



John McHugh

October 1, 1930 - January 30, 2015

John McHugh's visitation and services have been postponed due to inclement weather. Friends may visit at the Coyle Funeral Home, 1770 S. Reynolds Rd., on Tuesday, February 3rd from 2-8 p.m. Funeral services will held on Wednesday, February 4th beginning at 10:00 a.m., in the mortuary, followed by a Funeral Mass at St. Joan of Arc Church at 10:30 a.m. Interment will be private.

John McHugh, age 84, passed away peacefully on Friday January 30, 2015 in the Elizabeth Scott Community in Maumee Ohio after a brief illness with cancer.

John was born in Toledo Ohio on October 1, 1930 to James and Katherine McHugh. He attended St Agnes Grade School, Central Catholic High School, and the University Of Toledo. He married the former Kathleen "Connie" Feak on January 8, 1955.

John devoted his life to public service. He served as Jury Commissioner, Lucas County Recorder, Lucas County Treasurer, and as Mayor of the City of Toledo from 1990 to 1993. After his retirement from politics, John embarked on a career in real-estate development.

John was a former Chairman of the Lucas County Democratic Party, Past President of the Old Newsboys Good fellows Association, member of St Joan of Arc Catholic Church, and longtime member of AA. He loved to play golf and spend time with his family and friends. John spent many winters with his wife in Palm Beach Gardens Florida where he served as a marshall at PGA

National Golf Resort and Spa.

John was preceded in death by his parents; daughters Cindy and Kelly; brother James McHugh and sister Mary Doherty. He is survived by his wife Connie; children, Tim (Dolores) McHugh, Jim (Bonnie) McHugh, Bridget Cassady, Molly (Kevin) Branyan, Kathleen (Mike) Beach; grandchildren Rachael and Hayley McHugh, Steve (Stephanie) Longoria, Marcus and Deanna McHugh, Carly Cassady, Cori, Tony, Mariah, Derek Branyan, Sean Beach; great grandchildren Aria, London and Jaelynn; sister Margaret (Tom) Gibney and brother Tom McHugh.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a contribution to the Old News Boys, Hospice of Northwest Ohio, St Joan of Arc Church or to Open Door Ministries.

NEWS ARTICLE from the BLADE: written by Mark Zaborney

(News article) John McHugh, a former Lucas County recorder, treasurer, and Democratic Party chairman who capped a career in public life as a two-term mayor of Toledo, the last under the city-manager form of government, died Friday in the Elizabeth Scott Community in Springfield Township. He was 84. He had cancer, but his illness was brief, relatives said.

After leaving office, he sold real estate for a time. "He touched a lot of lives. A lot of people were glad to know him," his son Jim said. "He had a lot of friends across the whole city, from all walks of life, for reasons other than politics." Mr. McHugh served two two-year terms as mayor, from 1989 through 1993.

He was succeeded by Carty Finkbeiner, who was elected to his first four-year term in 1993 under charter changes, endorsed by Mr. McHugh, that gave executive authority to the mayor and expanded the size of city council, with members elected by district and at-large.

"John will be known as one of the most outgoing and spirited Irish politicians

in our city's history," Mr. Finkbeiner said. "He was a very gregarious, warm-spirited individual. He was one of the good guys."

Mr. Finkbeiner said Mr. McHugh worked with Gene Cook, a longtime council member, to continue efforts for downtown revitalization begun in the 1970s by Edwin Dodd of Owens-Illinois Inc., Paul Block, the late co-publisher of The Blade, and the late Mayor Harry Kessler.

"John sustained the development of downtown," Mr. Finkbeiner said.

Toledo Mayor D. Michael Collins was a Toledo police officer and president of the Toledo Police Patrolman's Association when Mr. McHugh was mayor.

"John's legacy to the city was his level temperament," said Mr. Collins, who noted that they are distant relations. Mr. Collins said that in his own experience as a government employee and elected official, Mr. McHugh ranked as the most worthy "to have been given that title of all the persons, including myself, who has held that office." For decades, Toledo had a city manager-council form of government.

Council hired the city manager, and the mayor, though elected separately, was but one vote on council. Mr. McHugh often said he was an advocate for the change, and he made the call explicit in his 1992 State of the City address, saying that voters needed "a real voice in how our city runs. ... One leader, one point-person, the power to lead - not be led by the bureaucrats protecting their own turf."

