



John Allen Adams

January 23, 1938 - January 27, 2025

John Allen Adams (87) of Elkridge, MD, beloved brother, uncle, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend, passed away peacefully on January 27, 2025, after a courageous battle with Alzheimer's disease.

John was born on January 23, 1938, to Samuel Levert and Mattie Elizabeth (Miller) Adams in Grant Town, WV. He was the fifth of nine children, growing up with two brothers and six sisters. During his childhood, the family moved to Cleveland, OH.

John married his soulmate, Charlotte (Spencer) Adams, on September 12, 1959, and they shared 65 plus loving years together. They were blessed with three children, Jonathan Levert Adams, Kymberly Lois (Adams) Kennedy, and Dara Monifa (Adams) Smith.

John attended Baldwin-Wallace College earning a bachelor's degree in accounting. He immediately pursued a master's degree in social work from the University of West Virginia. Subsequently, he completed all the coursework towards a doctorate in social work at Case Western Reserve University. John had a passion for community activism and advocacy. He actively participated in causes that positively affected African Americans during the civil rights movement, and volunteered his time in support of programs that strived to improve the lives of community residents. John was also an active member of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW).

During the early years of his professional career, John served as a social

worker and ran community mental health programs in Cleveland, OH and Hartford, CT. Later in his career, John shifted his focus to public administration, serving as deputy director at both the Wisconsin Department of Industry, Labor, and Human Relations (DILHR), and the District of Columbia Department of Employment Services. He also worked as a consultant for the U.S. Department of Labor, where his expertise played a key role in shaping the employment services infrastructure in Bulgaria.

Shortly before his retirement, John went back to his roots. He worked with local community action agencies to develop, promote, and implement programs to support individuals and families and assist communities in assessing local needs to combat the causes and conditions of poverty.

After retirement, John remained active, volunteering with the Kiwanis Club of Washington, DC, a community-led service organization committed to making a positive impact in the community. He also worked at H&R Block during the tax season serving as a tax preparer and customer service representative.

John was a distinguished athlete, demonstrating exceptional prowess in football, baseball, and track and field throughout his high school and collegiate years. His passion for sports extended beyond college, as he continued playing football and baseball for local teams in Cleveland. While living in Connecticut, he took on the dual role of player and coach for an over-30 league basketball team. However, those who knew John best would agree that golf was his greatest love. He discovered the sport in his early forties and was instantly hooked. He would always tell his daughters that he considered the sport of golf to be the great equalizer... regardless of your age, athletic ability, gender, etc. golf leveled the playing field. For 25 plus years, John would organize an annual group of 10 to 20 participants for a week-long outing of golf. Frequent destinations included Myrtle Beach, NC; Hilton Head, SC; Las Vegas, NV; and Biloxi, MS. Activities included team competitions, skins tournaments, and awards ceremonies. This annual outing became known as the Adams-McClain Golf Group, named for its founding members, John and the late Joseph McClain of Madison, WI.

Family and friendships were at the heart of John's life. Those who knew him experienced his kindness, selflessness, and natural ability to bring people together. His unwavering patience and loving spirit shone through in everything he did, especially in his later years. In retirement, he (with Charlotte) devoted himself to supporting his grandchildren, helping them pursue their dreams with the same dedication and generosity that defined his life.

John is preceded in death by his beloved parents Samuel and Mattie Adams; brother James Augustus Adams; sisters Ann Elizabeth Adams, Katie Pearl (Adams) White, Eleanor Janice (Adams) Smith; and Ina Jean (Adams) Lovett; and son Jonathan Levert Adams.

Surviving to cherish John's memory are his wife Charlotte Adams; his brother Samuel Levert Adams, Jr.; his sisters Laura Mae (Adams) Fields and Vera Jane (Adams) Friston; his daughters Kymberly (Michael) and Dara (Ronald); grandsons, Jacob William-Ajani Smith, and Julian Amari Smith; many nieces, nephews, and cousins; beloved friends; and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the heart – Jaquan Kennedy (Jennifer); Malee Kennedy; Kayla Johnson; and Tylor, Trevor, and Trenton Knight.

John's wishes were honored through a private cremation. A memorial service to celebrate his life will be announced at a later date.

Tribute Wall



“ John served as Secretary for Eastern Branch Kiwanis for many years. His smile was infectious and his brilliance at so many things made him memorable. I am saddened to learn of his passing. My thoughts are with his family who he spoke of often with pride and love.

Elana Gardner - August 02, 2025 at 09:59 AM



“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Simplicity Cremation and Funeral Services - February 22, 2025 at 10:45 AM