



## John Conzemius

February 18, 1927 - December 13, 2018

The Mass of Christian Burial for John Conzemius of Wadena will be celebrated at 11:00 AM on Saturday, December 22, 2018, at St. Ann's Catholic Church in Wadena, with Father Aaron Kuhn as celebrant. Visitation will be held on Friday, December 21 at the St. Ann's Parish Hall from 4-8:00 PM, with a rosary at 6, and Parish Prayers at 7:00 PM. Visitation will continue at the church from 9:30 AM until the time of the service.

John was born February 18, 1927, the oldest child of John and Helen (Pazdernik) Conzemius of Breckenridge, MN. He attended Breckenridge High School and Moorhead State Teacher's College, where he met the love of his life, Donna Mae Brossoit. John graduated with an education and coaching degree in 1950, and dedicated his life to the development and growth of young people. He spent one year coaching and teaching in his home town.

In June, 1951 John and Donna were married in Thief River Falls and moved to Wadena, where they made their life-long home. John played semi-professional and amateur baseball and softball in the summers. He spent the school year teaching, coaching football and track, officiating, and later became an administrator and athletic director, spending the rest of his career in the Wadena-Deer Creek Schools.

Following his retirement in 1986 John continued his work in athletics,

officiating football and basketball and starting track meets, and acting as MSHSL Section 6A Secretary. John was a member of the Minnesota State High School League Hall of Fame, the Minnesota Coaches Association Hall of Fame, the MnIAAA Athletic Director's Hall of Fame, the Minnesota Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and was inducted this fall into the inaugural Wadena-Deer Creek Athletic Hall of Fame. He also received the Minnesota State High School Coaches Association Officials Distinguished Service Award and many other accolades.

A devoted Catholic, John spent countless hours volunteering and supporting his beloved St. Ann's Catholic Church, as well as the community of Wadena. He was always a loyal fan of his players and students and remained in touch with many of them. He recounted numerous stories, and never seemed to forget a name, location, score or a particular play in a game. John spent hours on the greens, especially enjoying the camaraderie of a game of golf with family and friends.

John was extremely proud of his children and grandchildren, his siblings, and their families. He cherished time spent playing a game of cribbage or pinochle, sitting by the lake, or just visiting around the campfire. John could make a connection with anyone, anywhere, and he felt a strong love and interest for everyone he met.

In 2017 John sold the only house he ever owned and moved into The Meadows of Wadena. On Thursday, December 13, following a series of setbacks in his health, John passed away at Fair Oaks Lodge in Wadena, at the age of 91. He was always appreciative of the care he received at his home at The Meadows of Wadena, in the Tri-County Hospital, and at Fair Oaks Lodge.

John was preceded in death by his wife Donna Conzemius, his parents,

brothers Bob and Dave Conzemius, and sisters Janice and Dorothy, and brothers-in-law Henry Smude and Gene Shafer.

Grateful for having shared his life are his children, Cathy (Thom) Peterson, Park Rapids; Tom (Laurie) Conzemius, Park Rapids; and Mark (Jeanie) Conzemius, Sioux Falls, SD; seven grandchildren, Sara (Robb) Swanson, Katie (Paul) Johanning, Maria (fiancé Andrew Bartell) Conzemius, Joel Conzemius, Paul (Leslie) Conzemius, Annie (William) Thompson, and Helen (fiancé Austin Hogie) Conzemius; eight great grandchildren; sister Lorraine Shafer, brother Mike Conzemius, sisters-in-law Lori Waage, Elaine Conzemius, and Jackie Conzemius, and many life-long neighbors, special friends and family.

Pallbearers will be Joel Conzemius, Paul Conzemius, Paul Johanning, Robb Swanson, William Thompson, Andrew Bartell, and Austin Hogie.

Honorary pallbearers will be all the athletes, coaches, and staff of Wadena-Deer Creek Schools.

Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery, Wadena, MN.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St Ann's Catholic Church, Wadena High School Athletics or to Broom Tree Retreat Center.

