



John "Johnny" Rathbun

April 6, 1930 - February 8, 2020

John "Johnny" Clair Rathbun, 89, of Glendive, MT went to be with his Lord and Savior and rejoin the love of his life on February 8, 2020 at the Eastern Montana Veterans Home. Visitation will be Thursday, February 13, 2020 from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. at the Silha Funeral Home in Glendive. Funeral services will be held at 10:00 A.M. on Friday, February 14, 2020 at the Silha Funeral Home with Pastor Charles Rushing officiating. Interment with military honors will be held at Dawson County Cemetery. Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements.

John was born on April 6, 1930 to John Samuel and Mary Jane (Byer) Rathbun in the Westerheim Community of Golden Valley County, ND. He was baptized in Beach, ND just before entering the military.

John attended schools at the Westerheim country schoolhouse and the Sentinel Butte High School in Sentinel Butte, ND. He then received his high school diploma while serving in the United States Navy during the Korean War.

John was always a tough country boy and even fought in the Golden Gloves boxing program. He worked for various farmers and ranchers in the Sentinel Butte area, followed by jobs in the oilfield, service stations, and eventually went to work for the Northern Pacific Railroad as a fireman back when they still had the steam engines. His work there was interrupted when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy to serve as a Seabee in the Korean War for four years. Upon his return home, he became an engineer for Northern Pacific Railroad. He

was always helping friends and family in his spare time and was always happiest when he was staying busy. After being laid off, John started the Union 76 station, which he managed until the gas crisis in the 70's. He then returned to work on the railroad as a machinist in the roundhouse, where he worked until his retirement. Even after retirement, John always loved telling stories of his time on the railroad and farming in North Dakota as a young man. After moving to Grandview in 2014, he could often be seen sitting outside watching the trains leave town.

John first met Helen Schieffer when she was a young girl. He'd occasionally see her walking to school and give her a lift. Several years later, after the war, they dated and were eventually united in Holy Matrimony on September 7, 1955. To this marriage were added a son, Steve, twin boys, Jon and Jan, who passed away shortly after birth, daughters Janie and Mary, and son, John. The family moved to their forever home just below Hungry Joe in 1963. Many memories were made and many potatoes were grown. Although a variety of vegetables and flowers grew in John and Helen's large garden, John became known as Glendive's "potato guy" for the special potatoes he grew and sold at the Friday Farmer's Market. He even fulfilled Helen's long-time wish of putting a real windmill in the garden. It took five trips to North Dakota to get it home due to North Dakota's famous windy weather.

Once they became empty nesters, John retired early to spend more time with Helen. He accompanied her to auction sales, worked together with her in their garden and was very active in the Farmers Market. Their time together was not to last, however, as Helen passed away in 1999 from cancer. Steve followed in 2005, also from cancer.

John made many transformations in his lifetime. He began to show his soft side at the birth of his first grandchild in 1985, and an even softer side after his wife passed in 1999. His greatest joys were his family, gardening, and visiting with everyone he met.

John was preceded in death by his parents, wife Helen, sons Jon, Jan and Steve, brothers: John W., William, James, Charles, Thomas and Dennis and

sisters: Mellisa, Meryl, Vivian and Kristee.

He is survived by his children Janie Rathbun, Beach, ND, Mary (Michael) Lee, Glendive, MT, John O. Rathbun, Colstrip, MT, granddaughters Eryn (Thad) Rule, Amy Lee, both of Glendive, Karlee (Will) Waddington, of Hysham, MT, and Ellen Rathbun of Billings, MT, great-grandsons, Colin Rule, Sawyer Rule, and Ian Waddington, soon-to-be-born baby Waddington, and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Glendive Medical Center Hospice program or the Glendive Community Cancer Fund.

Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silhafuneralhomes.com.

Cemetery Details

Dawson County Cemetery

Corner of North Sargent Ave. and East Allard
Street
Glendive, MT 59330

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **13**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (MT)

Silha Funeral Homes - Glendive, Montana
221 N. Meade Avenue
P.O. Box 848
Glendive, MT 59330
(406) 377-2622
silha@middrivers.com
<https://www.silhafuneralhomes.com>

Funeral Service

FEB **14**. 10:00 AM (MT)

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Tribute Wall



“ *John "Johnny" Rathbun*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM



“ *when i went to get fresh veges at his house in evenings i loved visiting w yr dad. he was a great story teller an very knowledeable*

sue nentwig schwindt - February 14, 2020 at 04:27 PM



“ *Sue Nentwig Schwindt lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



sue nentwig schwindt - February 14, 2020 at 04:24 PM



“ *Dick Sadorf lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Dick Sadorf - February 13, 2020 at 07:14 PM



