



1953 — *John* — 2026

John Bertram McNamee

February 20, 1953 — April 6, 2026

Glendale, CA

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved John Bertram McNamee, Ph.D. on April 6, 2026. John was born in Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, on

February 20, 1953, the fourth child to Lt. Colonel John B McNamee Sr. and Lt. Helen McNamee nee Rapacz (Nurse Officer). As his parents were military, John spent his early years in Oahu, Hawaii (before it was a state), Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey and Hollywood, Florida. He attended high school in Hollywood, Florida where he graduated with honors, then went on to earn his Bachelor of Science in Economics, with high honors, from University of Florida. He completed his education with a Masters and Doctorate in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Texas, Austin.

John was a true legend at Jet Propulsion Labs (JPL) for 36 years, having run multiple Mars Missions, the last of his career being project manager for the Mars 2020 Perseverance mission, which is now in the Jezero Crater. He also managed the Deep Space Network, Deep Impact and Dawn Missions. He served in a deputy role for Mars Exploration program, along with Mars Surveyor, Magellan and other missions. He was mission design manager for Mars Pathfinder, which delivered the first ever rover to Mars. He was awarded numerous NASA Exceptional Service awards and the highly covetable APM award, which recognizes the work of an individual in the field of project management, who has delivered something truly outstanding in their role, for Mars 2020 Perseverance Mission.

John was known for always wearing shorts and flip flops, never hard shoes. Regardless of the weather. He was a history buff and reader, especially WWII history and the history of aviation and space. He was a New York Yankees and New England Patriot fan from his years spent in New Jersey. He loved travel, sports radio, The Highwaymen and a dry martini.

John is survived by his wife Audrey McNamee, son Stevan McNamee, daughter Amanda McNamee, grandson Carter McNamee, brother Micheal McNamee, sister in law Virginia McNamee of Knoxville, Tennessee, brother Peter McNamee and sister in law Marge McNamee of Cottonwood, Arizona and many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his son Spc Matthew R McNamee, sisters Mary Bobber and Maureen Fiorelli.

Memorial services will be held at Forest Lawn, Glendale at 9:00 am, Monday, April 27th. In lieu of flowers please send donations in honor of Specialist Matthew R McNamee to Special Operations Warrior Foundation a 501© tax-exempt, National non-profit charitable foundation. www.specialops.org

Guestbook

John, This world was made so much better, and more fun, with you in it. You will be so truly missed.

CAROLINE MUGLIA

Apr 8, 2026

Michael & Deidre Neal purchased Teleflora's Shining Spirit Bouquet for John McNamee

MICHAEL & DEIDRE NEAL

Apr 8, 2026

It was a true honor to know you John. One of the smartest people I have ever met, and the only Yankee fan I ever got along with. May you rest in peace.

CLYDE

Apr 8, 2026

John! What a guy! What a man! Your joy, your laughter, your brilliance was legendary! How wonderful it was to see you and Audrey walk into Pier23 Cafe in S. F. I immediately knew it was gonna be a great day! Thank you for your kindness and patience you gifted everyone. Your beautiful smile and wisdom will never be forgotten. As kind as you've been I feel sorry for anyone who crosses you in the heavens! What a blessing it has been to have had you as a friend! Love you dearly. Michael Driscoll

MICHAEL DRISCOLL,

Apr 9, 2026

John God bless your family and saying prayers for them. Memories of you will keep them strong. Remember watching you manage so many missions and all the challenges in every mission . Your humor in reviews made them so interesting and clever.

CHAR RETIRED JPL

Apr 10, 2026

Every moment with John was a precious treasure. His presence, humility, authenticity and compassion for all. Even Soren. You will live forever in our hearts, John. Tango Delta, Carry on.

AMY DICKINSON

Apr 10, 2026

He will truly be missed.

BARBARA SALTZBERG

Apr 10, 2026

Rest in Peace John. I will always remember your leadership on our missions.

LARRY BRYANT

Apr 10, 2026

I worked with John the first time when we were tasked, in 2002 as a Project Manager/ Business Manager team to rescue the Deep Impact Mission from a termination review. We worked with NASA Headquarters (HQ) and the Principle Investigator, Dr. Michael A'Hearn from the University of Maryland and Ball Aerospace to present a Technical, Schedule, and Cost recovery plan to hold the launch date in early 2005 and stay within the cost parameters. Our plan was accepted by HQ and through this Project John & I established a professional and friend relationship that lasted. John was an experienced PM and he trusted me to perform the business management function without excessive oversight. Through the years since, we often shared stories of our experience on this mission which remains a hi-light of my career at JPL and has influenced my value of John as a manager and friend. I will miss him.

DAN GRAHAM

Apr 10, 2026

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Apr 10, 2026

John was a true friend. We played baseball together and attended Olson Junior High and Hollywood Hills High together. Our classmates are so sorry for your loss.

STEVEN DENT

Apr 11, 2026