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Cemetery

Franklin Dr. & 6th St SW  
Wadena, MN 56482

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC **21**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

St. Ann's Parish Hall  
514 2nd St. SE  
Wadena, MN 56482

## Visitation

DEC **22**. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
514 1st St. SE  
Wadena, MN

## Service

DEC **22**. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
514 1st St. SE  
Wadena, MN



# Tribute Wall



“ *Schuller Family Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of John Conzemius*



Schuller Family Funeral Homes - December 20, 2018 at 05:23 PM

BG

“ *My sympathy to the Conzemius family on the loss of your father. I fondly remember Mr. Conzemius as my football and track coach in the later 1960's. He also taught me how to drive. I would occasionally see him when I came to Wadena and was always impressed that he would remember me and call me by name. He was an excellent mentor of young men and helped all of us to grow.*

Bill Goepferd - January 04, 2019 at 09:37 AM

BG

“ *Bill Goepferd lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



Bill Goepferd - January 04, 2019 at 09:31 AM

RM

“ *RIP Mr. Conzemius.*

Robert Peters, Minnetonka - December 26, 2018 at 06:40 AM

GA

“ *Kathy, Tom, Mark and family, heartfelt prayers for all of you.*

*Your Neighbors,*

*Don, Violet, Greg, Mark & Blaine Anderson*

---

**GP Anderson** - December 23, 2018 at 11:46 AM

JS

“ *The Sundstroms have had the privilege of knowing and working with John since 1966, During that time John served as a mentor and a role model for us as well as being a good friend.*

*Jim had the opportunity to serve as an assistant coach for several years. It became obvious early on that John was a highly respected coach and later on as athletic director for his dedication not only to his school but to the many others he had contact with over the years.*

*It was also obvious that John was extremely devoted to his wife Donna and his children Kathy, Tom, and Mark and their families. We have enjoyed and appreciated the friendship of all of them for many years.*

*But it is now time to wish you a final farewell. Rest in peace, John-- you were one of a kind. Jim and Rita*

---

**Jim andn Rita Sundstrom** - December 22, 2018 at 09:14 AM

RF

“ Reed and Jennifer Thompson & Family,  
purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for  
the family of John Conzemius.



---

**Reed and Jennifer Thompson & Family**, - December 20, 2018  
at 01:56 PM



“ We knew John and his family well, both at St. Ann's parish and  
Wadena High School. It was at the golf course that I have the best  
memories of John. Always a gentleman, he left his mark on Wadena  
in so many ways. He will be missed by many. Our condolences to  
the family.

*Terry and Jerry Wynn*

---

**Jerry Wynn** - December 20, 2018 at 12:50 PM



“ 50 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



---

**Schuller Family Funeral Homes** - December 20, 2018 at 11:05 AM

JH

“ John and Donna were my godparents. They were among my parent's first friends in Wadena. Mr. C always seemed to me to be simultaneously down to earth, and also larger than life. A commanding presence who was also very approachable. I know his children and grandchildren must have volumes of happy memories to remember him by.

John Hamerlinck - December 19, 2018 at 07:41 PM

DK

“ Coach Conzemius was one of my favorite opposing coaches when I competed against his Wadena football & track teams. He took just as much pride in our successes as he did in those of his own athletes. A true gem of a human being who will be missed but never forgotten. God speed Coach C.

Dick Kimball - December 19, 2018 at 06:10 PM

JH

I affirm Dick's statement about Coach Conzemius. As the the football and track coach at Park Rapids HS for six years, we regarded Wadena as our top competitor. John's teams were always well-coached, conditioned and competitive. Blessed be his memory.

John Haugo - December 20, 2018 at 01:13 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John Conzemius.



December 19, 2018 at 03:33 PM

SL

“ Sher Linnes lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



Sher Linnes - December 19, 2018 at 02:08 PM



“ Glorious Grace Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Conzemius.



