



*John Victor Jokinen*

**July 31, 1943 - June 28, 2025**

John Victor Jokinen, 81, died on June 28, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. He passed as he lived with courage, grace, and integrity.

John was the youngest child of the late Uno Alvar Jokinen and Rachel Porthan Jokinen. He was preceded in death by his sister, Joan Jokinen Tate, and his brother, Robert Jokinen.

John's family roots were deeply Finnish. His grandfather emigrated first from Finland to the United States, followed by his grandmother, who courageously navigated Ellis Island alone with her children speaking no English and armed only with perseverance. This spirit of grit and determination, known in Finnish as Sisu, became a defining thread through John's life.

John's grandparents later settled in Ely, Minnesota, where his parents grew up before relocating to DeLand, Florida to raise their own family. There, John thrived in both academics and athletics starting in Little League and culminating in a senior-year State Championship in baseball. He graduated as Salutatorian from DeLand High School in 1961 and was later inducted into the DeLand High School Sports Hall of Fame, where his children and grandchildren cheered him on.

John went on to attend the University of Florida, graduating in 1965. A proud Gator for life, he served as president of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity during his junior and senior years. He rarely missed watching the Gators play and especially enjoyed celebrating their most recent NCAA men's basketball national championship. During his final illness, John's family made sure he was never without his beloved

Gator socks and pajamas. He also remained a lifelong fan of the Brooklyn Dodgers and Atlanta Braves.

Growing up along the banks of the St. Johns River in DeLand, John developed an early fascination with Cypress wood as he watched massive trees float downstream to be processed at the mills his father managed. That childhood experience sparked a passion that would guide his distinguished career in fine furniture most notably as co-founder of E.J. Victor.

After college, John joined Simmons Company as a sales representative. His first territory was in Albany, Georgia, where he met Huntie Hall, a high school teacher. They married in 1967. After 12 years with Simmons, John joined Henredon Furniture in Morganton, NC, in 1979. He credited his mentor, Henredon president William E. Smith, for shaping his knowledge of the furniture industry.

As the industry changed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, John made the bold decision to start a new company. In 1989, John, Edward W. Phifer, III, and Joseph B. Manderson co-founded E.J. Victor, with instrumental support from George D. Johnson, Jr., Stewart Johnson and Dan Breeden. They persuasively recruited retired Henredon executive M.C. Talley, who selected equipment and personnel and provided trusted advice. John's leadership, vision and perseverance were pivotal to E.J. Victor becoming one of the premier furniture manufacturers in the United States. The company reflected John's principles of integrity, fairness, and a deep appreciation for customer relationships and the dedicated employees.

John was a faithful member of Grace Episcopal Church, where he served on the Vestry, as a lay reader, and as chairman of the Stewardship Campaign. He also served on the Grace Hospital Board and was the first Chairman of the Grace Healthcare Foundation.

He enjoyed hunting in the Carolinas and South Georgia, and cherished the days fishing with his grandchildren at Pawleys Island, South Carolina.

John was an encourager and mentor not just to future furniture leaders, but to young athletes and aspiring professionals. He was a role model to his children and grandchildren, who lovingly called him Big John. He lived with humility and grace, never seeking attention and always inspiring those around him.

John's journey from the banks of the St. Johns River to the foothills of Western North Carolina was marked by 58 remarkable years in the furniture industry. His legacy of Sisu, generosity, and strength will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

John is survived by his devoted wife of 57 years, Huntie Hall Jokinen; his daughter, Jeanne Jokinen Bradshaw (Michael); his son, John Hunter Jokinen (Meg); and his grandchildren: Hall, Smith, Hayden,

and Cooper Bradshaw, and Thomas and Robert Jokinen. He is also survived by his sister, Joyce Jokinen Sims (Dave); sister-in-law, Mimi Langley Conner (Frank); and nine nieces and nephews.

The family expresses deep gratitude to Dr. Jennifer Atlas (Levine Cancer Institute, Charlotte), Dr. Greg Jones (UNC Health Blue Ridge), Dr. Keith Smith (Burke Primary Care), the Amorem Hospice Team, and Johns compassionate caregivers: Denise, Martha, Grace, and Tiffany.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m., Thursday, July 17, 2025 at Grace Episcopal Church, 303 South King Street, Morganton, with a reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Grace Episcopal Church Endowment, 303 South King Street, Morganton, NC 28655 or Amorem Hospice, 902 Kirkwood Street, Lenoir, NC 28645.

