



Brigadier General John Coy Rowland

February 15, 1941 - March 29, 2023

Brigadier General John Coy Rowland, age 82, of Grand Ledge, MI surrounded by his loving family, passed away Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at McLaren Hospital Lansing, MI.

John was born in the beautiful hills of Ewing, Virginia on February 15, 1941. The son of Galvin and Edith Rowland. John and his family moved to Monroe, Michigan in 1944. John graduated from Airport High School, Carlton, MI in 1959. After graduation, he received a Board of Regents Scholarship to attend Eastern Michigan University.

During college John sold his textbooks then drove to Chicago to rescue Judy Vreeland from becoming a flight attendant. They married in Chicago on November 2, 1962.

John was commissioned as an infantry officer in August, 1965 after graduating from Eastern Michigan University and completion of R.O.T.C.

John's college graduation gift was a trip to Vietnam. He entered active duty in October, 1965 and completed the Infantry Officers Basic Course (OBC) at Fort Benning, Georgia, then graduated from flight school in September of 1966.

After flight school he was transferred to the 1st Cavalry Division, Republic of

Vietnam where he served as a pilot, section leader, platoon leader and S2 of the 227th Aviation Battalion. While in Vietnam, he flew 839 hours of combat time, receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star and 32 Air Medals.

After Vietnam, he was transferred to Forth Wolters, Texas and served as a flight instructor until January of 1969 when he was released from active duty. After this, John transferred to the U.S. Army Reserve. In February of 1972 he joined the Michigan Army National Guard as a part-time helicopter pilot.

Returning to civilian life, he worked as a sales engineer and general manager for two automotive suppliers in the Detroit area. He then purchased a small flight school, Wolverine Aviation Inc. at Willow Run Airport. He sold that business in 1974 when John accepted a full-time position with the Michigan Army National Guard in Grand Ledge, Michigan. While working at the Army Aviation Support Facility, John served as a flight instructor, Operations Officer, Facility Commander, and State Aviation Officer.

He then took a job with Spartan Motors as Director of International Operations. While serving in this capacity, he supervised the company's operations in Mexico. John retired from Spartan Motors in 1994.

John is a dual-rated Master Army Aviator with over 9,700 hours of flight time. He was promoted to Brigadier General in 1994 as the Deputy Commander, Maneuver, for the 38th Infantry Division (M). in this assignment he was responsible for the tactical training and deployment of over 15,000 combat soldiers.

Other military decorations include the Legion of Merit, two Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, Army Achievement Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, and other service medals. In 1997 he was

honored by being inducted into the Eastern Michigan R.O.T.C. Hall of Fame.

On July 23, 1997 John received Senate confirmation for promotion of the rank of Major General. He retired in October of 1997 and transferred to the Inactive Army Reserve. He is a long-time director and past President of Michigan's Freedom Foundation and is a past president of the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame. Brigadier General John C. Rowland was enshrined into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame on October 2, 2005.

John is survived by his spouse Judy, children David John Rowland, (Michele Thomas Rowland) Catherine Mary Todd (Rowland) (Joe Todd) and Robert John Rowland. Grandchildren; Katie Rowland, Zachary Rowland, Kelsey Rowland, Savannah Todd, Sam Todd (Destiny Todd) and Bella Rowland.

John is preceded in death by his parents Galvin and Edith Rowland and sister, Barbara Smith (Rowland).

After retirement, John and Judy and family enjoyed spending their time and summers at their lake house making loving and lasting memories.

If you wish to make a donation, please donate to a veteran's organization of your choice and or help a veteran in need.

John was a good, kind, and decent man. He loved his God, country, and most of all his family. John's final statement was "I lived my dreams, Judy."

A Military Graveside service will be held Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 12:00 PM at the Oakwood Cemetery in Grand Ledge. Visitation will be on Tuesday from 2-4:00 PM and 6-8:00 PM with a Time of Remembrance Service at 7:00 PM at the Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home, Grand Ledge. Share your memories

and condolences online at www.holihanatkin.com

Cemetery Details

Oakwood Cemetery

299 Halbert Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 4. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home & Cremation Services
406 N. Bridge Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
(517) 627-2531
jasonbarclay@holihanatkin.com
<https://www.holihanatkin.com>

Visitation

APR 4. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home & Cremation Services
406 N. Bridge Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
(517) 627-2531
jasonbarclay@holihanatkin.com
<https://www.holihanatkin.com>

Remembrance Service

APR 4. 7:00 PM (ET)

Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home & Cremation Services
406 N. Bridge Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
(517) 627-2531
jasonbarclay@holihanatkin.com
<https://www.holihanatkin.com>

Military Graveside Service

APR 5. 12:00 PM (ET)

Oakwood Cemetery
299 Halbert Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Tribute Wall



“ *America the Beautiful was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.* ”



April 11, 2023 at 08:47 AM



“ *We've all lost a very special friend. A gentleman in every way. He loved and served his country and his family with his whole heart. He will be greatly missed* ”

Rosemary Wade - April 05, 2023 at 06:54 PM



“ *Worked with John at Spartan. You couldn't ask for a better person to work with. Thank you for everything you have done for our country and God Bless you and your family.* ”

Jeff Smith - April 03, 2023 at 07:07 PM



Send to Conner Roland

Mary - April 27, 2023 at 01:41 PM

DD

“ I first met John & Judy when they bought their lake house. Tricia & I went to see John to ask him if he would go to DC with Mid Michigan Honor Flight. It was our first flight. He also helped us with the airports on our first 2 flights. Thank you for your service John !!!!
Diane Diehm



Diane Diehm - April 03, 2023 at 06:55 PM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses* was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.



April 03, 2023 at 03:25 PM

TS

“ *Team Murphy - FedEx Services* purchased the *Beautiful Dreams* for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.



