



John J. McCarthy, Esq.

February 10, 1948 - October 28, 2025

John J. McCarthy, age 77, passed away on October 28, 2025, at Baystate Medical Center after a long battle with kidney disease. He was born on February 10, 1948, in Brooklyn, N.Y., son of the late John and Leona McCarthy. He grew up in Cranford, New Jersey and loved his role as the eldest brother to his eight siblings: three brothers and five sisters. The McCarthy home was very active, some might even say chaotic at times, but full of genuine love and devotion, which allowed strong, unique, and everlasting bonds to develop between the siblings.

John graduated from Roselle Catholic High School ('66) in Roselle, New Jersey, before obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree from Mount Saint Mary's College ('70) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. After graduating from the Mount, he worked for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in New York City. He was at MET Life for three years before packing up his car and relocating to Western Massachusetts to attend Springfield College ('75). He graduated from SC with a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and a Certificate of Advanced Studies. While attending Springfield College, he met and worked closely with his dear friend, Donnie Gallagher, with the FRIENDS organization. With his master's degree in hand, John found employment with two social service agencies in Chicopee and Springfield, providing counseling services for at-risk adolescents. In 1977, he decided to pursue his law degree from Western New England College, School of Law ('80), where he served as a student mentor in the Legal Writing Program. Years later, John continued to

teach and mentor law students at WNEC as a Trial Methods Adjunct Faculty member.

He was an attorney/shareholder with the Law Firm of Doherty, Wallace, Pillsbury and Murphy, P.C. in Springfield, Massachusetts, servicing clients for over 45 years in their Civil Litigation division. He was honored to be part of this incredible team of legal professionals. The attorneys and staff at DWPM were not only his colleagues, but he considered them as an extension of his family. He served as a member of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Advisory Committee on Rules of Civil Procedure for a 6-year term. He also sat on the Hampden County Bar Association arbitration and mediation panel. He absolutely loved the law and was never afraid to take on the hard cases. John always enjoyed debating and discussing the law with his two brothers Robert and Danny, who are also attorneys.

In September of 1975, he met the love of his life, Joanne Rurak, while attending the Big E with his college friend Paul. John and Joanne had their first official date at the Ground Round in West Springfield. After having dinner and enjoying live music, they went outside only to find that John's old blue VW had been stolen. They spent the next hour in the police department filing a stolen motor vehicles report and trying to figure out who to call for a ride home. This was the first of many wonderful memories created during their 50 years together as a couple. They were married at St. Stanislaus Basilica on August 12, 1978.

John was the proud father of his incredible children, Maureen and John. He was not only their father, who loved them with all his heart, but he was also their coach, mentor, and best friend. John coached or cheered from the sidelines, every game, except one, his children played in, from pee wee level through college. He always regretted missing that one game.

John coached youth sports in Cranford, N.J. and Chicopee, MA. for over 40 years. He even coached his youngest brother, Danny, on the St. Michael's basketball team dating back to 1972. He was honored to have been the assistant coach of the Holyoke Catholic High School boys' basketball team

when they won the Western Mass. Championship in 2006.

One of John's most valued possessions was his HD-35 Martin Guitar given to him by his siblings on his 50th birthday. He played his Martin regularly, mastering a massive collection of songs. He wrote the lyrics and music for several songs that he enjoyed singing to his children and nieces/nephews... songs such as "Good Night Guitar", "Rocky, Rocky", "Maureen's Song", "September Girl" and "Loose Stones". These songs expressed his deep love of family, while reminding them that it's the little things in life that can bring you much joy. He always brought his guitar with him when visiting with his family in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. His sisters, Mary, Eileen, Doreen, Kathy and Beth always enjoyed the sing-a-longs led by John at several family gatherings, including Beth's wedding.

John loved playing golf with his family and friends at the Buck Hill Falls golf course in Pennsylvania, a community where he purchased a home to be closer to his family. He wanted his children to have a close relationship with their grandmother, Mammy, and their aunts, uncles and cousins. He never wanted his children to simply be known as those cousins from Massachusetts. John particularly enjoyed playing golf with Ralph, George, and Peter each weekend at BH. Their foursome was famously known as "The Bandits". John had one crazy golf swing, but somehow it worked. A golf pro once told his son, "Johnny, never, never, ever try to replicate your father's swing".

John was once a Brooklyn Dodgers fan, just like his Dad, until the team decided to leave New York. Thereafter, he became a Boston Red Sox fan which led to a healthy rivalry between him and his brother Terry, who is an avid New York Yankees fan.

John also loved playing basketball in the men's over 30 basketball league. He may not have been the best player on the court, but he played with heart. He enjoyed being part of a team, which included Ronnie, Jimmy, Greg, Mike, John and Garth, who all happened to be exceptional players. John was very clever, he knew that by sponsoring the team, known as "McCarthy's Law", it

guaranteed that he would get some playing time.

John was very active in his community, selflessly giving of his time. He was on several boards, commissions and committees in Chicopee and Buck Hill Falls. He was on the Board of Trustees of Elms College when they made the difficult decision as to whether to become a coeducational institution. John had a special connection to Chicopee long before he moved here. It was his dad, the Vice President of Dow Jones, who chose the Chicopee location for the Wall Street Journal plant.

John will be profoundly missed by his loving wife, Joanne (Rurak) McCarthy of Chicopee, his beloved children, Maureen McCarthy- Honea (John) of Rogers, AR and John E. McCarthy (Alexandra) of Washington, D.C. and his puppy-boy, Henry.

He is also survived by an incredible family, which include his siblings, Mary McCarthy of Clark, NJ., Robert McCarthy (Liz) of Sarasota, FL., Eileen Foster (Cedric) of Cranford, NJ., Doreen McCarthy of New York, NY, Terrence McCarthy (Jen) of Cranford, NJ, Kathleen Annichiarico (Phil) of Oldsmar, FL, Daniel McCarthy of Westfield, NJ, and Elizabeth McCarthy-Miller (Eric) of Westfield, NJ, his brother-in-law, Ronald Rurak (Lynn) of Belchertown, MA., and his grandson Micah, along with several wonderful nieces and nephews. The family is grateful for the quality medical care provided to John, over the years, by Dr. Anthony Poindexter and the Fresenius Kidney Care staff.

A Celebration of Life and memorial service will be held on Saturday, November 1, 2025, at the Kozikowski Funeral Home in Chicopee, MA.

If you wish to make a contribution in John's memory, the family asks that donations be made to: St. Judes Children Research Hospital, the American Kidney Fund, Inc., or to a charity close to your heart.

Today, the world is a little sadder without John.

Tribute Wall

HS

“ Rest easy, Mr. John. You were one of our cherished regulars at Falls Pizza in Chicopee. Your bright smile and kind spirit always lit up the room. It was truly a joy to serve you — you’ll be deeply missed.

heather shelton - November 03, 2025 at 02:41 PM

AM

“ John will be sadly missed. The HCBA has lost another great one ! Condolences to all who loved John and knew him. May he watch over you all.
John Miller

Attorney John E Miller - November 03, 2025 at 10:51 AM

WO

“ Very sorry to hear of John's passing. He was fine lawyer and great human being. I first remember him from his intramural basketball days at WNEC Law. My condolences to Joanne and John's entire family.

William O'Grady - November 03, 2025 at 10:47 AM

WS

“ Deepest Condolences to Joanne and family. RIP, John -- and keep the music alive. You were one of the best. Amen. -- William Sharpton

william sharpton - November 01, 2025 at 04:40 PM