



## John J. Schlatka

February 12, 1954 - January 16, 2021

John J. Schlatka, 66, passed away peacefully at home in Athens, Alabama on Saturday, January 16, 2021. Born in West Springfield on February 12, 1954, he was a son of the late Joseph J. and Stefania A. (Gwozdz) Schlatka. John was a graduate of West Springfield High School, after which he had many different careers. He owned his own service station and drove a tractor trailer as an owner operator before settling on starting an excavation services business. He moved to Athens in the early 90's and worked in construction for Stone & Webster Engineering , a TVA nuclear power project, while he continued his own local excavation services business. After John retired he raised and grazed beef cattle on his property. He affectionately named his cattle after his favorite aunts, which was always a source of levity to the rest of the family. An avid reader, John loved biographies and history books. He was also a good automotive mechanic and focused on restoring antique farm tractors, with a special affinity for Farmall tractors. Somehow he kept his 1976 F150 pick up truck running and on the road, too. In his early years he modified a "55" Chevy sedan with a powerful engine which he frequently raced in local drag races. He also enjoyed riding his Harley-Davidson motorcycle during good weather. John was predeceased in 2016 by his sister, Elizabeth C. (Schlatka) Wrobleski, and in 2021 by her husband, Eric Wrobleski. He is survived by his brothers, David J. Schlatka and wife Linda of Harvard, and Joseph J. Schlatka, Jr. and wife Susan of West Springfield; nephews, Benjamin J. Schlatka and wife Shirley and their three sons of Lexington,

Stephen E. Wrobleski and fiancée Margaret Bright-Ryan of Westfield, and Joseph J. Schlatka, III, of West Springfield; and niece, Stephanie V. (Schlatka) Andrews and husband Anthony of West Springfield. John had many cousins and extended family and loved them all. He had a very big heart and a fully developed sense of humor. He would love to tell short stories that were enjoyable to hear, and was always ready to help others without being asked. In addition, after his passing, it was evident how many special relationships he made along his life's path in Athens. A funeral home service will be held Wednesday at 11AM in Kozikowski Funeral Home, 565 Front St., Chicopee, followed by burial in St. Stanislaus Cemetery. Calling hours are Wednesday from 9:30-11AM. Memorial contributions may be made to the Spastic Paraplegia Foundation, 1605 Goularte Place, Fremont, CA 94539.

# Cemetery Details

## St. Stanislaus Cemetery

800 Montgomery St.  
Chicopee, MA

# Previous Events

## Service

JAN 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

Kozikowski Funeral Home  
565 Front Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013  
(413) 592-9256  
kozikowskifh@gmail.com

## Visitation

FEB 3. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Kozikowski Funeral Home  
565 Front Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013  
(413) 592-9256  
kozikowskifh@gmail.com

# Tribute Wall

ED

“ We will remember John fondly and with smiles every time we talk about the Red Sox, eat banana bread, see an old truck, or hear a tractor running. John is and will be missed. John, look down upon us and smile every once in awhile. We will remember your sense of humor.

*With respect,*

*Ed and Lisa Dahlberg (AL)*

---

**Ed and Lisa Dahlberg** - February 02, 2021 at 01:48 PM

JG

“ Dave and Joe, I'm sorry to read of your brother John's passing. I didn't know him well but he surely was a man who kept busy with a variety of interests. My guess and hope is that his "sense of humor" served him and others well, especially during these trying times.

*Best wishes, Jim Gwozdz*

---

**James Gwozdz** - February 01, 2021 at 08:46 PM