



## John Robert Neel

October 12, 1928 - June 10, 2016

John Robert Neel, 87, of Bloomington, Ind., passed away Friday (June 10, 2016). He was born Oct. 12, 1928, in Fairmount, Ind., the son of James Robert and Sara Pauline (Gift) Neel. He married Rosalie Buchanan on Dec. 28, 1952 in Bloomington, Ind. John attended schools in Fairmount and Kokomo, Ind., and graduated from University High School in Bloomington, Ind., in 1946. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in geology and Master of Science degree in science education from Indiana University. He taught earth science in the Kankakee School District. At the same time, he was an author and photographer for science education materials and was an environmental activist by virtue of field work and teaching adult education courses at Kankakee Community College. He received a National Science Foundation grant to attend the University of California at Berkeley for a summer session. He also attended Southern Illinois University for a summer session in outdoor education and completed class work at Indiana State University. He sponsored a Boy Scout troupe, enabling them to earn their science badges, and was a member of the Kankakee Camera Club, earning slide of the year as well as other honors. Retiring to Bloomington, Ind., in 1991, he became a member of St. Mark's Methodist Church, the Bloomington Stamp Club, actively pursued an interest in collectible books and volunteered at the Science Olympiad and Hoosiers for a Commonsense Health Care Plan. Survivors include his wife, Rosalie Buchanan Neel; daughters, Julia Dietterle (Steven), Alicia Neel, Jeannine Murphy (James), and Jill Marcotte (Mark);

grandsons, Matthew Dietterle (Melissa), Christopher Murphy (Cassidy Milder) and Ryan Marcotte; granddaughters, Laura Marcotte Kimmel (Chris), Megan Murphy Shipley (Robert) and Elizabeth Marcotte; one great-grandchild, Jude Kimmel; one sister, Nina Neel Olvey (Donald); one brother, Keith Neel (Theresa); brothers-in-law, Russell Buchanan and Raymond Buchanan (Joan) and several nieces and nephews. Preceding him in death were his parents; one brother, Paul Arnold Neel; and sister-in-law, Mary Ann Neel. A memorial service to celebrate John's life will be at 11 a.m. (EST) on Friday, June 24, 2016 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Bloomington, Ind. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 South Old State Road 37, Bloomington, Ind. Please sign his online guestbook at [allencares.com](http://allencares.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JUN **24**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St Marks United Methodist Church  
100 State Rd 46  
Bloomington, IN 47408

# Tribute Wall

CV

“ *Rosalie and Family,*

*I was greatly saddened to hear, via Judi Riley, that John had died. I knew he had some health issues when I visited you in Bloomington, but hadn't kept up with his current condition.*

*I really enjoyed the opera at I.U., the fantastic brunch at the Union, seeing the campus, walking around your garden, and getting caught up with both of you. The time since then has gone too fast.*

*John and I had so many adventures. I never found a caterpillar in the garden that he didn't want to photograph in detail. Likewise my Night-Blooming Cereus, Cochin Bantam chickens, Peafowl, and any other horticultural or agricultural oddity I might produce.*

*Our trip to the Indiana Dunes on a photo safari really remains a fond memory. We traipsed over the dunes, down by the lake, into the woods, and out on a bog. I was the designated reflector and fill flash holder.*

*Then there were all the horticultural and agricultural books he helped me find.*

*One of my favorite moments of that last visit with the two of you was when he brought out his high school annual, and showed me the picture of the fuzz-faced freshman, called Jimmie Dean at that point (later James Dean, of course). Then, there was the collapsing cot, BANG in the night! What a riot!*

*Oh, I almost forgot the two Gremlins, one green and one yellow. I think you must be the only two Gremlin family I have ever known.*

*Please know that you and the whole family have my deepest sympathy in your loss.*

*Chuck Voigt*

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**Chuck Voigt** - June 29, 2016 at 04:35 PM

JM

*Chuck, thank you for your memories! We were all flash holders for some stunned caterpillar or butterfly often! I know Dad liked working with you. I actually put a picture of the two gremlins at Dad's memorial service - that too was a fond memory.*

Jill Marcotte - July 08, 2016 at 11:50 AM

BL

“ *Jill, Mark, and the rest of your family,  
We are sorry for your loss. You have our sympathy and prayers.  
sincere regards,  
Brian and Gail Lindley  
Manchester, IA*

Brian and Gail Lindley - June 24, 2016 at 06:00 PM

JM

*Brian, Thank you for your kindness, it is very appreciated! It's been many years since we have been able to talk with you.*

Jill Marcotte - July 08, 2016 at 11:51 AM

PC

“ *Rosalie,  
Sorry to hear about your loss. John will be missed. Please know that you and your family are in my prayers.  
Sincerely, Pat Cronp*

Pat Cron - June 23, 2016 at 09:26 PM

TF

“ *The Crabtree Family purchased the Plants-A-Plenty for the family of John Robert Neel.*



The Crabtree Family - June 23, 2016 at 08:20 AM

JD

“ John was a wonderful neighbor. We are grateful for his leadership as vice president of the neighborhood association during its infancy and as it formed solid footings. Our thoughts and prayers are with Rosalie and family during this difficult time.

