

Lee J. Vaughan

June 22, 1942 - February 29, 2020

Albany-Lee J. Vaughan, of Albany, NY, passed away on February 29, 2020. He was born on June 22, 1942 in Buffalo, New York, the first child of Robert L. and Mary Bainbridge Vaughan. Lee's life was a testament to justice and mercy. Lee's high school years were spent at St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute. At Canisius College, where he majored in English, was the Sports Editor of the Griffin, participated in ROTC and student government, and sang in the Glee Club. In 1964, Lee joined the Peace Corps and he served almost three years in Konea, Lofa County, Liberia. There, he taught an elementary school classroom, held a semi-regular medical clinic, and assisted his friend and fellow volunteer in completing construction on a school building.

Upon return to the United States, Lee joined the New York State Division of the Budget as an entry-level professional and continued there until his retirement thirty years later. He worked long, difficult hours, but enjoyed the camaraderie of his coworkers in the Division. He rose rapidly through the ranks to become assistant chief budget examiner. From his early days, Lee was recognized for his intelligence, leadership, negotiating and creative problem-solving skills, writing ability, and integrity. Open to all who approached him, he was highly respected and well-liked by anyone who worked for or with him, and by those who negotiated with him in the State government, the Legislature, and private industry.

Lee became the director of the revenue section of the Fiscal Planning Unit of the Division. During his tenure, he frequently was called upon to resolve issues involving State and local tax forecasting, State fiscal affairs, bond financing, tax administration and changes in State and local taxes. These were often related to State and local financial crises (particularly those of New York City). During such crises, many at all levels of government and industry relied on his calm demeanor and extraordinary problem-solving skills. His quiet sense of humor also helped. In his Budget career he received many awards and accolades, at both the local and national levels (including recognition by the American Society for Public Administration and the National Association of State Budget Officers), for his exemplary service.

Lee loved gardening and being outdoors. One of his favorite places was Blue Mountain Lake, where he spent over 35 summers with his immediate and extended family. He spent many happy days viewing the Adirondacks from Castle Rock and the porch of Pine Knot.

After retirement, Lee supported many organizations both financially and with his time. He was a long-time Apheresis Blood Donor. He drove regularly for the American Cancer Society, making sure that folks got to their appointments. Lee was a regular volunteer at the Food Pantry at St. Vincent de Paul's parish for many years. He also served as the treasurer and a board member of the Albany Fund for Education for 12 years. During that time, he strengthened the organization's finances and operations with his analytic mind, integrity, patience, and eye for detail. Equally important, Lee provided a moral compass and compassion for the needs of Albany's students. Lee

thought clearly and cared deeply. He was instrumental in AFE providing grants for student achievement, addressing food insecurity, and building opportunities for all students to grow, learn, and succeed.

Lee is survived by his wife, Varada Pandya Vaughan, and his four children: David, Peter (Karyn Silverman), Catherine, and Rebecca, and two grandchildren, Kieran and Leo. He was predeceased by his first wife, Julia Hassett, his brothers-in-law Gene Straight and Joe Hassett and his stepbrother John Lindsey. He is also survived by his four siblings Maureen (Gene Straight), Mary (Fran Cosgrove), Theresa (David Cherubin), and Thomas (Sharon McGlone), stepbrothers Peter Lindsey (Holly Yehnert), Rick Lindsey (Linda King), Robert Lindsey (Cassie Kronberg), Jim Lindsey, and stepsisters Ann Lindsey Takeuchi (James Takeuchi), and Patricia Durlak (Robert Durlak) as well as many well-loved nieces and nephews.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Lee's family Wednesday, March 4, 2020 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at McVeigh Funeral Home, 208 North Allen Street, Albany, NY 12206.

Funeral services Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 11:30 am St. Vincent De Paul Church, Albany, NY where his Funeral Mass will be celebrated.

The Rite of Committal will be held at Calvary Cemetery, Glenmont, NY. To leave a message for the family, please visit www.McveighFuneralHome.com

In lieu of flowers, please consider a contribution to Amnesty International or to The Food Pantry at St. Vincent de Paul or a charity of your choice. Lee is already sorely missed.

Cemetery Details

Calvary Cemetery

481 Route 9W
Glenmont, NY

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 4. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.
208 N Allen St
Albany, NY 12206
(518) 489-0188
info@mcveighfuneralhome.com
<http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com>

Service

MAR 5. 11:30 AM (ET)

Church of St. Vincent De Paul Church
900 Madison Ave.
Albany, NY 12208

Tribute Wall



“ I have a definite memory of Lee, he was about 13, and met him then when we visited Buffalo so many years ago . I am his cousin , Terry and visited Lee and Mary Beth when I was 5 . My father George was his father Robert’s cousin. I am very proud to be Lee’s cousin, he certainly led a very successful and well lived life. God bless him and all my Vaughan cousins.

