



John H. Keller Sr.

August 13, 1943 - May 31, 2015

John H. Keller, age 71, passed away on Sunday May 31, 2015 in St Anne's Mercy Hospital. John was born in Toledo, Ohio on August 13, 1943 to Herman and Laretta Keller. He graduated from St Ann's Grade School and Central Catholic High School, class of 1961.

John earned a football scholarship to the University of Toledo but left football signing a

contract with the Cincinnati Reds to play baseball in their minor league system. After injuries lead to his retirement in 1966, John worked in the real-estate and insurance industries. He eventually retired after 15 years as a courier for Mercy Health Partners. He enjoyed being an assistant baseball coach at Central Catholic, eventually becoming "The Voice of the Irish," announcing their football and basketball games from 1978 - 2014. John also spent several years as the PA announcer for the University of Toledo as well as the Toledo Mud Hens.

In 1992, John was awarded membership in the Central Catholic High School Athletic Hall Of Fame, joining his brother Richard Keller, and eventually his son John, as members. In 2007, he and his son John became the first father and son inducted into the Toledo City Athletic League Hall Of Fame. Most recently, he was nominated for entry into Central Catholic High School Music Hall Of Fame.

John was an active member of Little Flower Catholic Parish for 45 years where he served in

the music ministry and coached basketball. He was a founding member and current president of the CCHS Alumni Glee Club. He was also a member of The Toledo Swiss Singers, The Toledo Elks Lodge #53, the Downtown Coaches Association, and the Old Newsboys.

John was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Richard. He is survived by his wife, high school sweetheart, Joan Vollmayer Keller; children John H (Madelon) Keller Jr, Laura (Craig) Keller Jones; 7 beloved grandchildren; his sister Ann L. Wing; and many nephews and nieces.

Friends may visit at the Coyle Funeral Home, 1770 S Reynolds Rd; on Friday June 5, 2015 from 2-8 pm where the CCHS Alumni Glee Club will sing a tribute to John at 6:00 pm, followed by a brief Scripture Service at 6:30 pm.

Funeral services will be held at Little Flower Catholic Parish on Saturday June 6, 2015 at 11:00 am. The family will greet guests starting at 10:00 am.

Interment will be private.

Memorial contributions can be made to either Little Flower Catholic Parish or to Central Catholic High School.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 5. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Coyle Funeral and Cremation Services
1770 S. Reynolds Road
Toledo, OH 43614
(419) 865-1295
<https://www.coylefuneralhome.com>

Scripture Service

JUN 5. 6:30 PM (ET)

Coyle Funeral and Cremation Services
1770 S. Reynolds Road
Toledo, OH 43614
(419) 865-1295
<https://www.coylefuneralhome.com>

Visitation

JUN 6. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Little Flower of Jesus Church
5522 Dorr St.
Toledo, OH 43615
(419) 537-6655
<http://www.littleflowertoledo.org>

Funeral

JUN 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

Little Flower of Jesus Church
5522 Dorr St.
Toledo, OH 43615
(419) 537-6655
<http://www.littleflowertoledo.org>

Tribute Wall

TS

“ *John Jr. and Laura,
I was sorry to hear of your dad's passing. I wish I could have been there for you. Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with you. I remember Little Flower and how supportive your father was to the school and the sport's programs. If there is anything I can do please let me know. God bless you and your families.*
Tom Scheller

Tom Scheller - June 05, 2015 at 03:29 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John H. Keller Sr..*



June 05, 2015 at 12:45 PM

CV

“ *1 file added to the album VIDEO TRIBUTE*



COYLE FUNERAL HOME VIDEOS - June 04, 2015 at 04:25 PM

CV

“ 1 file added to the album VIDEO TRIBUTE



COYLE FUNERAL HOME VIDEOS - June 04, 2015 at 01:38 PM

JS


“ Dear Joan,
I am so sorry to hear of your husband's passing. You are in my thoughts and prayers and I extend my deepest sympathies to you and your family.
Judy Szor

judy Szor - June 03, 2015 at 09:05 PM

AK

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you,
Hans & Anita Kempers
Marietta, GA

Anita Kempers - June 03, 2015 at 08:37 PM

 Laurie Sheehy

“ Dear Laura & family, I'm so sorry to hear about your loss. I will keep you & the family in my prayer.
Laurie (Davis) Sheehy. CCHS 85

Laurie Sheehy - June 03, 2015 at 07:46 PM

MP

“ *Dear Joan,
We were shocked and saddened to learn of John's passing. May God rest his soul and comfort all who loved him.
Joe and I are traveling with many CCHS Alumni and friends who loved and admired John. We are all heartbroken that we can't be there to celebrate his brief but full and inspirational life! We will hold you and your family in our daily thoughts and prayers.
Joe and Mary (McCarty) Pierce*

Mary (McCarty) Pierce - June 03, 2015 at 04:49 PM

LJ

“ *Love, Jim and Kay Joyce purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of John H. Keller Sr..*



Love, Jim and Kay Joyce - June 03, 2015 at 02:14 PM

GC

“ *God Bless....Kevin, Becky and Olivia Cranford purchased the Fiery Lily and Rose for the family of John H. Keller Sr..*



God Bless....Kevin, Becky and Olivia Cranford - June 03, 2015 at 01:38 PM



“ *Spring Has Sprung Mixed Basket was purchased for the family of John H. Keller Sr..*



June 03, 2015 at 01:10 PM

“ John Herman Keller, Sr., public address announcer since the late 1970s at Central Catholic High School football and basketball games who was a football and baseball standout while a student there and who played in the Cincinnati Reds system, died Sunday of cardiac arrest. He was 71.