December 19, 2018 at 09:41 AM

JY

“ Jim Young lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



Jim Young - December 18, 2018 at 10:23 PM



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



December 18, 2018 at 06:15 PM

DF

“ *Dave & Sharon Folkestad lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Dave & Sharon Folkestad** - December 18, 2018 at 05:52 PM

MT

“ *Missy Tabery lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Missy Tabery** - December 18, 2018 at 09:02 AM

TF

“ *To the Conzemius family.  
The Larson's send our condolences on John's passing. We will miss a great coach, friend and family man. Like all of you we will remember the games, the fun and fellowship we shared with John over the years. The pain and loss are now and will gradually fade as you have the great memories to help keep him in your hearts forever. We will miss the funeral but know we will be praying for all of you.*

*Mark, Krista and Maren Larson*

---

**The Larson Family** - December 18, 2018 at 07:27 AM

MJ

“ To the Conzemius Families- my heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this very difficult time. I will always remember John's happy smile when I would see him at Mass at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church in Park Rapids, Minnesota during Christmas Eve Mass. I know it always made him so proud to be with his families and it really warmed my heart to see that. Now John, will be reunited with his beloved Donna and other extended family members and celebrate Christmas in a new and special way with Jesus this year. He lived a long and full life am sure he was met with smiles at the Pearly Gates of heaven when God called him "HOME". Rest In Peace John and you have earned your wings so "Go Rest High On That Mountain". Thinking of Cathy, Tom, Mark and all your extended families during this time. With Gods Love and Peace, Mark J.VonBank- St. Peter The Apostle Catholic Church- Park Rapids, Minnesota.



---

**Mark J.VonBank** - December 18, 2018 at 01:38 AM

JH

“ Accept condolences from the George Auel Family.  
Leonard Auel WHS Class of '52  
Mary Ann Auel Butzin WHS Class of '57  
Lee Auel Class WHS Class of '59  
Janice Auel Hofer WHS Class of '63

---

**Janice Auel Hofer** - December 17, 2018 at 09:41 PM

JH

“ *Janice Auel Hofer lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Janice Auel Hofer** - December 17, 2018 at 09:34 PM

JH

“ *So many people looked up to this strong, caring and dedicated man. What a gift to have him as a friend and teacher.*



---

**JAY HUTSON** - December 17, 2018 at 03:10 PM

HA

“ *I am so glad that I had the chance to know John. He was such a wonderful man. I used to wait on him at the Uptown Cafe for many years. The coaches would have a meeting there every so often and have lunch. John, Lowell and Bill were my favorite ones and they always had time to talk to you no matter where you saw them. Cathy, I am so glad that I had the chance to know both of your folks and to know and work with you too. You had great parents. God bless all of you. Helen*

---

**Helen Allee** - December 17, 2018 at 12:15 PM

HA

“ *Helen Allee lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Helen Allee** - December 17, 2018 at 12:11 PM

DW

“ *The Dave Walter Family remembers the friendship shown us by John and Donna Conzemius during the years we lived in Wadena. We send our condolences to their children and families on the death of John.*



---

**Dave Walter** - December 17, 2018 at 10:01 AM

HH

“ *Harry And Marge Harrison lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Harry and Marge Harrison** - December 17, 2018 at 09:46 AM

MH

“ Harry and I both first knew John when we were in high school. He was a very good teacher and football coach. Harry was his first quarter back and that story was brought up many times. We also grew in friendship on the golf course. Harry would golf with John many times. After I married Harry and started golfing, I to got to golf with John.

*He was a great guy and loved to be with friends and family  
May his soul rest in Peace.*

*Harry and Marge Harrison*

---

**Marjorie Harrison** - December 17, 2018 at 09:45 AM



“ Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Conzemius.



---

December 17, 2018 at 08:10 AM

JB

“ JOAN BRAUCH lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



---

**JOAN BRAUCH** - December 16, 2018 at 10:26 PM

EF

“ *Esther And Alan Freitag lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Esther and Alan Freitag** - December 16, 2018 at 10:06 PM

DS

“ *Rest In Peace Mr. C*

---

**Dave Schumacher** - December 16, 2018 at 09:45 PM

DS

“ *Dave Schumacher lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Dave Schumacher** - December 16, 2018 at 09:44 PM



“ *With Distinction was purchased for the family of John Conzemius.*



---

December 16, 2018 at 09:38 PM

KK

“ We have a book full of memories of our wonderful Uncle John! How blessed we were to have known him!

*Joe and Karla Kavon and family*

---

**Karla Kavon** - December 16, 2018 at 05:03 PM

TJ

“ The Family of Doug and Ann Johnston purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of John Conzemius.



