



Johnny J. Teglas

February 21, 2024

Johnny J. Teglas, 64, Blacksburg, Va.

Johnny Julius Teglas, 64, died Wednesday, February 21, 2024 following an extended battle with kidney cancer.

Johnny was a retired newspaper executive who spent his final years alongside his wife and son as they cheered their beloved Hokies, cared for their most loyal K9 princess; Dutchie, and tended their family property on Brush Mountain in Blacksburg.

Born in Pikeville, Ky. on June 26, 1959 to parents Joe and Mary Jane, Johnny's childhood was marked by adventure as his family followed his father's military career in the US Air Force. Growing up in various locations across the US and Europe provided rich context. Those experiences instilled skills of adaptability and observation as well as a sincere respect for the diversity of people, places, and ideas. The Teglas family settled back in the coalfields of Southwest Virginia, the place - a generation before - Johnny's grandparents immigrated to from Hungary in search of better lives.

Johnny was a 1977 graduate of Powell Valley High School (Big Stone Gap, Va.). Always respectful of his Appalachian roots, he reveled in his page 252 cameo reference by friend, classmate, and New York Times bestselling

author, Adriana Trigiani, in her novel, *Big Cherry Holler*.

Johnny graduated from Virginia Tech (Blacksburg, Va.) in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in communications studies and collective minors in sociology, psychology, social psychology, and criminal and deviant behavior. He would often recall fond stories of learning from Hokie legends Dr. Tony Distler and Dr. Bud Robertson. It was in Blacksburg that Johnny met his sweetheart, Kimberly.

Johnny and Kim married in 1982 and returned to Wise County, Va. to start their careers and family. The couple clung to each other through the death of their infant daughter, Ashton, in 1987. She succumbed to SIDS at just six weeks old. They cried with joy at the 1988 birth of their son, Jon Clark. Together, the three became a resilient, inseparable team, with Johnny's introspective, calming, and perceptive demeanor in complement. Through the highs and lows of life, they recognized God's immense blessings upon them and aspired to share those blessings with others through hospitality and service. As his sister, Mary Jo, would say, 'Johnny is our rock.' Solid, unchanging, strong. Johnny was unquestionably the captain of his family's team.

Professionally, Johnny would go on to become a highly successful journalist in Southwest Virginia. He spent the first two decades of his career as executive vice president and general manager of The Norton Press, Inc., publishers of *The Coalfield Progress* (Norton, Va.), *The Dickenson Star/Cumberland Times* (Clintwood, Va.) and *The Post* (Big Stone Gap, Va.). He also served as publisher of *The Post*. During that time, he earned dozens of Virginia Press Association and National Newspaper Association awards for writing, reporting, editing, photography, column writing, editorial writing, opinion writing, advertising, and graphic design. In his role at The Norton Press, Johnny was a production specialist, involved in niche product development and emerging

technologies. He also was a key member in the company's efforts to proactively expand into online publishing.

Johnny then went on to work for Landmark Community Newspapers. While at Landmark, he was responsible for the company's properties in Tennessee and Mississippi. Most specifically, he was publisher and regional manager of The Roane County News (Kingston, Tn.), The Roane County News-Record (Kingston, Tn.), The Harriman Record (Harriman, Tn.), The Rockwood Times (Rockwood, Tn.), The Morgan County News (Wartburg, Tn.), The LaFollette Press, (LaFollette, Tn.), and Landmark Web Printing (Chattanooga, Tn.). He also served as publisher and regional manager of The New Albany Gazette (New Albany, Ms.), and the Tupelo Penny Saver (Tupelo, Ms.). He developed and produced dozens of specialty products across traditional print and online platforms. Under his guidance, the newspapers earned dozens of Tennessee Press Association, Mississippi Press Association, and Landmark corporate awards. Johnny also served Landmark in a national role, sitting as a member of the organization's operations team. His areas of specialty were production efficiencies, human resources, and leadership development.

Throughout his career, Johnny penned a weekly column entitled 'Impressions'. His skillful storytelling imparted relatable and uplifting messages that resonated deeply with readers, constantly reminding them of the importance of faith, love, and community. With a charming mix of humor and sincerity, he invited readers into his world, showcasing the antics of his then-young son, affectionately known as "the Terror of Templeton [Street]," and the enduring support – and endearing wisdom – of his wife, "Mrs. T." His column served as a testament to the deep power of family bonds and the beauty found in life's simple joys. It left a lasting impact on all who read it.

Johnny retired from Landmark in 2013 and spent several years working as a substitute teacher and volunteer with at-risk students in Wise County, Va.

Public Schools prior to moving to Blacksburg.

Johnny was an avid Virginia Tech athletics fan and a long-time member of the Hokie Club. He loved listening to radio broadcasts of games, hosting guests for football game days, and helping plan tailgates. He never missed the opportunity to share that he 'was a Hokie before it was cool to be a Hokie!'

