



# John "Coach" P. North, Jr.

JUN 17, 1921 - JUL 6, 2010



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## **John "Coach" P. North, Jr.**

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**J**ohn P. North, Jr. died on July 6 at the age of 89. He was born in Gilliam, Louisiana, grew up in Old Hickory, TN and was a resident of Covington and Mandeville for the past 27 years. John graduated from Castle Heights Military Academy in Lebanon, TN and Vanderbilt University where he earned Bachelor's and Master's Degrees. He was a veteran of the Marine Corps and served in the South Pacific during World War II.

While in high school at Castle Heights he was recognized as an outstanding natural athlete, lettering in football, basketball and track. He set numerous school records and was inducted into the Castle Heights Hall of Fame. John was offered football scholarships at several universities but chose to attend Vanderbilt, close to home. In his freshman year he played football, basketball and ran track for the university. This was at the height of World War II, and after his freshman year he enlisted in the Marines to serve his country. He was severely wounded on the Island of Tinian and earned the Purple Heart. After his honorable discharge with the rank of Sergeant, he returned to Nashville and began to rehabilitate his wounded legs so that he could play football again. He rejoined the Vanderbilt team and served as captain, played offensive and defensive end and was the place kicker. In spite of limitations due to his war injuries he was chosen for the All American team his senior year. He was drafted by the Washington Redskins and played professional football for the Baltimore Colts for three years. John was a receiver for the Colts and held the record for the longest pass from the line of scrimmage (thrown by Y.A. Tittle) for many years.

After his retirement from the Colts, he began his long coaching career, first as a high school coach in Alabama and then for college teams, including Tennessee Tech, the University of Kentucky and Louisiana State University (LSU) on the staff of Charles McClendon in the early 1960's. He left LSU to accept a position with the Detroit



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Lions where he worked for eight years.

He joined the staff of the New Orleans Saints and was appointed head coach early in the 1973 season. His tenure with the Saints spanned two plus turbulent years and included a player's strike and a rained out training camp. In spite of these setbacks, the Saints gained respectability and reached several milestones including the team's first shutout. Coach North will be remembered for his hardnosed approach to football and his sideline antics. After Coach North left the Saints in 1975 he ended his NFL coaching career with seven years as an offensive coach for the Atlanta Falcons. After leaving the Falcons, Coach North returned to the New Orleans area and served one year as quarterback coach for the USFL New Orleans Breakers. After retirement from football, he worked as a licensed Real Estate Agent on the North Shore. He was an active member of St. Timothy Methodist Church, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and remained an active member of the NFL Alumni Association .

Coach North is preceded in death by his beloved wife of 60 years, Blondell "Dell" McClure North and his son, John P. North III. He is survived by his daughter, Martha North Tennison (Nelson), granddaughters Gayle Guglielmo Croxton (Steve), Dell Guglielmo, Katie North Demicelli (Mike), and 5 great grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held at 2:00 PM on Saturday, July 10, 2010 at E. J. Fielding Funeral Home, 2260 W. 21st Ave. Covington, LA 70433.

Visitation will begin at 12:30 PM.

Committal will follow the service at the adjacent Pinecrest Memorial Gardens.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of Coach North (the bread man), to the St. Timothy Methodist Church Wednesday Night Meal Outreach Ministry, 334 Asbury Dr. Mandeville, LA 70448.



## Tribute Wall

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CS

**Candace Sturzl** posted:

Martha, I was saddened to hear of your father's passing. My sympathies to you and your family. God Bless you for the love and care you gave to your father.

July 13 at 3:49 PM

WI

**Wayne Mayberry, liie** posted:

Great man!! So glad I can say he was a friend.

July 11 at 3:00 PM

SM

**Suzanne & Ben Motion** posted:

We have lost a neighbor and friend of many years. We know he has gone on to join his beloved Dell. Our deepest sympathies to his family. We regret that we cannot attend as we are in Boston for the funeral services of a cousin. Suzanne and Ben

July 10 at 2:38 PM

DS

**Diane & Bill Strait** posted:

Dear Martha, We're so saddened by the news of your father's passing. We know he's in heaven with God now and safe and sound. Please accept our condolences as you tell him good-bye. What a very wonderful man he was, and loved by everyone! Love, Diane and Bill

July 10 at 9:08 AM

JS

**Joe A. Spain** posted:

My condolences to John North's family on his passing. I trust you are comforted by knowing that John is now in a better and brighter place. I knew John later in his life - primarily through St. Timothy UMC - and we shared many conversations about my native Tennessee and his experiences there. He was a wonderful man who lived a full life and I am a better person for having known him.

July 10 at 8:19 AM



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LB

**Liz Bell** posted:

Martha and Gayle, you and your family are in our hearts, thoughts and prayers. Please let us know if there's anything we can do to support you, now or in the future.

July 9 at 3:34 PM

LM

**Louise Talarico Mackenzie** posted:

In memory of dear Uncle John who taught us all so many valuable things as children. We learned to swim, ride horses, play golf, and laugh a lot. We learned the value of being active and trying our best at everything. Funny how the smallest things inspire you. He always called me Louisa Mae Alcott and I had no idea who he meant for a long time. Then, I discovered her as a writer and felt so honored. While growing up, I got the inspiration to go to college when I spent part of summers at Tennessee Tech, U.K., and L.S. U. You will be long remembered and missed. Much love to Marty and Family Louise

July 9 at 6:09 AM

LO

**Louis Ogle** posted:

Martha, Nelson and family: I was so sorry to learn of your Dad's death. I saw him just a couple of weeks ago and he looked fine ... we never know. Please call on us if we can be of help to you. "Coach North" was well loved and respected. May he rest in peace with our Lord. Love and peace to all of you. Louis & Jean

July 9 at 3:53 AM

SS

**Susan Stein** posted:

Martha, I just heard about your father. I am so sorry for your loss....it's so hard to lose a loved one.

July 8 at 3:53 PM

TN

**Tom Nielsen** posted:

Martha: I just wanted to offer my condolences. We therapists don't always take care of ourselves so please call if you ever need a shoulder, friend, or free lunch. Take care, Tom

July 8 at 2:14 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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