Terry Vaughan Brown - December 11, 2025 at 08:29 AM



“ *Lee J. Vaughan*

October 08, 2023 at 09:24 PM



“ I am sending my condolences to Varada and her family. I fondly remember many get-togethers at their house, and I am profoundly thankful to Lee, Varada, and their extended family for making myself and my family feel welcome amongst them. I thank you very much for this gift, and wish you strength in this difficult time.

Gerwin Schalk

Gerwin Schalk - March 08, 2020 at 07:35 PM

CG

“ Please accept my prayers and thoughts for the Vaughan family at this time of great loss.

I am very shocked and saddened to learn of Lee’s passing. We were classmates at Canisius College and, for part of that time, we were roommates off campus on Agassiz Circle. In the past six decades, our paths crossed every so often and, I regret, not often enough.

Lee’s precise intelligence, wry wit, and gentle kindness are testaments of his character. He understood that spirituality springs from gratitude and that true humility is bound to the love of humanity. Each time I read his obituary I am struck by the accuracy of description of Lee. It is exactly as I have always known him to be. He sought the path forward by listening, loving, and learning. Trek on, trek on Lee Vaughan. You have shown us all how to live.

*Michael Goodman
Canandaigua, NY*

C. Michael Goodman - March 06, 2020 at 01:15 PM

JC

“ *John Cape.*

During my long tenure at the Budget Division, including my time as Director, I developed a deep and abiding admiration and respect for Lee’s intellect, his character and his capacity for joy. To this day he remains the smartest man I ever knew and one of the kindest, honest and ethical as well. I went on to consult with 26 other states and never met anyone who came close to Lee. He will be profoundly missed.

John Cape - March 06, 2020 at 10:24 AM

LS

“ *My condolences to the entire vaughn family. May he rest in peace after a life well lived.*

Lauren Scialdo

Lauren scialdo - March 05, 2020 at 07:57 AM



“ *Carissa Neate-Lammers purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Lee J. Vaughan.*



Carissa Neate-Lammers - March 04, 2020 at 04:45 PM

MS

“ *Teresa,
I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your brother, Lee. Though I probably only met him once (at your wedding?), being your brother and a Vaughan, he was probably worthy of all those kind words attributed to him in the obituary. He will be missed by you.*

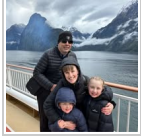
Mary Swartzbaugh

mary swartzbaugh - March 04, 2020 at 04:45 PM

DM

“ *Great bio.
A life well lived.*

David Weber (Eden and Mercedes) - March 04, 2020 at 03:54 PM



“ *My condolences to my beautiful family abroad. I am ever so thankful to Lee and all the family for welcoming me into your home and lives. Sending much love to you all. Xxx Carissa, Corey & Anastasia*

Carissa Neate-Lammers - March 03, 2020 at 09:06 PM

KR

“ *Our heartfelt condolences to all the beautiful Vaughn families, John and Kathleen Rosch*

Kathleen Rosch - March 03, 2020 at 08:41 PM

RA

“ *I am so sorry to learn about Lee's passing Varada. My sympathies and heartfelt condolences are with you and Rebecca and Mary and the entire family. We are thinking of you and wishing you comfort and peace during this sad time. Ramona*

Ramona - March 03, 2020 at 02:39 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Lee J. Vaughan.*



March 03, 2020 at 02:37 PM

CM

“ *Varada and family, So sorry for your loss. I will miss my visits with you . Thank you for letting me take care of Lee. Best Wishes Cory Maiello*

Cory Maiello - March 03, 2020 at 09:55 AM

JJ

“ TO THE FAMILY OF LEE

PLEASE ACCEPT MY DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF LEE. WE WERE CLASSMATES AND GOOD FRIENDS AT CANISIUS COLLEGE IN BUFFALO. BESIDE BEING ONE OF THE SMARTEST KIDS IN OUR CLASS LEE WAS A WONDERFUL HUMAN BEING. I HAVE NOT SEEN LEE SINCE MY WEDDING RIGHT AFTER GRADUATION. MY HEART GOES OUT TO THE ENTIRE VAUGHAN FAMILY AT THIS TIME OF SORROW, AND I'LL KEEP YOU IN MY PRAYERS

JOE JORDAN , CANISIUS COLLEGE CLASS OF 1964

JOE JORDAN - March 03, 2020 at 09:01 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Lee J. Vaughan.*



March 02, 2020 at 05:40 PM