He liked an even keel - and a good laugh, said Sandy Isenberg, a former Lucas County commissioner, who said she was given her "first real job" in the county recorder's office when Mr. McHugh led it.

"He's a tough guy to explain because he had so many facets," Ms. Isenberg said. "He caught on to being the [county] treasurer. He knew what to do and how to do it. He caught on to being mayor - and running the city, as Mike Collins will tell you, isn't an easy job."

During Mr. McHugh's tenure, a downturn in the national economy was "hitting places like Toledo hard," said Michael Beazley, administrator of the city of

Oregon and a former chairman of the county Democratic Party. "In '91 and '92, from Portside closing, which was more of a symptom, to the auto industry recession, it was a tough time to be mayor. John kept a positive attitude throughout."

As he left office Mr. McHugh touted many achievements, four typewritten pages' worth, despite the economy and the limits of his office.

Among them were a seven-year deal with Chrysler Corp. to keep Jeep in Toledo; efforts with the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority to develop an air-cargo hub at city-owned Toledo Express Airport, and creation of joint-economic development tax districts with Rossford and Perrysburg.

Mr. McHugh oversaw the first stages of the former Portside Festival Marketplace becoming a branch of a Columbus-based science museum.

In an interview on the public affairs television program The Editors he also said that race relations had improved, as had regional cooperation.

"When I took over as mayor, nobody trusted and nobody wanted to talk to us," Mr. McHugh said in January, 1994. "I think those barriers have been taken down."

Mr. McHugh said that historians would look back and comment, " 'You know, he didn't do a bad job after all under very, very difficult conditions.' When I sought the office, I figured I could make a little bit of a difference or I wouldn't have done it, and I think I have."

Peter Silverman, a Toledo councilman during Mr. McHugh's tenure, said the mayor gave him good advice because he worried a lot.

"He'd always say, relax, 99 percent of this stuff never happens and you're just giving yourself heartburn. It was some of the best advice I ever got," Mr. Silverman said. "They were very tough times. L-O-F wanted to leave. Owens-Corning wanted to leave. The takeovers had hit Toledo. He was just very level-headed trying to work with people to get things done."

Jack Ford, another Democrat - and a successor, though under the strong-mayor system - recalled that as a member of council, he crossed swords with Mr. McHugh on several issues.

"He was more of an old-school politician than folks today. He came up through the party," Mr. Ford said. "When you say John McHugh, I tend to break into a smile, because he was always smiling."

Keith Wilkowski, who was city law director when Mr. McHugh was mayor, said the former mayor was "the epitome of the type of good-hearted person that we would all like to have be involved in government."

Mr. McHugh was criticized early in his first term, mostly with humor, for renting formal wear to attend black-tie events.

A local shop donated a tuxedo to the mayor - he held it up at a council meeting - and council formally expressed its gratitude "that head officials of this city shall be properly accoutered for even the most august ceremonial happenings."

Mr. McHugh came to the mayor's office by what the late Chase Clements, The Blade's politics writer, called "a circuitous route": jury assignment commissioner for Common Pleas Court from 1956 to 1971; county recorder from 1971-1979, and then county treasurer from 1979-1985, when he became chairman of the Lucas County Democratic Party.

He resigned in 1989 to run for mayor. He defeated Republican incumbent Donna Owens in 1989 and Republican challenger Paula Pennypacker in 1991.

He ran unsuccessfully for city council in 1959 and for sheriff in 1968.

Former Lucas County Commissioner James Holzemer said he and his wife, Janice, had dinner with Mr. McHugh and his wife, Connie, almost every Friday night for the last 15 years. He said the former mayor continued to be active in Democratic politics but never contemplated a return to office.

"He was one of a kind. He was a genuine character. He would talk to anyone at any place, any time," Mr. Holzemer said. He said Mr. McHugh was a good administrator who managed offices well.

As Democratic Party chairman, Mr. McHugh aimed to bridge factions in the party between what was popularly referred to as the A Team and the Court House Gang, or B Team. "John wanted to bring people together and develop

more by consensus," Mr. Beazley said.

Mr. McHugh was born Oct. 1, 1930. His mother, Catherine, grew up poor in Ireland and married his father, James, in 1928. Mr. McHugh once told The Blade that his first job was setting pins in the neighborhood bowling alley. A longtime South Toledo resident, Mr. McHugh later had an appliance store on Broadway, his son Jim said.

