



## John Maurice Poling

March 16, 1936 - March 4, 2026

Dr. John Maurice Poling, longtime Bloomington optometrist, devoted husband, father, and grandfather, passed away peacefully on March 4, 2026, at the age of 89.

John was born on March 16, 1936 and grew up just a block from Indiana University, a place that would shape much of his life. From an early age, the campus and its traditions were part of his everyday world. He attended University School and later continued his education at Indiana University, eventually becoming part of one of the early graduating classes of the Indiana University School of Optometry. He was particularly fond of professors and mentors, Dr. Henry Hofstetter and Dr. Charles Shick.

John participated in many sports at University School, but particularly excelled on the varsity basketball team.

John took great delight in following Indiana University athletics and was especially thrilled to see Indiana University football rise in recent years from being the worst team in college football to the national champions.

John served in the United States Navy Reserve. In 1962 he obtained his Indiana license in optometry and soon thereafter established his practice in Bloomington, where he faithfully served the community for more than five

decades before retiring in 2013.

While at Indiana University John met Joyce Barger and later they were married. Together they built a life centered on family, service, and community.

For generations of Bloomington families, Dr. Poling was a trusted and familiar presence in their lives. Known for his careful attention, professionalism, and kindness, he took great pride in helping his patients maintain their vision and eye health. Many of his patients remained with him for decades, often bringing their children and grandchildren to the same practice. His commitment to personal care and long-term relationships made him not only a respected professional but also a valued member of the community he served.

Known for his generosity with both his time and resources, he took particular interest in serving on the Scholarship Committee of the Community Foundation of Monroe County.

French Lick has for many years been an important part of the lives of John and his family. John had fond memories of Jazz Festivals at French Lick before the resort was renovated. Following the renovation, John loved to visit French Lick frequently with Joyce and the rest of his family, including a 20 year tradition around the Thanksgiving holiday, creating memories that will last for generations.

John also loved nature and the outdoors and remained vigorous and active for as long as he was able. He was happiest when riding his tractor and clearing fields or working out in the yard. For many years after selling a fishing camp in Canada, he enjoyed an annual fishing trip with special friends, Dr. David Byrne and Dr. Jim Arata and his brother, Bob Poling. The group traveled north to the Wild Nest fishing camp near Flin Flon, Canada, where they embraced the simplicity of the wilderness, living in primitive conditions and cooking the

fish they caught each day. Those trips were among John's favorite adventures.

John is survived by his wife, Joyce Barger Poling; his daughter, Elizabeth Hanigan (Don); his two beloved grandchildren, Tierney and Will Hanigan; his brother, Robert Poling, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his daughter, Alexandra Ashley Poling; his father, Harvey S. Poling Sr.; his mother, Ruth Poling Karsell; his brother, Harvey S. Poling Jr.; and his sisters, Florence Walmer and Patricia Borland.

The family is grateful for the love and support of Shannon and Chris Keith and the loving, excellent care he received from IU Health, including from Dr. Palomaki, Dr. Shenoy, Dr. Jackie Joyce, Dr. Hoff, Dr. Habib, and Dr. Strobel and the many patient caregivers in the emergency room at the IU Health Hospital.

John will be remembered for a life marked by quiet dedication — to his profession, to his community, and most of all to his family. Through decades of caring for his patients and investing in the lives of others, he left a lasting imprint on the Bloomington community and on all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Visitation will be Wednesday, March 18th from 5:00 PM – 7:30 PM at Allen Funeral Home, (4155 S. Old State Road 37, Bloomington, IN, 47401). The funeral service will be held at Allen Funeral Home on Thursday, March 19th, at 10:30am. Burial will follow at Rose Hill Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to Ivy Tech in John's memory. You may use the following link <https://impact.ivytech.edu/johnpoling>

Or mail to: Ivy Tech Foundation, 200 Daniels Way, Bloomington, IN 47404.

# Cemetery Details

## Rose Hill Cemetery

West 4th Street  
Bloomington, IN 47401

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**MAR 18.** 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory  
4155 S. Old State Road 37  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
(812) 824-5905  
<http://www.allencares.com>

## Funeral Service

**MAR 19.** 10:30 AM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory  
4155 S. Old State Road 37  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
(812) 824-5905  
<http://www.allencares.com>

# Guestbook



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Maurice Poling.*



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March 18 at 10:17 AM



“ *Chris Callaway purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of John Maurice Poling.*



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**Chris Callaway** - March 17 at 12:06 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John Maurice Poling.*



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March 12 at 10:18 AM



“ *Kristy & Dennis Murphy purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of John Maurice Poling.*



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**Kristy & Dennis Murphy** - March 11 at 10:39 AM



“ *Kristy & Dennis Murphy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Maurice Poling.*

Kristy & Dennis Murphy - March 11 at 10:39 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Maurice Poling.*



March 10 at 09:13 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John Maurice Poling.*

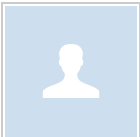
March 10 at 09:13 PM



“ *Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Maurice Poling.*



March 10 at 07:53 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John Maurice Poling.*

March 10 at 07:53 PM