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John "Tate" Lanning, Jr.

Jan. 9, 1937 - April 8, 2020

John "Tate" Lanning, Jr., 83, of Morganton, NC, passed away on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at Grace Ridge Retirement Community due to complications from Parkinson's disease.

The son of the late John Tate and Elizabeth (Williams) Lanning, Tate was born on January 9, 1937 in Durham, NC. He attended Durham High School and received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Duke University, where he was a member of the golf team. Upon graduation, Tate accepted a facility design position at Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, VA. He later worked with Chapman Construction in Charlotte, NC, before moving to Raleigh, NC, to join the team of John A. Edwards & Company. In 1972, he established Tate Lanning & Associates, specializing in the design of water and wastewater systems for municipalities throughout NC. In 1990, Tate received the Distinguished Service Award by the Professional Engineers of North Carolina (PENC). In 2002, Tate's firm was obtained by WithersRavenel, with whom Tate worked until his retirement in 2007.

Tate was an active member of St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Raleigh, NC, for over 50 years. He also served on the Board of Directors of Penick Village in Southern Pines, NC, and volunteered with NC Episcopal Cursillo and Wake Relief. Tate was known for delighting audiences with his performance of Andy Griffith's humorous

known for delighting audiences with his performance of Andy Griffith's humorous monologues "What It Was Was Football" and "Romeo and Juliet." He was an avid golfer and accomplished musician who entertained friends and family with his unique renditions of praise songs and bluegrass tunes. His children and grandchildren will miss his special birthday phone calls, which always included a live performance of "Happy Birthday," featuring elaborate licks and riffs, played on his beloved baby grand.

Tate was married for 56 years to his high school sweetheart, Michael May Lanning. Following her death, Tate moved to Grace Ridge Retirement Community in Morganton, NC, where he enjoyed singing in the chorus, hosting family gatherings, and worshipping at Grace Episcopal Church.

Tate is survived by his daughters, Kathy Robertson (Bill) of Rutherfordton, NC, Rebecca Lanning (Frank Godwin) of Chapel Hill, NC, and Carrie Shuping (Alan) of Crossnore, NC; sister, Lucy Lanning Mauger (Richard) of Greenville, NC; brother, Tommy Lanning (Kay) of Asheville, NC; grandchildren, Hannah, Will, Helen, Walker Tate, John Tate, and Rose; and many extended family members.

Tate's family would like to express their deepest gratitude to Burke Hospice and the staff of Grace Ridge for their care and support during his illness.

A memorial service will take place at Grace Episcopal, with final inurnment in his family's plot at St. Michael's once the national emergency related to COVID-19 has passed.

Memorial contributions may be made to Grace Ridge Endowment Fund, payable to Blue Ridge Healthcare Foundation, 500 Lenoir Rd., Morganton, NC 28655 or to Grace Episcopal Church, 303 S. King St., Morganton, NC 28655.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.