Johnny lived out his alma mater's motto, Ut Prosim (That I May Serve). He served his communities through volunteer efforts with the Wise County Chamber of Commerce, Wise County Education Association, GAP Corporation, United States Postal Service Advisory Committee, Appalachia Cultural Arts Council, Lonesome Pine Hospital Board of Directors, CASA of Roane County, Roane County Chamber of Commerce, Dolly Parton's Roane Imagination Library, and the Harriman Rotary Club. A quiet, but familiar face on the sidelines of his son's athletic events, he served in numerous leadership and support roles for Appalachia Little League, Appalachia Youth Football League, and Appalachia High School. For more than three decades, he volunteered to support the annual Coal/Railroad Days 5K road race.

A longtime member of Andover United Methodist Church (Andover, Va.), he most recently attended Blue Ridge Church (Christiansburg, Va.). While gifted at writing words, singing them wasn't his thing. That didn't stop him from cherishing many old hymns, which were deeply influential in his relationship with God, his family, and others. Nos. 98, 347, 364, 369, 657, 707 to name a few.

Johnny was, simply, the best gift giver. The intentionality and personalization with which he approached Christmas, birthdays, and everything in between, created a special (often unspoken) bond with those closest to him. He gave without regard, just as Christ taught. Recognizing this, it was the honor of Kim and Jon Clark's lives to care for him in his final days on earth. His final gift to

them. Their final gift to him. That kind of gift can tear you up, soften you, break you, and remold you into a stronger, more observant and tender human. A human like Johnny.

Johnny is survived by his wife and life partner of 41 years Kimberly Clark Teglas; their son Jonathan Clark Teglas; sister Mary Jo Myers, niece Courtney Myers Hampton and husband Randall; great nieces Katie Buckles, Ashley Hampton, Samantha Hampton, and Hannah Hampton; mother-in-law, Venus Trusley Clark; brother-in-law, J. Gregory Clark; and countless other family members, special friends, and colleagues. He was preceded in death by parents Joseph and Mary Jane Couch Teglas, daughter Ashton Julianne Teglas, brother-in-law, Chip Myers, and father-in-law, James "Teddy Bear" Clark.

The family will have a private funeral service to say goodbye to Johnny and lay his remains to rest at the American Legion Cemetery (Big Stone Gap, Va.). The service will be officiated by Rev. Tony Nunley and Chris Fisher. The family is tremendously grateful for the support of their community (in Blacksburg, Appalachia, and beyond) and from Johnny's medical teams, especially Good Samaritan Hospice. To celebrate Johnny, the Teglas family invites you to make a memorial contribution to Virginia Tech's campus beautification fund or to Good Samaritan Hospice.

Cemetery Details

American Legion Cemetery

Big Stone Gap, VA

Tribute Wall

TR

“ So sorry to hear about Johnny’s passing. He was a mentor to me on the printing aspects of the newspaper business when we both worked for Landmark. We emailed and talked on the phone many times about managing newspapers, bouncing thoughts and ideas around. We became friends and shared stories of our families and lives. He was a good man. My sympathies to all of his family.

Teresa Rice - February 28, 2024 at 09:17 PM

AT

“ Mary Jo and family, much love and our deepest sympathy to you all at the loss of your beloved brother. Many happy memories of our days in school. We keep you all in our prayers. much love, Adri Trigiani

Adriana Trigiani - February 25, 2024 at 01:16 PM

AT

“ Johnny was always a ray of light. Quick to laugh, he had a great sense of humor. He was so smart, a fabulous writer who grew up to become a revered, respected journalist and editor. We are heartbroken for Kim and Jon Clark. A beautiful family- beloved husband and father- our deepest sympathy on the passing of this good and fine man, and a lifelong friend. much love, Adri Trigiani

Adriana Trigiani - February 25, 2024 at 01:14 PM

MS

“ *Kim and Jon Clark,*

So very sorry to hear of Johnny's passing.

We extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to you and your family.

*Monty & Theresa Salyer
Roanoke, VA*

Monty Salyer - February 24, 2024 at 08:59 AM

KT

Thank you, Monty. Johnny always thought the world of you!

Kimberly Trglas - February 28, 2024 at 05:11 PM

BS

“ *So sorry to hear this. Prayers for your family. His support and love for his family, community, and friends will always be remembered.
Sincerely, Becky Summers*

Becky Summers - February 24, 2024 at 08:26 AM

KM

“ *Sending love and prayers for comfort in your precious memories.
Kathy and Lynn Musick*



Kathy Musick - February 23, 2024 at 11:17 PM

TL

“ Johnny was one of the kindest men I ever knew, in journalism or elsewhere. His capacity for love of his family, community and fellow man would be hard to match. He was a light in this world.