---

**The Family of Doug and Ann Johnston** - December 16, 2018 at 04:09 PM

DJ

“ Our Uncle John's vision of life was truly remarkable and inspirational to us all.  
He is a great loss to all who knew him.  
May his Soul Rest In Peace and for those of us that remain behind,  
may we be comforted through the Love of the Lord.  
*The Family of Doug and Ann Johnston*

---

**Doug Johnston** - December 16, 2018 at 03:51 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Conzemius.



---

December 16, 2018 at 12:53 PM

DV

“ My deepest sympathies to the Conzemius family, Coach John Conzemius had the ability to communicate to kids and get them to have success in athletics and take those successes into life and make positive thing happen in their lives.

-----  
**Dale Vierkant** - December 16, 2018 at 10:16 AM

BN

“ Sending prayers for the Conzemius family. John lived behind our family when growing up and my sisters and I used to babysit for them. They had the best kids when it came to baby sitting. We enjoyed seeing John at the Maslowski Center when he was working out and we had many good visits there too. John was the most humble and lovable man. We will miss him. Sandi & Barry Pratt & Naomi Brust too

-----  
**Barry & Sandi Pratt & Naomi** - December 15, 2018 at 09:52 PM

JD

“ Julie&George Deiss lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



-----  
**Julie&George Deiss** - December 15, 2018 at 07:37 PM

SN

“ John was a shining example of leadership for those of us who had the privilege of calling him coach. I can imagine him exclaiming his famous “my stars!” as he entered the gates of heaven and then hooking up with Lars. God bless John and all of the Conzemius family.

-----  
**Steve Nelson** - December 15, 2018 at 06:45 PM

GG

“ *John Conzemius—truly a Gentleman’s gentle man...his legacy is reflected in his fine children and grandchildren.*

---

**Gary Gauldin** - December 15, 2018 at 05:37 PM

CK

“ *I was very sorry to hear of the passing of Coach John Conzemius. It was my privledge to have played football under Coach Conzemius in the late 50's.They say that there is a great benefit to participating in sports in ones youth, in order to learn important life lessons. Coach instilled in his players such lessons as good sportsmanship, hard work, confidence, how to handle winning and losing, accountability, dedication, perseverance, and leadership to name a few. He was a kind person, who always found time to visit with you and you always knew how dedicated he was to not only being a coach but mentor. I am thankful that I had the the opportunity to have known Coach Conzemius and I extend sincere sympathies to his family and friends.*

*Charlie Kennedy*

---

**Charlie Kennedy** - December 15, 2018 at 04:17 PM

RR

“ *I was thankful to have John as my track coach from 1965-1968. John had the ability to help athletes achieve their max potential. Gary Boylan, a fellow classmate and I had the opportunity to visit with John on Sept 5, 2018 and reminisce about the past & right up to the present. We can be thankful that we had the privilege of knowing him while he was here. Ron Ristvedt*

---

**Ron Ristvedt** - December 15, 2018 at 01:47 PM

DO

*John was a terrific role model as a coach and teacher. He had discipline but did it fairly. His integrity was something that I always admired and strived to follow. I will always feel blessed to have played for John! My prayers go out to his wonderful family.*

**Daryl Oja** - December 16, 2018 at 05:29 PM

DS

*“ To the family I am sorry for your loss. What a great mentor, teacher and coach John was to thousands of student-athletes and fans. I will always respect the personal time he took to make sure track meets were accurate and fair for all the participants. Kind, gentle, dedicated, devoted, we are all better people because John was in our lives. God Bless the great memories of John.*

**Dan Skogen** - December 15, 2018 at 08:17 AM

JE

*“ Bruce and I had many wonderful talks with John at the club house after golf. He was a well loved man.*



**Judy Erdahl** - December 15, 2018 at 12:30 AM

DO

*“ Doug And Joan Ostlund lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



**Doug and Joan Ostlund** - December 14, 2018 at 11:05 PM

JB

“ *John was a wonderful friend and teacher. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.*  
*Jerry and Irene Baron*



---

**Jerry and Irene Baron** - December 14, 2018 at 09:45 PM

BW

“ *Bob & Phyllis Wilkening lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Bob & Phyllis Wilkening** - December 14, 2018 at 07:39 PM