Team Murphy - FedEx Services - April 03, 2023 at 10:40 AM



“ *Sweet Sincerity was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.*



April 03, 2023 at 10:07 AM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.*



April 02, 2023 at 06:37 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.*



April 02, 2023 at 02:14 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.*



April 02, 2023 at 10:27 AM

1S

“ *It was a honor and a privilege to have served with General Rowland*

1SG Stull - April 01, 2023 at 09:58 PM



“ *Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.*



April 01, 2023 at 08:18 PM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Kelsey Rowland - April 01, 2023 at 05:28 PM

TD

“ *John had a servant's heart and has earned his heavenly wings. I cherish our chats at his summer home. He spoke at our Memorial program at the Castle in Canadian Lakes. I told him we were acknowledging our Vietnam Vets and it could be a difficult topic. He said he knew exactly what they needed hear. I will never forget that. He was also an honored guest on one of our Mid-Michigan Honor Flights when I was the Hub Director.*

Rest easy soldier, your extraordinary legacy will live on.

Tricia Donegan

Canadish Lakes, MI

Tricia Donegan - April 01, 2023 at 05:24 PM

RD

“ Robert Deuker purchased the *Strength & Solace Spray* for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.



Robert Deuker - April 01, 2023 at 05:09 PM

RD

“ Robert Deuker purchased the *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.



Robert Deuker - April 01, 2023 at 05:09 PM

DS

“ I've known John for many years as a fellow QB member and friend. We served a few years on an aviation awards committee and several times shared an hour and a half ride where we had time to talk and get to know each other. John I hope knew I was in awe of his knowledge and kindness. I learned so much from him and will continue to treasure the scale model of a Blackhawk helicopter he gave me.
Dan Schiffer

Dan Schiffer - April 01, 2023 at 08:25 AM

ST

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



savannah todd - April 01, 2023 at 01:31 AM

SS

“ Sincere condolences to Zach and Kelsey . Was so sorry to hear about your grandfather.

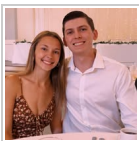
Sandy Sipes - March 31, 2023 at 09:02 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Brigadier General John Coy Rowland.



March 31, 2023 at 09:01 PM



“ Such an amazing and kind man. Mr. Roland always made me laugh every time I walked over to your cottage in the summer time. Always had a big smile on his face smoking his cigar that smoked up the whole lake!! Love him to pieces, he was very close and meant a lot to my family ❤️

Brianna Wade - March 31, 2023 at 06:32 PM

LH

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with your family. John was an amazing family man and I know what a profound loss this is. May all your happy memories and good times bring you peace. Hey is flying with the angels free from pain. Love, Laura and John Hensley*

Laura Hensley - March 31, 2023 at 05:19 PM

KT

“ *1 file added to the album Dad*



Katie Todd - March 31, 2023 at 02:24 PM

RM

“ *What a great man and gentleman. Wonderful memories of aviation discussions, especially watching airplanes in the blue skies of the airshow in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.*

Randy Maiville, son-in-law of Colonel John Ghere

Randy Maiville - March 31, 2023 at 02:24 PM

GT

“ *Judy, we lost a great soldier today. John was such a caring person, always concerned about others. I too will miss him.*
G J Tellier

Gary Tellier - March 31, 2023 at 12:16 PM

GV

A solider, leader and warrior, we are blessed to have had him in our ranks. He was a soldiers General, always focused on the people and would ask no one to do anything he would not do himself, he lead from the "front" always present and involved. He will be gone, but not forgotten. Greg Vадnais

Greg Vадnais - March 31, 2023 at 03:52 PM

LM

My sincere condolences for your family. What an impressive life John dedicated to his country and family. Lean on each other during this difficult time. Love to all of you.

Lisa McAlvey

Lisa McAlvey - March 31, 2023 at 04:26 PM

AS

I will miss the General's annual Grayling visit to our home with the aviators all reminiscing. Best guest ever, very thoughtful, kind, forever a gentleman, and strong presence. I have admired him since 1985 and will fondly remember him.

Andrea Sting - April 01, 2023 at 09:20 AM

GT

Saddened to hear of General Rowland's passing, he was truly a good man and a great leader. He cared deeply for his soldiers and employees and always put their morale and welfare first . He had the unique leadership skill to motivate and make you feel important and valued. General John Rowland was an enlisted man's leader. Fond memories of serving on his team at the AASF, 46 Aviation Bn, STARC Aviation. He shared with me and many others his proudest accomplishment was our Aviation safety record. Flying out of Grand Ledge in some years as many as 10,000 hours flight time our crews and aircraft accomplished numerous missions with no loss of life. My deepest condolences to his wife Judy and family. He will be missed but I believe we will see him again in Paradise. RIP General John.

Gary Tucker - April 01, 2023 at 09:54 AM

MK

Sincere sympathy to the Rowland family. I will miss our neighbor and friend. Love from the Krupps

marilyn krupp - April 01, 2023 at 04:45 PM

TG

*I got to meet BG Rowland, Just a few time when I drove BG Mathieu and BG Taylor. Sorry to hear of his passing. May the Lord give the family peace and contentment in their hearts.
SFC Thomas M Gorsuch Ret. MIARNG.*

Thomas Gorsuch - April 03, 2023 at 01:45 PM

SW

One of the greats. Never seemed in a bad mood. Always had something positive to talk about. Always kind to our family and genuinely interested in other people. Simply larger than life. John's friendship meant a lot to my dad. He will be missed. Prayers for your family.

Sean Wade - April 03, 2023 at 03:12 PM

KF

Our sincere and deepest sympathies to Judy and family!!

Kathy Ritchie Fisk - April 04, 2023 at 09:51 PM