



John Douglas Marsellus

June 26, 2025

John Douglas Marsellus, 86, died peacefully from pancreatic challenges. He lived and worked in Syracuse all of his life.

John attended local schools, then graduated from Deerfield Academy and The University of Virginia where he was a member of St. Elmo Hall and several honorary societies including The Seven Society. After serving in the US Army Intelligence Corps, he began a 40-year business career with the Marsellus Casket Company. For John, the Company was a family business and "a business family". He truly loved his work and funeral industry friends. He respected the skills and craftsmanship of his associates. The Marsellus Company enjoyed the reputation of being the leading manufacturer of fine hardwood caskets in the world.

Throughout his life, he consistently enjoyed and supported volunteerism and creative philanthropy.

He served in leadership positions and as a trustee and director of local civic organizations including American Red Cross (local and national positions}, Crouse Hospital (30 years}, ESF Foundation, Commissioner NYS Parks Central Region, M&T Bank Advisory Board Central Region, NYS State Fair Advisory Board, Syracuse Rotary Club (60 years}, and the former Syracuse Chamber of Commerce (both his great grandfathers John Marsellus and Robert Dey were past presidents}.

John was involved with public projects such as the 24 Second Shot Clock, a new carillon system in City Hall, attention to Forman Park upgrades, the

bronze sculpture of Libba Cotton in Libba Cotton Grove and a Peace Garden at the MOST which includes an original concrete section of the Berlin Wall. John was recognized with an Honorary Degree from Onondaga Community College, a lifetime achievement award from the Casket & Funeral Service Supply Association, and the Colvin Conservation Award from the Montezuma Audubon Center.

Besides loving his family and enjoying all types of people, John had a cheerful enthusiasm with a special zest and curiosity for travel and adventure.....even a skydive in 2018. John enjoyed Skaneateles Lake, Boca Grande, Florida, the Arts, sailing, skiing, tennis, and travelling with his wife and life partner, Candace, in Northern England, Switzerland, and Maine.

He is survived by his wife Candace of 59 years, a daughter, Bettina, a son, Derrick, and grandchildren.

His cheerful, giving spirit, sense of humor, many acts of kindness and enjoyment of good times with friends and family will be missed by those who knew and loved him. In John's memory, please consider making a contribution to a community charity of your choice.

A private burial service will be at the family gravesite in Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse.

Cemetery Details

Oakwood Cemetery

940 Comstock Ave
Syracuse, NY 13210

Tribute Wall

MG

“ I am so very sorry to see Mr Marsellus has passed. I worked for his company back in the early 70's. He was the kindest man. He remembered me when years later my husband worked for him..I loved working for him. He always had a smile and kind words. My condolences to his family.

Mary Giblin - June 30, 2025 at 08:19 PM

ED

“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Mr. Marsellus was a unique individual with a heart for philanthropy and giving back. I have fond memories of my 18 years with the Marsellus Casket Company. In God's Peace, Elizabeth DaBoll

Elizabeth DaBoll - June 28, 2025 at 07:38 AM

RC

“ What great man

Richard Criswell - June 27, 2025 at 05:07 PM

LA

“ Please accept the most heartfelt sympathies of Le Moyne College. We hope the love and memories that you will forever hold in your heart bring you peace and comfort during this difficult time.

Le Moyne College, Office of Alumni - June 27, 2025 at 11:23 AM

AK

“ Dear Candie, Bettina, Derek-
Our hearts are with you as we ask Our Lord to especially bless the
immortal soul of such a wonderfully fine and gentle man.
What a treat it was to call him a beloved friend. We treasured your
John!
God blessed your lives ever so richly and now we pray He eases
your difficult days.
Our love,
Tony and Bobbie

Anton Kreuzer - June 27, 2025 at 06:38 AM

MH

I crossed paths with John while working at the Red Cross years ago
and have never forgotten what a wonderful person John was. It is rare
in this day and age to meet such a genuine, kind, caring, giving and all
around good person. I have no doubt that everyone who met him felt
the same. Rest in peace John, you were an inspiration, and you will be
missed.

Mona Hamlin - June 27, 2025 at 05:00 PM