MC

“ *Maren Larson Crabb lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Maren Larson Crabb** - December 14, 2018 at 06:44 PM

LC

“ *Larry & Ruth Clark lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Larry & Ruth Clark** - December 14, 2018 at 04:52 PM



“ *Tender Tribute was purchased for the family of John Conzemius.*



---

December 14, 2018 at 03:19 PM



“ *Dave And Norie Trout lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Dave and Norie Trout** - December 14, 2018 at 03:08 PM

JB

“ *What a blessing John was to our school and community! He was my teacher and drivers ed instructor in high school. When I started working at the school in 1968 I referred to him as Mr. Conzemius. After a few months he said I should call him "John" instead of Mr. Conzemius. I told him I was still too fresh out of high school to do that; it would take some time before I could call him "John". When I was paying bills for the school district, we received an invoice from Wadena Hide and Fur for hauling away an "old football dummy". I needed to have approval to pay the bill, so I put it in John's mailbox. I attached a note that said "Is this you, John?" At that time, that was very brave of me to do that. I could hear his laughter from down the hall when he read that note. John loved our school and our community, and we loved him. I always enjoyed our visits at church and most recently at The Meadows. John, you have always been my inspiration!*

*Joyce Boyne*



---

**Joyce Boyne** - December 14, 2018 at 11:41 AM



“ *John touched out lives in many ways. Charlie remembers him being his golf partner.*

*Charles and Gladys Chase*



---

**Gladys Chase** - December 14, 2018 at 10:36 AM

MM

“ Mike Mueller lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



Mike Mueller - December 14, 2018 at 10:08 AM

JS

“ Jim Stoneman lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



Jim Stoneman - December 14, 2018 at 09:33 AM

MF

“ Marie Fraune sent a virtual gift in memory of John Conzemius



Marie Fraune - December 14, 2018 at 08:40 AM

M#

“ Members Of Wadena Elks Lodge #2386 lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius



Members of Wadena Elks Lodge #2386 - December 14, 2018 at 06:59 AM

DK

“ *Dan Kern lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Dan Kern** - December 14, 2018 at 06:09 AM

RL

“ *Ruby Lynk lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Ruby Lynk** - December 13, 2018 at 11:52 PM

SK

“ *I remember John when I was in junior high school back in the early 70s when he was also there with mr. Larson. Sad to hear when they leave when you have memories of them. Sorry for your loss*

---

**Scott kern** - December 13, 2018 at 11:00 PM

TG

“ *Tom Gerszewski lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Tom Gerszewski** - December 13, 2018 at 10:11 PM



“ *Jane Erckenbrack lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Jane Erckenbrack** - December 13, 2018 at 09:13 PM



“ *Marladene Heinen lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Marladene Heinen** - December 13, 2018 at 08:33 PM



“ *Liz Miller, WHS Class Of 1962 lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Liz Miller, WHS Class of 1962** - December 13, 2018 at 07:53 PM



“ *WHS Class Of 1962 lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**WHS Class of 1962** - December 13, 2018 at 07:49 PM

TK

“ *Tammie Klawitter lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Tammie Klawitter** - December 13, 2018 at 06:09 PM

DS

“ *Dan And Deb Sweere lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Dan and Deb Sweere** - December 13, 2018 at 05:58 PM

MO

“ *Mike Ortmann lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Mike Ortmann** - December 13, 2018 at 05:44 PM

TB

“ *Sending thoughts and prayers to the Conzemius family. He was such a wonderful man and I truly enjoyed getting to know him this past year. You could spend all afternoon visiting with him, so many stories. He was so sweet, patient and so kind. He talked highly of his family and talked about them often. We will really miss him. Praying for comfort and peace for your family.*

---

**Tabetha Boe** - December 13, 2018 at 05:11 PM

BM

“ *Bob & Maria Miner lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Bob & Maria Miner** - December 13, 2018 at 04:57 PM

MV

“ *Myrtle Vierkant lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Myrtle Vierkant** - December 13, 2018 at 04:55 PM

 Alan Schumacher

“ *Alan Schumacher lit a candle in memory of John Conzemius*



---

**Alan Schumacher** - December 13, 2018 at 03:36 PM