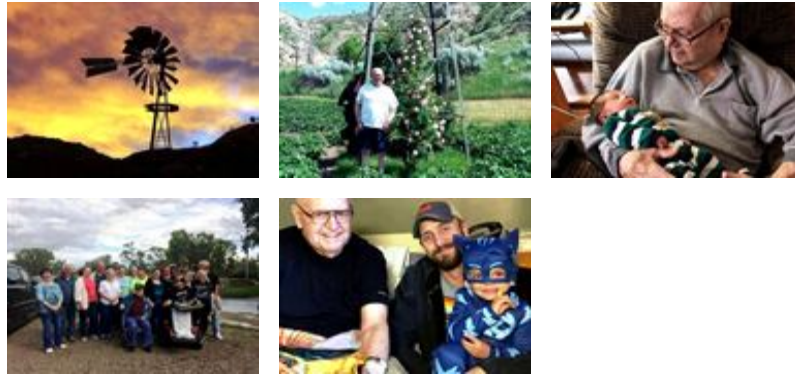
“ Ray And Laurie Mittelstaed sent a virtual gift in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun



Ray and Laurie Mittelstaed - February 13, 2020 at 03:37 PM



“ 40 files added to the album Life Tributes



Silha Funeral Home - February 13, 2020 at 01:18 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of John "Johnny" Rathbun.



February 12, 2020 at 03:33 PM

EL

“ *Eula Langton lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Eula Langton - February 11, 2020 at 11:34 PM

MP

“ *Mary Coyan Perryman sent a virtual gift in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Mary Coyan Perryman - February 11, 2020 at 09:44 PM



“ *Sweet Sincerity was purchased for the family of John "Johnny" Rathbun.*



February 11, 2020 at 07:10 PM

DT

“ *Debbie Tweet lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Debbie Tweet - February 11, 2020 at 06:59 PM

LG

“ *Mary...So sorry to read about the loss of your Dad. He was a wonderful guy. Laura Grzanic.*

Laura Grzanic - February 11, 2020 at 04:24 PM

LS

“ *Linda Schuler lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Linda Schuler - February 11, 2020 at 10:11 AM

KM

“ *Johnny was such a straight shooter, so kind and nice to all of us McGoverns as we grew up across from the 76 gas station! In many ways , he embodied all that is good about being a true blue American! Bless all of you! Kevin McGovern*

kevin mcgovern - February 11, 2020 at 07:58 AM

TH

“ *Tammy Helmuth lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Tammy Helmuth - February 10, 2020 at 09:39 PM

CO

“ Rest in peace Johnny Clair. Say hi to your cousin Lorraine (my mom) and give her a hug from me. Thank you for all the kindness you showed to her and also to Val and me. Mary Janie and family our thoughts and prayers are with you and yours.

Carol Obrigewitch - February 10, 2020 at 09:30 PM

BJ

“ Bob And Dixie Justice sent a virtual gift in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun



Bob and Dixie Justice - February 10, 2020 at 09:21 PM

TD

“ Mary and family- I'm sorry for the loss of your loved one. My thoughts and prayers are with you.



Tammy Dey - February 10, 2020 at 08:52 PM

AR

My deepest sympathy to the Rathbun family, two of whom have been my life-long friends. May dad rest in peace.

Arlyse - February 10, 2020 at 10:39 PM

ML

My Deepest sympathy goes out the all of the Rathbun Family May He rest in Peace

Maurice Lardy - February 11, 2020 at 12:20 PM

DS

“ *Denise Stoddart lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Denise Stoddart - February 10, 2020 at 08:13 PM

AK

“ *So sorry to hear the passing of Johnny. I loved listening to his stories when he would come to visit Bud and I. After Bud passed away he would stop and say hi and add a few more stories. A lot of his talkings were of Helen—oh how he missed her. Now they can be together again. Prayers to all of you. RIP Johnny. Alice*

alice kunick - February 10, 2020 at 08:07 PM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of John "Johnny" Rathbun.*



February 10, 2020 at 07:31 PM

GS

“ *Gayle Sharbono lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Gayle Sharbono - February 10, 2020 at 07:11 PM

CD

“ *Indeed a fine man! I very much enjoyed my visits with him which were filled with laughter and friendly banter. May God rest his precious heart!*

Carole J. Diede - February 10, 2020 at 05:54 PM

NS

“ *Noren And Karen Shanley lit a candle in memory of John "Johnny" Rathbun*



Noren and Karen Shanley - February 10, 2020 at 04:58 PM