

Dr. John Demshar, 1948 - 2022



John Paul Demshar, 74, known by many as “Dr. John” or “Dr. D,” passed away peacefully on the morning of September 22, 2022, surrounded by his family. His passing was associated with a rare form of cancer, Waldenström Macroglobulinemia, which has been associated with exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Debbie; three children, Jeanie, Jonathan (Edna), and Austin (Sarah); three grandchildren, Bryce, Murphy, and Ira; siblings Jim (Vicky) and Joe (Deena); Romeo the cat; and many in-laws, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

John was born in Rock Springs, Wyoming, the son of John Sr. and Betty Demshar. He graduated from Rock Springs High School in 1966. In 1969 he volunteered in the US Army and served in South Vietnam. After graduating from the School of Optometry at UC Berkeley in 1977, he moved to Stockton and opened a private optometric practice. He went on to help form the Brookside Optometric Group as a senior partner.

John’s dedication to humanitarian causes began in 1991 with the Flying Samaritans, performing vision clinics in San Felipe, Baja Mexico. Dr. Demshar then joined Lions in Sight, becoming its Clinical Director in 2010, participating in free clinics in dozens of countries, seeing thousands of patients. Dr. Demshar also performed volunteer clinics for the Stockton St. Mary’s Dining Hall and Homeless Shelter, the Gospel Center Rescue Mission, and the Stockton Children’s Home. He invited students to work with him at these local clinics, mentoring them and providing hands-on experience.

For over a decade John and Debbie ran an annual fundraiser dubbed “Summerfest,” where John served his home-crafted and barrel-aged tequila, a hobby he began in 2012 after receiving a thrift store book his wife found for \$1.

John treasured time spent with his wife, children, and grandchildren, whether it was cruising the lake in the family boat or traveling the world with them. It was on these trips especially that he shared his puns – “John-isms” – and catalog faces he found in everyday objects, which in 2019 he turned into a self-published book, Pareidolia – Seeing Faces in Unusual Places.

Visit jpdemshar.com for a detailed version of John’s life, and for links to donate to his favorite causes. A Celebration of Life to honor John is planned for a later date.

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