



John Bruce Gordon

March 5, 1944 - September 27, 2012

John Bruce Gordon age 68 of Bolivar, Missouri passed away Thursday, September 27, 2012. John passed peacefully at his home in Bolivar from his battle with liver cancer.

John Gordon was born March 5, 1944 in Poplar Bluff, Missouri to Pastor William S. and Elva Marie Gordon. John was the younger brother of Lynda Sue Gordon Miller. John accepted Christ and lived for much of his childhood in St. Louis, Missouri where his father was a pastor for Missionary Baptist churches. The family moved to Arkansas when John was 17 and he graduated high school from Beebe, Arkansas. John then attended Central Baptist College in Conway, AR where he met and married Sondra Ann Lovelace. John graduated from Central Baptist College in 1964 and then University of Central Arkansas, Conway in 1966 with a degree in Education.

John taught students K-12 in New Mexico, Tennessee, Arkansas and Missouri eventually spending his last 17 years of teaching in Licking, Missouri. While there John taught spelling, sponsoring 15 winning Frisco League Spelling Bee teams; creative writing, encouraging his students and students across the state of Missouri to write with the creation of Missouri Student Author Week sponsored by then Missouri Gov. John Ashcroft; reading, challenging students to read more each year knowing that reading is the key to learning; and drug education, hosting Drug Education Festivals for area schools highlighting the

importance of making healthy life choices which lead to successful adult lives. Helping students reach their fullest potential was John's goal. Having graduated last in his own high school graduating class, John used his own story of struggle to highlight what is possible when you have a dream and become dedicated to following it.

Throughout his career in education and lifetime John also shared his love of music with the world around him. Playing bass guitar for the Missourians, writing gospel music for various artists including the Oak Ridge Boys, or playing piano on a cruise ship, at restaurants, local events and even at Woods grocery store on Christmas Eve, music was an expression of joy for John and a celebration of the joy inherent in his world.

John is survived by his wife of 49 years, Sondra Lovelace Gordon of the home; their daughter and her husband Tisha and Zeke Clawson along with two grandsons Zach and Taylor Clawson all of Bolivar. He was preceded in death by his parents William and Marie Gordon and his sister Lynda Miller.

A private inurnment ceremony will held for the family at Greenwood Cemetery in Bolivar. A Celebration of Life honoring John will be held on October 7, 2012 from 2-4 pm at McClelland Dining Hall on the campus of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri. A short memorial service will be held at 3pm as part of the celebration. Butler Funeral Home in Bolivar, Missouri is in charge of the arrangements.

In lieu of flowers John requested donations be made to the Bolivar Care to Learn Foundation. Donations may be made to Bolivar Care To Learn in care of Butler Funeral Home 407 E. Broadway, Bolivar, Missouri 65613.

Friends and family may sign the guest book or send private condolences at www.butlerfuneralhome.com

PDF Printable Version

Tribute Wall



“ *John Bruce Gordon*

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ *John Bruce Gordon*

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ *John and I worked together for several years with Drug Ed Fest in Licking, MO when I represented my title of "Little Miss Elly May", personally crowned by Donna Douglas (Elly May of the Beverly Hillbillies). John made a huge impact in my life and the lives of many people. He will be greatly missed.*

Angelique Jones Buerk - March 10, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *A sympathy card has been sent to the family of John Bruce Gordon c/o BUTLER FUNERAL HOME funeral home.*

October 23, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ *JTB, JB, GMAN, was probably one of the strongest most powerful men I have ever had the privileged to know. He could get more out of kids than they thought possible! We started our rival along about 1962 when I was but 10 years old. I do believe after 50 years he had come across someone that was his match. We had our differences but OH did we have one really strong love between us, being the 2 women in his and my life. Sissy was 9 years older than I and he come into my life and swept her away. I was torn but after many years we decided, she had enough love and understanding that we could both love she and Tish.*

As many close friends were introduced to me and my oldest sister Twila. John would always began by: these are my sister in laws from hell. John was a great influence on many peoples lives and I cherish the time that God allowed us to be enemies and we loved the good times and the hard times because we always ended up loving each other more! God has surely got the GRAND orchestra playing and John is playing the piano in Heaven for all to hear. I am looking forward to the homecoming we will have one day.