He and his wife, Joan, were watching a Tigers game on television at home in Toledo when he was stricken. He was pronounced dead at Mercy St. Anne Hospital.

Mr. Keller started announcing Central Catholic football games in 1978. Boys and then girls basketball duties followed. He was at the microphone through this year's schedule.

"He projected well and enunciated well and had a good command of the king's English," his wife said. "He worked real hard to make sure the kids on the line in football were recognized on the P.A., not just the stars."

Mr. Keller as a youngster idolized and emulated his brother, Dick, nine years his senior, who excelled on the Central Catholic football team and went on to play at the University of Notre Dame. Mr. Keller became a halfback, then quarterback of the Central Catholic football team. A star pitcher, he collected three no-hitters his senior season alone. He also played basketball.

He'd been slated to attend University of Toledo on a football scholarship after his 1961 graduation, but the Cincinnati Reds enticed him with a bonus, and he pitched minor league ball until 1966. His professional career was marred by injury and mishap.

"They say I blew a good education chasing fame. Well, they're wrong," Mr. Keller told *The Blade* as his pro career ended. "I got an education. It's a different thing from memorizing facts from books. I learned things about people, what living is all about."

Afterward, he worked for a title company and sold houses, insurance, and cars. He later was a courier for Mercy St. Vincent Medical Center. "He could talk with anybody and enjoyed everybody's company," his wife said.

His son, John, Jr., was a star athlete at Central Catholic, played football for the University of North Carolina, and was on the 1996 U.S. Olympic handball team. In 2007, they became the first father

and son inducted together into the City League athletic hall of fame. He and his late brother, Dick, were inducted into the Central Catholic athletic hall of fame in 1992.

He was born Aug. 13, 1943, to Laretta and Herman Keller.

Surviving are his wife, Joan Vollmayer Keller, whom he married Nov. 21, 1964; son, John H., Jr.; daughter, Laura Keller Jones; sister, Ann Wing, and seven grandchildren.

Visitation will be from 2-8 p.m. Friday in the Coyle Funeral Home.

The Central Catholic alumni glee club, of which he was president and a founder, is to perform a tribute at 6 p.m., followed by a

Scripture service at 6:30 p.m. Funeral services will be at 11 a.m.

Saturday in Little Flower Catholic Church, where the body will be after 10 a.m.

The family suggests tributes to Little Flower Church or Central Catholic.

This story was written by Blade Staff Writer Mark Zaborney. Contact him at: mzaborney@theblade.com or 419-724-6182.

Blade - June 03, 2015 at 08:18 AM

BH

“ *Joan-*

Sorry to hear about John's passing. We have lots of good memories from our days at CCHS and the reunions. John was a great guy with a real sense of humor. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Bill Hickok

Bill Hickok - June 02, 2015 at 08:18 PM

CF

Joanie,

We are so sorry for your loss. Our entire family has so many wonderful memories of time shared with John coming to see my Dad and brothers and having a few brews together. We so looked forward to John and your visits to the Dixon's home or cottage. Bill also shared many great times at Little Flower with John. The times are endless. Please know our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family in this time of sorrow. It was a true blessing to have known John.

*Sincerely,
Connie Fish (Dixon) & Family*

Connie Fish - June 03, 2015 at 08:35 AM

RD

We share your grief as we shared your happiness. With all of our love, Ray and Nancy

Ray and Nancy Duwve - June 03, 2015 at 11:32 AM

CP

*Joan --
Your family is in my prayers.*

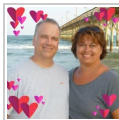
*Sincerely,
CeCe (Dentico) Pietras*

CeCe Pietras - June 04, 2015 at 04:44 PM

DB

Joan and Family - So sorry for loss. You are in my prayers. Diane Brown

Diane Brown - June 05, 2015 at 10:03 AM



Laura, John and Mrs. Keller, I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your dad and husband. I have many happy memories of childhood days spent with Laura at your home, little flower and playing various sports. I will keep you and yours in my thoughts and prayers in the days and weeks to come. Fondly, Jennifer Shanteau Bucher

Jennifer Shanteau Bucher - June 07, 2015 at 12:14 AM

DS

Joan, We are so sorry to hear of John passing. So many memories, so many stories, so many laughs, from St Anns to Central to UT to recruiting of John Jr. It seems like only yesterday we went to Holiday and Ice. Our prayers are with you and John. Dan and Dodo Simrell

Dan Simrell - June 08, 2015 at 09:21 AM