connie Carver

Connie Carver - October 22, 2021 at 06:12 PM

WI

John was by choice a man of the sea and loved every trip on blue waters. when john came to st. george island educated himself in the nature of bait, fish, oysters,birds (that tell you where fish are),,seasons of shrimp,ponpano,scalops,lobsters. anything and everything concerig, living on in and arround the water..you had to love and respect his devotion ,dedication,and determination to living on or near the water.... few people you meet in life have such focus.... And we will all miss his stories

willy - November 04, 2021 at 07:34 AM

SP

So very true Willie!!!

Susan S. Pruett - October 11, 2022 at 02:10 PM