



John D. Engelbrecht

June 12, 1951 - April 18, 2020

John D. Engelbrecht, 68, of Evansville, IN, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, April 18, 2020 at Deaconess Midtown from a massive heart attack. John was born June 12, 1951 in Evansville to the late John A. and Bettie Ann (Groves) Engelbrecht.

Until his death, John was Chairman of South Central Inc (SCI), and was the epitome of a local entrepreneur and businessman. He took over the reins as CEO of SCI at age 23 after his father, John A., passed away unexpectedly. Under his leadership, SCI grew from a small, Evansville based company into a thriving business with a nationwide footprint with diverse business holdings. John's opportunistic nature and strong leadership allowed him to expand the family business greatly from its start as a radio and television broadcasting company to a diversified holding company that also encapsulated financial services, low voltage contracting, real estate, addiction treatment centers, and a myriad of digital media services. He retired as CEO in 2008, whereupon his son, JP, took over as the 3rd generation leader of SCI.

Beyond his extensive business accomplishments, John relished living and being involved in the Evansville community. He truly believed in being a steward of the assets of SCI to serve the Evansville region, often saying he wanted to bring money back home to Indiana. Countless organizations across the Evansville region benefited from his donations of millions of dollars in cash and services during his life. Further, John dedicated much of his time and energy as a director for Citizens Bank, Vectren, Deaconess Hospital, WNIN, and the Evansville Museum of Arts, History, and Sciences.

John received many accolades over the years. Notable public honors include being inducted into the Junior Achievement Evansville Business Hall of Fame in 2014 and receiving the Sagamore of the Wabash Award from Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb in 2018. However, John's greatest honor was bestowed on him by his children and grandchildren when they called him Papa.

John loved the Catholic Church and was a member of St Mary Catholic Church in

downtown Evansville. He was a proud graduate of both Reitz High School (1969) and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville (1973).

He is survived by his wife, Stephanie (Mosbacher) Engelbrecht; son, JP (Allison) Engelbrecht; daughters, Elizabeth (Jeff) Cox and Nora (Engelbrecht) Ferguson; grandchildren, Ellie, Will, and Anna Engelbrecht, Myles Frazier, Sullivan, Riley, Caroline, Marilyn, and Robert Cox, and Theodore, John, and Henry Ferguson.

Due to the current pandemic, there will be a private family service with Fr. Benny Chacko officiating. Arrangements will be handled by Ziemer Funeral Home East Chapel, 800 S. Hebron Avenue, Evansville, IN 47714.

Private burial will be at St. Joseph Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Evansville Museum of Arts, History, and Sciences, 411 SE Riverside Drive, Evansville, IN 47713.

Condolences may be made online at www.ziemerfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery

St. Joseph Mausoleum

2500 Mesker Park Dr

Evansville, IN, 47720

Comments



“ John D. and his dad John A. WERE the best quality owners anyone could ever work for! And I would sit Gordon Arnold's barber chair in high school, his dad would be on the list for a cut before or after me....His dad taught me all about radio and tease me about working at THAT ROCK Top-40 across town... John D. would pop by WIKY at times, when I was doing a weekend shift or filling in for a vacationing crew member... Helped me to get in that building THREE TIMES as an employee... And, when the 68th year of South Central was close, he sold the cluster of stations to another great radio family, Duke Wilson from Wisconsin (Midwest Communications).... Same rule.... COMMUNITY... The tri-state should be thankful that the Engelbrechts were the class media group in the home market... His dad came off The USS Birmingham (from WWII service) and put on 820 a couple of years later... WIKY-FM became one of the first FMs to be on top in ANY market... John.... RIP and I WILL SEE YOU down the line.... You have run the race with joy!!! II Timothy 4:7 and 8... Gone to soon in our eyes and hearts, but God's plans are eternal...

"Skip" Spence - April 23 at 11:52 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Andy Reeves - April 23 at 04:45 PM



“ Ivan sent a virtual gift in memory of John D. Engelbrecht



Ivan - April 23 at 12:18 PM



“ Stephanie, J.P. and family, please know how sorry Mary Ellen and I were to hear of John's passing. As a member of the Board of Citizens Bank we valued his opinion greatly. He always had the interest of our customers, employees and shareholders at heart. We're sure all of you will miss him, he was a man of high character. We'll think of him often.
May he Rest in Peace.
Bill and Mary Ellen Vieth

Bill Vieth - April 22 at 10:47 AM



“ Thinking of Stephanie and all of the family during this difficult time. John was such nice person and he and Stephanie were a beautiful couple. We wish the best for all of the family. Howard and Janet Leistner

Janet Leistner - April 21 at 08:30 PM



“ I'm proud to have worked at WIKY during his ownership. He was the consummate pro.