Terri Likens - February 23, 2024 at 09:30 PM

LT

“ John and I are saddened by the news of Johnny’s death. Sending prayers of comfort to Kim, Jon Clark, Mary Jo and family.

Lynne Tull - February 23, 2024 at 07:38 PM

JM

“ My sympathy to Kim and Jon Clark and all of Johnny's family as we all mourn the passing of my friend and colleague. I had the privilege of working alongside Johnny for more than 25 years, first at Norton Press and then at Landmark Community Newspapers. He was a great newspaperman who excelled at everything — writing, photography, design, technology, print production, internet development — while keeping the true focus on serving our readers, advertisers and the community. And he had the awards from his peers to show it!

As we traveled together to many newspaper conferences and trainings, Johnny named us the “Fuddy and Duddy” show. These travels took us to places such as Denver, Fort Worth, New York City, Reno, Boston, Nashville, Richmond, Lancaster, Atlanta and many others to bring the latest in everything back to our hometown newspapers. I have so many wonderful memories from our days working and traveling together. One that has always stuck with me is driving into NYC. Johnny was at the wheel as we came into the city at the Holland Tunnel. A convertible right ahead of us was blasting the song “Spirit in the Sky” by Norman Greenbaum, which echoed through the tunnel welcoming us to Manhattan. It was a surreal experience that I relive every time I hear the song. Today, I know the “Spirit in the Sky” has welcomed this great man to his team. Rest in Peace, dear friend. You will live on in the many great memories we had the chance to share, as well as the many lives you touched.

Jeff Moore - February 23, 2024 at 08:58 AM

TP

“ Prayers for all the family.



Tricia & Jimmy Peters - February 23, 2024 at 08:09 AM

KK

“ *Kathy Kleineick lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Kathy Kleineick - February 23, 2024 at 05:26 AM

SF

“ *Susie Fig lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Susie Fig - February 22, 2024 at 09:41 PM

JV

“ *Such a beautiful tribute to Johnny. I worked with Johnny when he did long-term substitute teaching at LFA. He was always so giving of his time and talents. I admired him for his cooking talents and still remember his spaghetti sauce to this day! I' m still using his homemade white board cleaner that he created especially for me! Whenever I use it, I still think of him telling me not to waste money on the store bought kind! He was so kind and insightful.*

Jerry Vance - February 22, 2024 at 09:08 PM

RM

“ *Roy Munsey lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Roy Munsey - February 22, 2024 at 08:53 PM

DG

“ So sorry to read of the passing of Johnny. Several years ago I use to wait on him in the bank at Appalachia. He was always very kind and always talking about his young son.
Prayers for his family.

Dora Dinsmore Garrison

Dora Dinsmore Garrison - February 22, 2024 at 07:08 PM

LM

“ Lee Maddox lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas



Lee Maddox - February 22, 2024 at 07:06 PM

AD

“ Ann & Gary Dean planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny J. Teglas.

Ann & Gary Dean - February 22, 2024 at 06:56 PM



“ Floor Plant for Sympathy was purchased for the family of Johnny J. Teglas.



February 22, 2024 at 06:56 PM

DL

“ *Danny (Jabo) Lawson lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Danny (Jabo) Lawson - February 22, 2024 at 05:52 PM

PC

So sorry for your loss I love you Kim and Billy always loved you too

Patricia Cline - February 22, 2024 at 07:10 PM

TS

“ *Tommie Sizemore lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Tommie Sizemore - February 22, 2024 at 04:50 PM

CT

“ *Cindy and Jack Tanzey purchased the Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White for the family of Johnny J. Teglas.*



Cindy and Jack Tanzey - February 22, 2024 at 04:12 PM

CT

“ *Cindy and Jack Tanzey planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny J. Teglas.*

Cindy and Jack Tanzey - February 22, 2024 at 04:12 PM

MM

“ *Myra Marshall lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Myra Marshall - February 22, 2024 at 04:06 PM

MB

“ *Mary and I are so shocked and saddened by Johnny’s passing. Please know that if there is anything we can do for you all to please let us know. May God be with you as you grieve.*

Mike & Mary Brown - February 22, 2024 at 03:58 PM

LK

“ *Lisa Kirk lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Lisa kirk - February 22, 2024 at 03:56 PM

DM

“ *Darlene McQueen sent a virtual gift in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



Darlene McQueen - February 22, 2024 at 03:39 PM

DM

Kim and Jon Clark know that I am and will be praying for you today and the days ahead.

Darlene McQueen - February 22, 2024 at 03:40 PM

CG

“ *I'm so sorry to hear about Johnny's passing. He is now at peace and completely healed. You all will be in my thoughts and prayers.*
Carol Giles

carol giles - February 22, 2024 at 03:39 PM

JF

“ *John Fraley lit a candle in memory of Johnny J. Teglas*



John Fraley - February 22, 2024 at 03:35 PM