

# *John Joonpyo Hong*

August 27, 1938 ~ April 10, 2023 (age 84)



## Obituary

John Joonpyo Hong, age 84 of Westlake, passed away peacefully on the morning of Monday, April 10, 2023, five months after suffering a stroke with subsequent complications. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, and he enjoyed frequent visits from his family and friends throughout the course of his illness.

John grew up in Korea, where he attended Kyungbok High School for boys in Seoul and graduated in 1958. He was accepted into the prestigious Seoul National University and began his pre-medical studies in the fall of 1958, graduating with his Medical Doctor degree in 1964. He finished 8th in his class and chose to pursue general surgery as his specialty. After training in Seoul, South Korea, John immigrated to Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1967 for a surgical internship, then to Northeast Ohio to continue his general surgery training. He trained at Aultman Hospital in Canton for one year, then Fairview Hospital in Cleveland for the remainder of his residency. He served as chief surgical resident from 1971-72 at Fairview Hospital.

John and his wife were very proud to become U.S. citizens and worked hard to build a good life for their family after coming here with very little. Having managed to escape capture and almost certain death by a North Korean soldier as a pre-teen, he was always very grateful to the U.S. for their help during the Korean War.

After residency training, John opened his own private practice in Brook Park as a general practitioner and general surgeon in the 1970s, eventually building his own medical office that he passed on to his son. He was a Fellow with the International College of Surgeons and had staff privileges at Deaconess Hospital, Fairview Hospital,

and Southwest General Hospital over the course of his medical career. He built a large solo practice, serving many in the area, and was honored by the union workers of the Ford Motor Company in appreciation for his dedication to their healthcare. John retired in 2013, with his children following in his footsteps in the medical field, as he followed in his dad's footsteps. They all became doctors or dentists and all married doctors or dentists.

Outside of medicine, John enjoyed classical music and playing the violin. He could often be found on the golf course when the weather was nice enough, even managing to hit an elusive and much-desired hole-in-one. He remained the ultimate student throughout his life with a constant appetite for knowledge, satisfied through reading, watching documentaries, and then YouTube once he discovered it as a source of information.

He was a dedicated member of the Korean American community, with leadership positions that included serving as President of the Korean American Medical Association of Northeast Ohio. He kept in touch with his medical classmates from Seoul National University who came to the U.S. and maintained good friendships with them through his alumni association.

John was also a founding member of the Korean Central Presbyterian Church of Cleveland and was honored to serve the church and his faith as an elder. The connections and friendships he developed through his church community over the past five decades anchored much of his life here in Cleveland.

But above all, John was a man who loved his family, and they meant everything to him. John is survived by his beloved family: wife Judith, aka Judy, with whom he would have celebrated 58 years of marriage next month; children Richard (Kyoko), Rosamond, aka Rosy, (Jeff Weil), and Raymond (Sandy); grandchildren Marcus, Nicholas, Tyler, Jaimeson, Jessica, Katie, Lauren, Alexander, Adelyn, Audrey, and Alayna; sisters Pamela Okpyo and Henrietta Kyungpyo. He is preceded in death by his father Myung Kil Hong, mother Kilsang Hong (nee Song), his brother Kevin Keunpyo, and his sister Grace Jongpyo Yoon (nee Hong). He will be greatly missed by many.

Friends will be received at the Korean Central Presbyterian Church of Cleveland, 8220 Brecksville Rd., Brecksville, OH 44141 on Thursday, April 20, 2023 from 6-7:30 pm. A funeral service at the church will follow from 7:30-8:30 pm.

Committal service to bury his ashes will be held at Crown Hill Cemetery, 8592 Darrow Rd., Twinsburg, OH 44087 on Monday, April 24, 2023 at 12 pm.