Mark Elliott - April 21 at 06:36 PM



“ I have known John through the years, probably starting when I was a Board Member at WNIN. We didn't see each other a lot but it was enjoyable when we did. Our discussions ranged from swimming and general fitness to business. I always respected his perspective on not only the broadcast business, but also any other general topic in business or otherwise. I was very sad to read of his passing. He was good to me and I liked him.

John Stanley

John Stanley - April 21 at 01:58 PM



“ Dear Stephanie and Engelbrecht Family,

John was a very special person who served as a role model and support for me in a difficult time of my life. His faith, commitment to healing, generosity of spirit and dedication to our community was an inspiration to many. I am so sorry for you loss. He will be greatly missed.

Sincerely, Christine Theby

Christine Theby - April 21 at 12:58 PM



“ Stephanie & family,
I send my condolences to all of you. I really enjoyed getting to know John when I joined WNIN and he was a WNIN board member. And I especially valued his friendship and advice. He was always happy to help. I also admired his other community service and, of course, his business success. I will miss him.

Brad Kimmel - April 21 at 11:49 AM



“ Heart's Companion Bouquet was purchased for the family of John D. Engelbrecht.



April 21 at 10:57 AM



“ Stephanie-
So very sorry for the loss of our husband John. My prayers are with you and your family.
Rosemary McGarrah

Rosemary McGarrah - April 21 at 10:20 AM



“ I had the pleasure of serving on the Deaconess Health System Board with John for many years. I always enjoyed his insight, humor, and steady hand. He had the ability to see to the heart of complex issues, and to guide and lead the group in the right direction. John respected everyone he met, and was a very genuine person. He will be missed.

Bruce Stallings - April 21 at 09:55 AM



“ My thoughts and condolences to Stephanie and the Engelbrecht family. John was a good man and his contributions to the community as a business leader and philanthropist will live on forever. Peace!

Steve Bohleber - April 21 at 09:22 AM



“ It was an honor to work for this man. I have so many great memories of my time on the hill working for SCC, and John played a big part in those memories. Sending peace and love to the family.

Cindy Miller - April 21 at 08:31 AM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of John D. Engelbrecht.



April 21 at 07:18 AM



“ Brian Tornatta lit a candle in memory of John D. Engelbrecht



Brian Tornatta - April 21 at 06:45 AM



“ Prayers for the Family from the Tornatta's. God is Good. Rest in Peace John.

Brian Tornatta - April 21 at 06:47 AM



“ I worked for John A & Bettie 1964 before graduating from Reitz. During my tenure I would take and pick up John from high school....he was a great kid. I left WIKY in 1976 but followed the WIKY adventures and employees/friends I had made during that time. Rest in Peace John David. Donna Garwood House/Corey Garwood.

Donna House - April 21 at 05:03 AM



“ I have known John for 50 years. We worked together in both business and the community. I fondly remember his father, mother and most of all JP who was a standout in both high school and college and now leads the company. John was highly intelligent, very witty and a joy to be around. I will miss our very interesting conversations. I will miss him. Thoughts and prayers o all.

Donna Leader - April 21 at 03:46 AM



“ Love, Aaron, Nelly, Sydney, and Vicki Beck purchased the Enduring Grace for the family of John D. Engelbrecht.



Love, Aaron, Nelly, Sydney, and Vicki Beck - April 21 at 01:19 AM



“ My sincere condolences go out to the family of John David. I have many fond memories from the years I worked for him at South Central Communications. He was a great leader and kind and caring man. Please know your family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Melissa Mauser - April 20 at 10:03 PM



“ I knew John back when I was a kid and my dad Charlie Blake would take me up to the station on Mt Auburn. Now dad will have another friend up in Heaven. I am sorry for your loss. Charles Blake.

Charles Blake - April 21 at 10:15 AM



“ What a loss in so many ways. I truly enjoyed every opportunity I had to meet with John and spend time with him. So much to teach and so many amazing stories. A one of a kind whose like we will not see anytime soon. My sincere condolences to JP and the family.

Richard Clements - April 20 at 09:56 PM



“ John was a good friend, I enjoyed our talks together as friends of Bill. Loved serving with him at Stepping Stone doing bridge group and carrying the message. Many a drunk benefited from Johns wisdom and compassion. I will miss his wit and friendship.