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

#### Visitation

July 17, 2025  
3 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Grace Episcopal Church

#### Service

July 17, 2025  
2 p.m.

Grace Episcopal Church

#### Committal

N/A

# Tribute Wall

What a beautiful tribute! His spirit of SISU lives on in all those who share his lineage. Love you! - Ashley (daughter of Karen Sims)

–Ashley Pickholtz



You were one of the Best - Never allowed us to make an excuse.

–Shea Davenport

What a beautiful tribute. I remember him so fondly, even though it was a short time. He stepped in to dance the father daughter dance at cotillion when my father couldn't make it. I'm sure I stepped on his shoes and he just kept on moving with such grace and confidence. Your family is held so close to my heart. Thinking about you as you move forward. He was a hero!

–Jamie Matthews (Golightly)

My condolences to all family, I had the pleasure of meeting Jon, Joe and Ed when they came to the store I was General Manager of Porters of Racine and meeting with my boss Bob Waters. This is when we were introduced to the group that set a high precedent of what they were embarking on and how well it was received in the furniture industry. May Jon Rest In Peace at the hand of our Lord. He was definitely one of the leaders in our field.

He was definitely one of the leaders in our field.

—Thomas Rafool



I am so sorry to hear about John's passing. I have many fond memories of the summer I worked at EJ Victor. He was such a kind person. My thoughts and prayers are with your family.

John was always a positive force, accompanied by his trademark smile. He carved his own path and brought others along to share in his progress. His passing leaves a hole in my heart.

—Stephen West



—Tracy B Johnson

I'm praying for your family to be wrapped in God's comfort and peace. Sending much love and hugs.

—Ellen Settlemyer

Didn't know Mr Jokinen well but he was always nice to us neighborhood kids even though probably we were up to no good ha - my condolences to Huntie John Jr and Jeannie - Sisu huh that's cool actually I'll adopt that as a to live by type principle - I bought a Sisu tee shirt in Me Jokinen's honor - nice man RIP

—James Isenhower

I came to know Mr. Jokinen through his service at Grace Hospital, what is now UNC Health Blue Ridge. His professionalism, commitment to our hospital and his kindness stand out as I remember him. I am very sorry to hear of his passing.

–Jacque Garner



My heart was saddened upon hearing of Big John's passing. I true leader in our industry whose innovation of creating EJ Victor was a genius leap for High Point and our luxury brand. My prayers go out to my friend John Hunter and his mom and family! I'm a Proud member of our EJ Victor Family! John McCarthy EJ Victor Midwest-California-Hawai'i Rep

–John McCarthy

–Mary Jo Polo



Hearing of John's passing had an enormous effect on me. I've known John and the family for many decades. From my early years in retail spanning over many decades, John displayed true character and friendship that I cherish. In addition to being a great mentor and teacher, doing business with John was a thrill and enormous fun. His zest for the business was extraordinary and I learned so much from him. His legacy will be remembered by many. Claire Goldhagen

–Claire Goldhagen



It saddens me to have learned John had passed. Very hard to believe. John was a great person to work with during the time me and my colleagues had known him. He is and will be missed. Justin Deane, John



be missed. Rest in Peace, John.

–Cesar L Piezas

It is with great sadness to that we say goodbye to a true gentleman, partner and mentor. Everyone at the Jimenco family will miss John and will remember him for all that he did for us. There is nothing but gratitude and admiration in our hearts. We thank God for having placed John in our path, seldom does one have the good fortune to meet such a wonderful man. Our prayers with John H. and Huntie and their entire family, as well as the EJ Victor family that John lead. -from Colombia with love Antonia, Luis and the Jimenco Family.

–Luis & Antonia



Either deepest sympathies to all family and friends. John was truly an exceptional human being. He will never be forgotten. May his memory be a blessing. Claire Goldhagen

–Claire Goldhagen

One of the kindest Men best boss most caring loving person I've ever worked for EJV will never be the same without him. Truly heartbroken fir his family. Thank you for EVERYTHING

–Mistie Beach

John was always kind, friendly and professional, he will be missed. Gigi and Paysage team

–Paysage



Our team from Paysage is saddened by John's passing. He was always professional, kind and friendly. Gigi and Judy



–Paysage



Our team from Paysage is saddened to hear about Jon. He was always professional, kind and friendly. He will be missed. Gigi and Judy

It saddens me to hear of his passing. He was a nice man that always greeted you with a smile. I will keep his family and friends in my thoughts and prayers. God bless.

