



## John M Bals

September 4, 1922 - October 8, 2016

John Martin Bals slipped away peacefully at his home in Minocqua on October 8, 2016 with family by his side, at the age of 94. He was born in Chicago, IL on September 4, 1922; the son of Martin J. Bals and Margaret Elizabeth (nee Jonck) Bals. At the age of 3 years, John and his mother, now a naturalized U.S. Citizen from the country of Denmark, moved to New York City where they lived until 1931 when they received word that her father, still in Denmark, was very seriously ill. Therefore, they left for Denmark where John's grandfather survived his illness, but they remained there until 1940 when the Germans invaded and occupied Denmark. Since they were U.S. citizens, very soon they were strongly advised to leave Denmark and return to the U.S., where John, at the age of 17 was required to make his own way in New York City. He has been forever grateful for his education in Denmark and several language skills he had acquired as a result. His first good job was in N.Y. City harbor where he was a translator of English/Norwegian on several Scandinavian ships there for repairs.

Later he served in the US army and in 1945 married Dorothy Buenger in New York City where soon after his Army discharge he became employed by the Aurora Pump Co., a unit of the General Signal Corporation, in their NY City sales office. The pump company being based in Aurora, IL, a western suburb of Chicago. Over the years, he and Dorothy had four children, and John was traveling the U.S., Mexico and South America in sales where he developed some very good business associates who became good friends. John worked

very hard, concerned to provide well for his family after having been so poor after his return to the United States. His family's happiness and well being was always upper most in his mind.

In 1952 he was asked to transfer to Aurora Pump's main plant in Aurora, IL, where he eventually rose to the presidency there in 1959. Unfortunately, John became widowed after Dottie passed away in 1967. It was a terribly difficult interlude for him at that time. Fortunately he met, then married Jane Keister Gouwens in 1969. They became one big family, as Jane had also been widowed and had a young daughter, John adopted.

In 1972, John decided to retire and make a move up to Manitowish Waters, WI on Island Lake. It was quite a change because as well as being a devoted president of the company, he was very involved with the Fox Valley Industrial Assoc., church, social and community affairs in Aurora. Over the years, he had enjoyed giving much to the city and decided it was the time to come north where he had enjoyed a number of summer vacations with his family.

When he moved to Manitowish Waters he continued to devote time to the community church, lions club and lake assoc. He was also always eager to learn more and was fascinated by history of the world and the Northwoods as well. He pursued this by hunting for old items from logging and farming era, transforming them many times into beautiful items for their home; especially the antique lamps he rebuilt from scratch. However, he always had time for fun, boating, cross country skiing and snowmobiling.

In 2005 they made a move to Minocqua in Timber Ridge, therefore leaving their dream home and building their cozy home on a ravine.

John is survived by his loving wife, Jane and by his children, John Martin Bals Jr. of San Francisco, Barbara (Carmine) Pascucci of Seattle, WA; James Robert (Diane) Bals of Seattle, WA; Debbie Lynne Rabska of Chippewa Falls; grandchildren, Jens Pascucci, Nina Pascucci, Joshua Rabska, Jacob Rabska, Emily Rabska and Dawn Rogers; also great grandchildren, Easton, Amy, Jerry and Cody. He was preceded in death by his parents, his first loving wife Dottie and their son Jeffery Howard.

A memorial service will be held on Friday October 14, 2016 at 2 PM at the Manitowish Waters Community Church. Visitation will be one hour prior the service at the church. Burial will follow in Pinelawn Cemetery.

If desired, in lieu of flowers, donations could be made to the Manitowish Waters Community Church, Manitowish Waters Lions Club or a charity of choice.

Bolger Cremation and Funeral Services of Minocqua and Woodruff is serving the family. Please visit [www.bolgerfuneral.com](http://www.bolgerfuneral.com) to share condolences, memories or pictures.

# Cemetery Details

## Pinelawn Cemetery

Manitowish Waters, WI 54545

# Previous Events

## Memorial Gathering

OCT **14**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Manitowish Waters Community Church  
49 S Hwy 51  
Manitowish Waters, WI

## Memorial Service

OCT **14**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Manitowish Waters Community Church  
49 S Hwy 51  
Manitowish Waters, WI

# Tribute Wall

TJ

“ Dear Jane. We were so saddened to hear of John's passing. John was such an interesting person, we enjoyed his many stories. May God give you strength at this time. All our love, Ted and Mary Johnson

ted amd mary johnson - October 26, 2016 at 09:11 AM

PS

“ Jane, Was sorry to here of John's passing. We have fond memories of our PEO times together. Know that you are in our prayers as you adjust to this change in your life. Penny and Roger Samuelson

Penny Samuelson - October 17, 2016 at 10:51 AM

CB

“ Carmen and Bill; Jill, Bill, Lauren, and Brandon purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of John M Bals.



Carmen and Bill; Jill, Bill, Lauren, and Brandon - October 13, 2016 at 08:50 AM

PM

“ Very sorry to hear of John's passing and my condolences to you, Jane, and your family. Its been many years since owning the Village Soda Grill in Manitowish Waters, but I remember John as such a warm and gracious man and know he will be missed.

Patrick Murphy - October 11, 2016 at 05:23 PM

RM

“ Dear Jane, Rich and I were shocked and saddened to learn of John's passing. I had always meant to call you, but it seems we were never there long enough. Now I truly regret that. I will always remember how we met, walking our dogs down the road. Seems like yesterday when Hokie wound up with a face full of quills and Rich and you pulled them out, one by one. I also remember the look of devastation on John's face when we heard his son had died. Luckily there are more happy memories rather than sad ones. Even though we didn't get to see you often, John will be remembered in our hearts. Take care of yourself. Love, always, Rich and Joan Madura

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**Richard and Joan Madura** - October 10, 2016 at 01:52 PM