Ron Mckeethen - April 20 at 09:53 PM



“ More gratitude than I can ever express for the opportunity to come work for you at South Central in 1998. My family and I have been blessed by the outstanding company the Engelbrecht family built- especially under John David's leadership. You have been a leader, mentor, and friend. Your legacy will last forever.
Mike Bevers- WIKY

Mike Bevers - April 20 at 07:42 PM



“ You was a friend. RIP

Harry lowe - April 20 at 08:20 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John D. Engelbrecht.



April 20 at 06:27 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of John D. Engelbrecht.



April 20 at 06:20 PM



“ Stephanie, on behalf of the Evansville Museum Docent Association, we extend our condolences to you and your family. Such a difficult time for all of you . . . We greatly respect your husband’s remarkable life, career, and selfless contributions to the community, including his dedication to the Evansville Museum. Our hearts are with you.

Peg Ehlen, President of the Docent Association

Peg Ehlen - April 20 at 06:10 PM



“ My first job was for John's radio station in Knoxville. Over the years he became someone I looked very much forward to seeing visit our stations and the opportunity to spend time with him.
Always a gentleman and a brilliant businessman, he has set a high bar for those that follow. I am beyond saddened to learn of his passing.
Prayers for the family as you deal with this great loss.
May you Rest in Peace John.
Thank you for the many years of friendship.

Jeff Jarnigan - April 20 at 06:01 PM



“ Sending our deepest condolences to Stephanie and the entire Englebrecht family. What a loss to the Evansville community. John was an incredible leader in business and in philanthropy and was admired by so many. There are no words that seem adequate to comfort you after such a sudden loss. May you find comfort in knowing that our community mourns with you.

Stephanie -- Lean on us. If you need anything, please reach out.

XOXO,
Matt and Erika Taylor

Erika Taylor - April 20 at 05:26 PM



“ John and I served on the EMAS Board together, as I made a plea for underwriting he quietly stepped up and took care of it. He was a generous community supporter.
Shirley Becker

Shirley Stucki Becker - April 20 at 03:57 PM



“ Such sad news! John David was a man I greatly admired and respected. He was a leader that gave all the credit to his employees. He was one of those people you were in awe of but at the same time so completely easy to talk to. Prayers for understanding and comfort for all the family.

Susan Hollingsworth
Knoxville, TN.

Susan Dew Hollingsworth - April 20 at 04:21 PM



“ John and I were acquainted as a result of our mutual relationship with the Evansville Museum. I enjoyed his dry sense of humor but mostly the years we spent working together on projects for the Museum's Science Committee. Even before his passing, I could not help but continuously reminded his many generous contributions to the community through his support of the Maple Sugar Shack and numerous sponsored planks on the boardwalks at the Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve.

Mitch Luman - April 20 at 04:32 PM



“ To Stephanie, J.P., Nora and other JD family members. My sincerest of sympathies to the entire family. What a shock. But what a gentleman. I had the good fortune of working for J.D. on two occasions, once on the radio side and later managing his TV enterprise during the time USI won the Div II national championship. John David and his Mom, Betty were always gracious, friendly and generous with me and my wife. I learned much from John David and treasure the memories we made together during those years I was associated with his great company. May the gates of Heaven welcome you and may you find an even bigger boat there for eternal relaxation. You've earned it!

John Reiplinger - April 20 at 05:46 PM



“ Such sad news. My deepest sympathy to Stephanie, J.P. and the entire family. He was a joy to know... such an impish sense of humor. This town has lost one of its best.

Linda Bennett - April 20 at 07:57 PM



“ sorry for your loss

Henry Backes - April 20 at 10:48 PM



“ Nora, Bussie, and families.....

I am very sad to hear about your fathers death, especially in the current atmosphere of isolation. Please know that my prayers are with all of you!

Beth Becker - April 21 at 01:03 AM



“ Stephanie and family. We are so sad to hear of John's passing. He was a wonderful person with a huge heart and giving spirit. We will be praying for all of you.

Nina and Randy Lientz

nina lientz - April 21 at 02:41 PM



“ Dear JP and Engelbretch family. I am so sorry to hear that your dad passed away. I remember him very well, he made a great impression on me on one of the IPMA meetings a few years ago. a very charismatic man. I send you a hug filled with sympathy. Veronica Zorrilla from Mexico

Veronica Zorrilla Ibarra - April 21 at 05:31 PM



“ R.I.P Bettie and John, your back together again. heaven was needing some angels and he choose the best. You will be missed and thank you for all you have done for the community.

Francine Howard

Francine Howard - April 21 at 05:34 PM



“ I worked for JD at WTVK channel 26 Knoxville when it became WVLT channel 8. It's was an interesting and challenging time and I have many memories of our time together. John was a complex man and I wish that we had stayed in touch more. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Andy Reeves - April 23 at 04:40 PM