Mr. McHugh was a graduate of Central Catholic High School and attended the University of Toledo.

He and his wife spent winters in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., and he was a marshal at the PGA National Golf Resort there.

He was preceded in death by daughters Cindy and Kelly, who died in childhood.

He and Kathleen "Connie" Feak married Jan. 8, 1955. She survives as do sons, Tim and Jim McHugh; daughters, Bridget Cassady, Molly Branyan, and Kathleen Beach; sister, Margaret Gibney; brother, Tom McHugh; 11 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Visitation is 2-5 p.m. Sunday and 3-8 p.m. Monday (which, due to the Level 3 Snow Conditions was postponed until Tuesday February 3, 2015) in Coyle Funeral Home. Services will be at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday in St. Joan of Arc Church.

The family suggests tributes to the Old Newsboys Goodfellow Association, of which he was a former president, Hospice of Northwest Ohio, St. Joan of Arc Church, or Open Door Ministries.

Blade staff writers Tom Troy and Lauren Lindstrom contributed to this report. This story was written by Blade staff Writer Mark Zaborney. Contact him at mzaborney@theblade.com or 419-724-6182 Published in Toledo Blade on Jan. 31, 2015

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- See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/toledoblade/obituary.aspx?n=j>

ohn-mchugh&pid=174019611#sthash.IS9wH6l4.dpuf

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 3. 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>

Funeral

FEB 4. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

St Joan of Arc
Toledo, OH 43614
<http://joanofarc.org>

Tribute Wall

DD

“ *Molly and your family,
So very sorry to hear about your Dad's passing! He was a neighbor
of mine for many years! Loved to chat with him!
May he rest in peace!*

Donna Novotny Danford

Donna Danford - February 05, 2015 at 06:45 AM

BC

“ *CONNIE AND MCHUGH FAMILY*

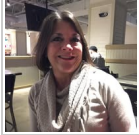
*SORRY ABOUT JOHN DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS SICK.. I KNOW
HOW YOU FEEL, I LOST MY WIFE IN OCT.I HAVE YOU AND
YOUR FAMILY IN MY DAILY PRAYERS BILL CASSIDY*

BILL CASSIDY - February 03, 2015 at 01:57 PM

SP

“ *I'll always remember John with his warm smile and gentle way. You
have my deepest sympathy. Sally Powless*

Sally Powless - February 02, 2015 at 03:00 PM



“ There aren't enough words in the Webster dictionary to express how very sorry I was to read of your father's passing! Your Dad left on the most incredible legacy...that shines through each and every one of you! He taught you how to fight and battle the worst disease through faith and prayers. He taught you to hold your head up high and pray for those less fortunate. He sacrificed so many things in life, with humility and love He not only touched your hearts, but he touched so many others. His impact on Toledo alone...and add all the inspirations to those that he loved, by inspiring people to be better and make a difference well what more can I say? He did more in his life than one person can dream of of doing in their first 40 years of life! His life was so incredibly fulfilled by his big happy cheer, he showed so much compassion to all who were near and far. My thoughts, love, and deep prayers are with you and your family...as you grieve for the most wonderful man that walked this earth. He will be missed by so many...carry on his legacy now and make him proud. One day all of you will meet again...until then...
May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.
May or loving Lord bless you,hug you, and give you comfort!
Much love and prayers,
Cathi Williamson-Cryan

Cathi Williamson-Cryan - February 02, 2015 at 12:17 AM

BM

“ Sorry to read of John's passing. A true Irish gentleman, and more important, an honest politician. I am proud to say that I was an alter boy in John and Connie's wedding. My thoughts are with the McHugh clan.
Bob McCarthy

Bob McCarthy - February 01, 2015 at 07:07 PM

CC

“ *Bridget.....I was so sorry to hear of the passing of your father.
Please accept my deepest sympathy*

Carol Clark

Carol Clark - February 01, 2015 at 05:03 PM

PJ

“ *Molly, my thoughts, prayers and love to you and the rest of your
family! (((Hugs)))*

Patti and Todd Jimison

Patti Jimison - February 01, 2015 at 04:31 PM

RB

“ *TIM, MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.
YOUR DAD WAS A GREAT MAN AND WELL LIKED BY ALL. MAY
HE REST IN PEACE. MAY GOD BLESS THE McHUGH FAMILY.
ROB BROADWAY*

ROB Broadway - February 01, 2015 at 12:21 PM

MK

“ *Molly so sorry for your loss. My deepest sympathy go out to you and
your family. Your in my thoughts, I feel for you. Hang in there.*

Marlene Kirkendall

Marlene Kirkendall - February 01, 2015 at 11:25 AM

BC

“ Molly, so sorry to hear about your Dad. He was a good man Toledo will always be proud and a pleasure to know. Chris & I are keeping you & your family in our prayers.