–Sharon Carlton

John was a fine person and a good friend. He left the world a better place and will be dearly missed. - Jon and Patti Windhorst

–Jon Windhorst

It saddens me to hear of John's passing. I started at E. J. Victor when we first moved here in 1997. The owners always treated you as family and knew your name. When I started helping with costing John already knew a good idea of the cost. In recent years as I would pass the vicinity of his residence I would think of him and pray. My prayers continue for all the family.

–Jane Rice

I knew Jon when I started my career in the industry with Simmons. Jon and I would cross paths years later while I was with Thomasville and he with EJ Victor. Jon was a wonderful example of professionalism and humility. His achievements in both his career and family are a tribute to his upbringing and an inspiration to all who knew him. He will be missed. Jim Adams High Point NC

–Jim Adams

Saddened to hear the news. John was a dear friend, couldn't of met a nicer person. I will always remember and miss him dearly. Sincerely, Joseph Cabral  
Toronto Canada

–Joseph Cabral

–Doug & Susan Gordon

Although we only met John once here on Marco Island, when they were visiting Huntie's sister, Mimi and her husband Frank. We had a nice conversation on the party boat as we cruised around the island, but I feel like we knew John because Mimi and Frank always spoke so highly of him and Huntie . Our hearts go out to the family. May he rest in peace

–Del & Judy

You never felt like you worked for John, but that he worked with you to make you a better person and this produced a win for you, your customer, and your company. I had never seen or heard the word "sisu " until reading John's obituary, but this word defined this great and gentleman. Thank you for being my mentor, my cheerleader, but most of all, my friend. Thad Pettyjohn

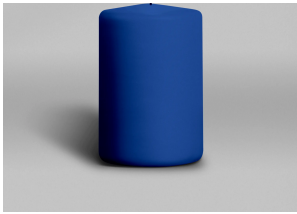
–Thad Pettyjohn

I really admired John Jokinen, he was so nice and friendly. Just a great person all round. What a legacy he leaves behind with E.J. Victor. Such beautiful furniture! I know he will be missed in Morganton.

–Dovie McBrayer



.John was a visionarv and always kind and professional. so



John was a visionary and always kind and professional, so sorry for your loss. Judy

—Judy Watford

Condolences to family and friends.

—Joy Brokaw

Worked with and for John many years building sample frames. He was a good man and I am honored to have worked for him. He was a hard worker and super nice guy. I will always remember his smile. Prayers for the family. May the Lord give you peace and comfort through this time of loss.

—Charles Woody

My condolences, a true gentleman.

—Alex Shuford

John was one of the finest gentlemen I've had the pleasure of knowing. I am a better person for just knowing him. Peace be with you John and to your family.

—Ronn Hatchel



—LAURA McCOY

—Jim and Linda Belote

So sorry for your loss. I have one fond memory of John. I



was 16 years old and was working at Henredon. I wanted to play softball and we had a practice at Bethel park. It had rained the day before and the sod was still saturated. I went to swing at a ball and my knee cap came out of place and was on the backside of my leg. Laying there in agony not

knowing what to do, John came to me and managed to get my knee cap back in place. I had to wear a cast the entire length of my leg but I remember the doctor telling me if he hadn't set my leg that I would no doubt would have to have surgery. I'm thankful he was there and knew what to do. That was in 1981.

–Mark Hensley



–Jean & Christian Patton

Gentleman, friend, remember "the boardwalk." Wormi

–Allen. Kearns



–Christie Jones

My heart is with you and your family.

–Jim Cornelison

Jock was one of the nicest people I have ever met in life. A Straight Shooter and one the Best in the Furniture Business. He will be Missed!!

–Bob Lynch

John was a good man to work for he showed us respect and called you by your name when he walked by and spoke that meant a lot to me .Sending prayers to his family

–Susan Vess

Morganton lost a true kind Gentleman !

–Ronnie and Dinah Whisnant

Deepest sympathy.

–Ann Smith