*With Sympathy,  
Jack & Cathy Dvorak*

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**Jack Dvorak** - June 22, 2016 at 01:48 PM



“ Bountiful European Dish Garden was purchased for the family of John Robert Neel.



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June 21, 2016 at 01:13 PM



“ Blue & White Sympathy Floor Basket was purchased for the family of John Robert Neel.



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June 21, 2016 at 11:29 AM

JU

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



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**Julia** - June 20, 2016 at 06:38 PM

JE

*Mr. Neel was my Science teacher at Westview High school, Kankakee Illinois. Taught me how to use a photo darkroom properly. I started helping him build a new home, I think in Bonfield, but had a full time job and could not continue. He was a great guy and was always willing to help. Thank You Mr. Neel for sharing your life with so many students.*

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**Jim Enz** - February 14, 2025 at 05:15 AM

BP

“ *I taught with John at WHS and had a great respect for him. He and I spent several weeks together in a canoe documenting all suspected sources of pollution into the Kankakee River. That was a project sponsored by local government. It was a most interesting experience and I learned a lot from John. My condolences to his family. I know family meant a great deal to John and I can imagine he is missed terribly. Ben Peyton, Mason, MI*

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**Ben Peyton** - June 19, 2016 at 09:01 PM

JU

*He is. He was a wonderful Father*

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**Julia** - June 20, 2016 at 06:17 PM

SP

“ *Mr. Neel was one my science teachers at West Junior High School in Kankakee. He provided significant inspiration and opened my eyes towards a career in science/engineering. Every student should have a teacher with such qualities, because teachers like Mr. Neel make a huge difference.*

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**Stephen "Steve" Garnier, Ph.D.** - June 16, 2016 at 09:50 PM

LL

“ Mr. Neel was my science teacher, too, at West Junior, circa 1967. Being a girl, I didn't believe I was a "science person," but he proved me wrong! I still remember the weather mapping exercise in which each student took the temperature at their own desks and we drew maps of the weather "fronts" in the classroom. He made things real. I still remember him as a sweet man.

*My deepest wishes for peace to his family.*

*Loretta Line, Chicago*

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**Loretta Line** - June 16, 2016 at 02:40 PM

  
Pamela  
Zeedyk

“ Mr. Neel was my science teacher, and his daughters had my grandmother for history at Limestone School. Such a wonderful teacher and lovely man. Pamela Voss Zeedyk.

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**Pamela Zeedyk** - June 16, 2016 at 11:19 AM

GS

“ Gene had great respect for John and their times on staff together in Kankakee. Gene passed away Dec. 7. Now, they are sharing their science love in heaven...

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**Gloria Stookey** - June 16, 2016 at 06:14 AM

LL

*Gloria, Gene was also my teacher and I have fond memories of him. Please accept my deepest condolences.*

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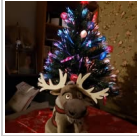
**Loretta Line** - June 16, 2016 at 02:43 PM

HJ

“ *Mr. Neel was a wonderful Teacher and Mentor. He cared about all of us during our Junior High days and always made us think it through! May his family know what an impact he made on all of us.*  
*Hugh Janda*

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**Hugh Janda** - June 15, 2016 at 10:08 PM



“ *Blessings of Love, I never had Mr. Neel for High school science, but boy did he want me in biology, I fished with our family a lot and am not quimish, he heard me talking and ask the kids I was talking to bring me by the lab, I never flinched and told him I would love it, but my parents wanted me to go into business. :( He was a wonderful teacher and will be missed. May God be with you all, Prayers and Love*  
*Angel Myers-Martin-class of 79!*

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**Angel Martin** - June 15, 2016 at 07:28 PM

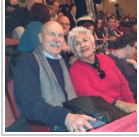
PZ

“ *Mr. Neel taught earth science at West Junior High School in Kankakee, IL. I was a student of Mr. Neel's in 1968, He was a very gifted man with many talents including the keen ability to teach others. Fond memories remain with me today from Mr. Neel's third period earth science class. My condolences to the family.*

*Paul Ziemer, WA state*

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**Paul Ziemer** - June 15, 2016 at 01:30 PM



“ Hugs and prayers are with all the Neel Family at this sad time. I taught with John in District 111 and appreciated his enthusiasm for his students and his photography. May God's comfort and peace fill you and may your fond memories bring smiles.  
Mary Thomson



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**Mary Quiroz Thomson** - June 15, 2016 at 01:08 PM



“ Dear Aunt Rosalie & cousins & families, I have many good memories of Uncle John. I'm sorry we can't make it to his memorial service. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.  
Faith Hobbs

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**Faith** - June 15, 2016 at 07:03 AM



My thoughts and prayers are with each member of this family. It was my pleasure to work with John at Westview High School for many years.

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**Beulah Pennell** - June 16, 2016 at 03:39 AM



“ Our sincere condolences to the Neel family, it was our pleasure to take care of John in his final days.

Sincerely,  
Meadowood Staff and Friends

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**Leslie Miller** - June 13, 2016 at 01:52 PM