S.I.L. from HELL Darla Lovelace Bennett - October 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ *Mr. G was one of my favorite teachers during my elementary years. It saddens my heart to know that he is no longer making students laugh or challenging them to go a little farther for that answer. He was a great man.*

Mara (Barton) Strycharz - October 04, 2012 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Mr. G was one of the most interesting and effective teachers that I was privileged to work with. I could say he always went by the book...but I would be fibbing. If for motivational purposes, eating a worm sandwich, renting a limo for students, dancing on his desk sounds outside the box, then that was G. His room was across from Mrs. Barnes, and the two of them worked great together. His spelling teams won something like 13 straight Frisco League spelling bees. He was a motivator deluxe. I was honored to call him my friend.

Dave Barnes - October 04, 2012 at 12:00 AM

AM

“ Mr. G was an inspiration and I feel blessed to have been a student of his. He knew how to encourage his students and to make learning fun. He truly cared and that radiated off him. I wish I could be at the service. I've been sharing memories of him with friends who don't even know him and they, too, agree he was an amazing man. I thank God he was one of my teachers in education and in life.

Amber - October 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM

KF

“ Mr. G was an amazing teacher, and wonderful man. He cared for his students, Our Class of 1996 will always remember him and he will be missed.

Kristy (Tubbs) Fudge - October 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RD

“ My condolences to friends and family Mr G was a great man. He had a great impact on my life. Helped me overcome stage fright :) He was a bold man and when I was in 6th great he was super hero status to me! Rest in peace Mr. G

Rebecca Drennen - October 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JK

“ I had the honor of working in Licking Elem. office when "Mr. G" was teaching there at Licking. My best memory was when he got a group together to go on a cruise in the 90's - my niece had been in a terrible car accident and was able W/Mom to go on this cruise - Thanks to Mr. Gordon. Love & Prayers go out to all family.

Joyce Krewson - October 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LT

“ Mr. G, as we called him in school, was a great teacher, and made learning fun. He was my homeroom teacher in 6th grade at Licking Elementary. He told us one year if we would win Frisco League Spelling, he would let us shave his head. So we won, so we had a school assembly and all that participated in the spelling bee got to buzz his hair. Thanks G-Man!! You were one of a kind and an amazing teacher. My thoughts and prayers are with your family!!

Laresa (Ramsey) Terrill - October 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ I'm sure John will be missed by many. He was very generous in sharing his music with others. I enjoyed getting to know him while I was working at PVHCF. He seemed to sincerely interested in people of all ages and backgrounds, bringing smiles to many.

Susan Stephenson - October 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM

KL

“ *Sondra, Darla & Tish & family. We will remember JB as a guy that always wanted to have a new adventure in his life, had a quest for life and all it had to offer. He never met a stranger. He was always to challenge others with a reward that made them become winners. Anticipating seeing you in a few days. Love Karl & June*

Karl & June Lovelace - October 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ *Sondra and Tish,*

We are praying for you during this time of loss. We are glad we are able to think back on so many fond memories of John and your kindness and generosity toward us.

The heavenly worship band is now a little stronger.

Love,

Tim and Kim (and Jessica, TJ, and Josh)

Tim and Kim Blankenship - October 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM

BG

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you! Celebrating a life that impacted many for God's glory with you as well!*

Betty Glasgow - September 30, 2012 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ *Dear Sondra and Tish,*

John and you have been a blessing and inspiration to a great many people. I know that John and you, Sondra, have touched my heart and inspired me as well and John was a great blessing to our grand daughter, Ashlynn. She really loved him. Thinking of all of you.

Mr and Mrs Jerry Miller and family - September 30, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LD

“ *All the fun, all the laughs, all the trips, all the special things about John - things we will never forget.*

Lisa, Jeanne and Dick - September 29, 2012 at 12:00 AM