Bill & Chris Conklin - February 01, 2015 at 09:30 AM

SM

“ Dear Mc Hugh Family,
I go back a long way with John. St Agnes Parish and with your mother
and my mother who both came from Ireland. I also had Kathleen at OLPH. The Irish parties and the Notre Dames Games
You have my love and support at this time.
God bless you Connie and you family.
Sister Ann Marie McManus O.S.U.

Sister Ann Marie Mc Manus - February 01, 2015 at 09:30 AM

CV

“ 2 files added to the album VIDEO TRIBUTE



COYLE FUNERAL HOME VIDEOS - February 01, 2015 at 08:52 AM

BN

“ Sorry for your loss, Hayley and family, Ms Nancarrow

beth nancarrow - January 31, 2015 at 07:18 PM

JT

“ Our deepest sympathy to Connie and family. We are out of town and just read of John's passing. John was a long time friend and was always there for me and my family. He was a mentor to me for many years. He was my "go to guy" over the years. I am saddened by his passing and will miss him greatly. Our best wishes to the McHugh family. Respectfully, James Telb and family.

James A Telb - January 31, 2015 at 03:13 PM

JE

“ Julie East lit a candle in memory of John McHugh



Julie East - January 31, 2015 at 02:56 PM

JE

Prayers lifted @ the loss of a wonderful spirited respected man. Prayers for his family.

Julie East - January 31, 2015 at 03:01 PM

MH

Such memories of John McHugh. Bridget, Connie, Jim, Tim, Molly, Cass, Sympathy and prayers from Alaska. What a great man, and what a pleasure and honor I had to be a part of such a wonderful family! God bless you all! "The Harv"
Mary Harvey

Mary Harvey - February 02, 2015 at 06:01 AM

CP

“ To Jim and Bonnie, Molly and Kevin and families,

Our thoughts and prayers are with you all -

Matt and Carolyn Petrie



Carolyn Petrie - January 31, 2015 at 12:31 PM

TK

“ I first met John McHugh in the 1970's. I was the US Mailman for the Lucas County Courthouse in the 1970's, 80's,90's. And the Mailman for the Government Center in the 1980's and through the 1990's. I knew His honor (as I called him). He treated me with respect as he did every one he interacted with. I knew him as the jury commisioner, County Recorder as well as County Treasurer. And he treated me the same when he became Mayor. A genuine Good guy and a throw back to the old days. My condolences to his family and all his friends. Heaven is even better because he is there now. Rest in peace "Your Honor" Tom Knight Maumee Ohio

Tom Knight - January 31, 2015 at 12:16 PM

LF

“ Love, Kevin and Mary Ann McHugh and Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of John McHugh.



Love, Kevin and Mary Ann McHugh and Family - January 31, 2015 at 09:16 AM

CS

“ *Bridget and family
Hope you will find comfort in treasured
memories at this
difficult time.
Ceylon Smith*



Ceylon Smith - January 31, 2015 at 08:11 AM

NR

“ *Nancy Ryan purchased the Quiet Expressions for
the family of John McHugh.*



Nancy Ryan - January 31, 2015 at 07:17 AM

FW

“ *Molly, Kevin and family sorry to hear of John's passing. I have
several memories of working for John and Bill at Broadway
Appliance and Furniture.*

Carole and Fritz Ward

fritz ward - January 30, 2015 at 03:53 PM

RS

*Our condolences to the MchHugh famil..... what a wonderful man... he
did so much for his family and our community. He will never be
forgotten. May he RIP!
Rob, Kyle, & Josh Sarahman*

Rob Sarahman - February 01, 2015 at 01:31 PM

NN

So sorry for your loss. Wish I could be there to help out. Love, hugs and prayers to all. Have a ton of good memories

net nut - February 01, 2015 at 05:17 PM