



# John Charles Willenbrock

May 20, 1939 - January 17, 2022

John Charles Willenbrock, 82, of Fishers, Indiana passed away peacefully January 17, 2022 with his beloved wife, Janie; and daughters, Laura and Chris by his side. He was born in New York City, May 20, 1939 to German immigrant parents, Klaus and Katerina, who instilled in him a love of Jesus and unshakeable faith in God. He developed a love of electronics at a young age, attended the prestigious Brooklyn Technical High School, and Concordia College in Bronxville, New York. At Valparaiso University he was an active member of Sigma Pi Fraternity and earned a degree in Electronics Engineering. There he met Janie, the love of his life. They married in January of 1963, and set up their home in Indianapolis, where John worked for 38 years at Naval Avionics Center (later Raytheon). He was involved in research and development as lead engineer of numerous systems for Naval aircraft, including a patent for specialized equipment.

John was a loving father to Laura and Chris, sharing with them his interests in astronomy, photography, and woodworking. Together the family enjoyed little league softball coached by John and Janie, camping trips, swimming at the Rivi, sailing on Geist and waterskiing on Morse Lake.

With Janie, John led the Luther League youth group at Cross and Crown Lutheran Church for several years. He sang bass in the choirs at Cross and Crown and Cornerstone Lutheran Churches. He used his gifts of leading worship with his voice and guitar in many places over the years, including Cursillo ministries. Over twenty years, he led music for Connection Ministries and then Friendship Saturdays at Carmel Lutheran Church for adults with intellectual disabilities. He served faithfully in a variety of other roles in church throughout his life, including President of the Cross and Crown congregation.

John was a member of the Indianapolis Maennerchor for 43 years, serving as president several times. From the age of seventeen, John was an amateur radio enthusiast, communicating with fellow "hams" around the globe, via voice and Morse Code.

John is survived by his loving wife of 59 years, Janie Willenbrock; daughters, Laura (Peter) Simpkins and Chris Willenbrock; granddaughters, Devin Simpkins and Hayleigh Simpkins; sister, Catherine Schmidt, nieces, Caran Kalish and Liz Young and their families; nephew, Jonathan Schmidt; cousin, Jack Willenbrock and his family; brother-in-

law, John (Marsha) Anderson; nephews, Ben (Maggie) Anderson and their daughters, and Brock Anderson.

John was valued for his integrity, quirky sense of humor, loyalty, and biblical wisdom. Our family chain is broken and nothing seems the same. But as God calls us one by one, the chain will link again.

Visitation will be Friday, January 28, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. until the time of service at 11:30 a.m. at Cornerstone Lutheran Church, 4850 E. Main Street, Carmel, IN 46032. John requested that we invite you to join us for a 'Beer 'n Brats' luncheon at the church following the service.

Memorial contributions are suggested to Connection Ministries, P.O. Box 29495, Indianapolis, IN 46229.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN **28**. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Cornerstone Lutheran Church Carmel  
4850 E. Main St.  
Carmel, IN 46033  
(317) 814-4252  
<http://www.cornerstonelutheran.church>

## Memorial Service

JAN **28**. 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Cornerstone Lutheran Church Carmel  
4850 E. Main St.  
Carmel, IN 46033  
(317) 814-4252  
<http://www.cornerstonelutheran.church>

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Shirley Brothers Mortuaries & Crematory - February 07, 2022 at 09:32 AM



“ Janie and Family,  
Thinking of you and praying for you and your family as John's presence here on earth will surely be missed. He certainly left his mark here, never to be forgotten and cherished by all who knew him. May the wonderful memories and his lovely legacy carry you through the tough times. I will especially miss that wonderful east coast accent of his, along with his great sense of humor. It is fun to imagine eternity and what humor looks like there. I picture John continuing to be the instigator of many good laughs. May the Holy Spirit grant you comfort and peace.  
Clarissa Hay

Clarissa Hay - January 28, 2022 at 11:25 AM



“ To the Willenbrock family,  
John was and continues to be a bright light who made the world a better place. He shared his many gifts with an open heart: his love for family, God, music (always had his guitar nearby), service to others, polka and of course bratwurst and beer (Annual German Fest at German Park)!  
Janie and family, I am truly sorry for your loss. John's memory lives in my heart and countless others'. May this bring you some peace and comfort.

Julie Hemker - January 27, 2022 at 10:57 PM



Jules, I would never have made it through this without you. And your family's love and prayers. Chris

Chris - January 29, 2022 at 07:44 PM

CS

“ To the Willenbrock family,  
We are so grateful to have been friends with John.  
He shared his love of family...love of God and the Bible...love for life...with such  
German gusto that I smile with those memories.  
John left our world a better place because of his warmth, integrity, sense of  
humor, wisdom, brilliance and profound trust in God.  
Janie and family- we truly share in your sadness and will miss John deeply.

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**Charlotte Schild** - January 27, 2022 at 04:58 PM

CH

*Char, you are a gem. I love you!- Chris*

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**Chris** - January 29, 2022 at 07:40 PM

MP

“ My thoughts and prayers are with the Willenbrock family. As a kid growing up at  
Cross and Crown, I remember him well. He was always there to greet me and  
share some words of wisdom with me. He will be missed

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**Mark Potter** - January 26, 2022 at 09:46 AM

CH

*Mark it was great to see your dad and Dave at the Celebration of Life for my dad.  
Thank you- Chris*

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**Chris** - January 29, 2022 at 07:38 PM

JS

“ Janie,

*I am so sorry for your loss! John was a gem and I have great memories of him  
and you while you were at Cross and Crown. You are in my prayers!*

*Julie Slavens*

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**Julie Slavens** - January 25, 2022 at 05:27 PM

KM

“ John, you have been a wonderful servant to Our Great Lord and to all the lives you touched. I enjoyed serving with you at our Friendship Saturday gatherings and truly enjoyed the gift of music you shared with all of our friends. My favorite memory is when you would walk in the room ....Josh would loudly yell "JOHN JOHN JOHN , JOHN JOHN JOHN" as he would clap in happiness. Priceless. Your true gift was how you freely shared your love for the Lord. You are a treasure and will be missed by many. Rest in Gods loving embrace.

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**Karen Morris** - January 24, 2022 at 02:53 PM

MB

73 my friend. I am confident you are in the arms of our Savior.  
Marsh Brynildson

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**Marsh Brynildson** - January 25, 2022 at 08:25 AM

DB

I met John more than 30 years ago when he led singing for the ministry at Castleton Baptist Church for adults with intellectual disabilities. John and Janie, you have been dear friends and faithfully committed with us in the Friendship groups at Cross and Crown and Cornerstone. We will miss John's music leadership, but mostly, his friendship. You are our loss John, But Jesus is your gain!

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**Don Boden** - January 25, 2022 at 10:03 AM

JG

Sending thoughts and prayers to you all! John has finally been reunited with his best friend and my Father Fred!

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**Jenny Reiner Gregory** - January 25, 2022 at 02:16 PM

CS

Janie, my condolences to you and your family on John's death. Carroll always enjoyed working with him in the Maennerchor.

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**Clarice W. Stegall** - January 27, 2022 at 03:25 PM