



John G. Esswein

October 25, 1956 - August 15, 2025

Dr. John G. Esswein, passed away suddenly on Friday August 15, 2025 on the Feast of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after a valiant battle with complications from cancer treatments.

John was born October 25, 1956 to Richard and Lotus "Bunny" (Ellis) Esswein.

He met Mary Wingerter in Perryville, MO in 1989 and they were married on January 27, 1990.

He grew up in St. Louis, attended Cardinal Glennon College for one year, and graduated from Rockhurst College with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry. He then attended University of Missouri - Kansas City Dental School and has run his own family dental practice in Perryville for over 40 years. His wonderful staff has always been like his second family. Doctor Esswein devoted his life to service and healing for those in need.

John's passions began with his faith, family, and friends. He was a nurturing, supportive and fun father and "Papa" for his two daughters and grandson. John loved serving his St. Vincent de Paul parish in many ways, especially as Chairman of the bingo stand at the annual Seminary Picnic where he greeted his regulars year after year.

John enjoyed so many things in life, including playing soccer, trout fishing, hunting, gaming, reading, classical music, bee-keeping, playing bridge, planning school reunions and working on his farm. He also served as swim team coach for St. Vincent High School and participated in both AAU and USA swimming events. He was a member of Knights of Columbus Council #1263, American Legion Post #133, among many other organizations, as well as Captain in the United States Army Reserves.

Survivors include his wife of 35 years, Mary; daughters Maria Esswein of St. Louis and Anna (Kenneth) Esswein Burgess of Murray, KY; grandson Rowan Burgess; mother-in-law, Patricia Wingerter; sisters-in-law, Terri (late William) Esswein; Teresa (Kevin) Corby; Sally (William) Delabar; Melissa (Joseph) Jedlicka III; Rebecca (Christopher) Wecke Sr.; brother-in-law William (Kelly) Wingerter Jr.; along with many nieces, nephews, beloved Esswein cousins and his dear friends.

Proceeded in death by his parents; brother William Esswein; father-in-law, William P. Wingerter Sr.; sister-in-law, Sara and infant baby Maria Sara Wingerter; and partner of Maria, Michael Casey Saunders.

Visitation will be from 4:00 to 8:00 pm on Friday August 22, 2025 at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Perryville and will continue on Saturday, August 23 from 9:00 to 9:45 am at the church.

Funeral Mass will commence at 10:00 am Saturday, August 23 at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Perryville with Msgr. John Shamleffer and Rev. Kevin Schmittgens concelebrating.

Burial will be at St. Boniface Catholic Cemetery in Perryville, MO.

Graveside Military Honors will be provided by American Legion Post #133 and Delta Team.

Memorial contributions may be given to St. Vincent de Paul Educational Foundation, Ladies of Charity, or the New Life Mission Inn in Perryville.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandyoungfuneralhome.com.

Ford & Young Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

St. Boniface Cemetery

Perryville, MO 63775

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **22**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church (Perryville)
1000 Rosati Court
Perryville, MO 63775

Visitation

AUG **23**. 9:00 AM - 9:45 AM (CT)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church (Perryville)
1000 Rosati Court
Perryville, MO 63775

Funeral Mass

AUG **23**. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church (Perryville)
1000 Rosati Court
Perryville, MO 63775

Tribute Wall

AK

“ Dear Essweins:

John's service was beautiful. We always felt a link with you guys: Anna, is about our daughter's age, I always valued when our she interacted with Anna, but especially Maria for "big sister wisdom" (they also shared a hilarious facial expression right before swimming events). In addition, John was great fun and reminded me of my Uncle Dewey Urban, Son of a dentist in Dentist in Perryville and also my childhood dentist in Sikeston. Of course, I also enjoyed my interactions with John during many swimming events. Please know that we are thinking of and praying for you guys frequently and take care.

Andy, Susan and Mary Kendig

Andy Kendig - August 25, 2025 at 09:52 AM

SM

“ So sorry to hear about John. Just wanted you to know that all of us who have known you in our lives over the years are thinking about you during this difficult time.

Susie Miget - August 23, 2025 at 11:55 AM

CH

“ So very sad to hear this. Was very concerned when he was still having so much jaw pain while he was treating me a couple of months ago. He was so special and such a blessing to everyone who had the pleasure to know him. Huge loss. He was a long drive for me but it was so worth it because he was so special.

Catherine Lynne Hurst - August 23, 2025 at 12:41 AM

TA

“ Theo A. planted a grove of 10 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John G. Esswein.

Theo A. - August 22, 2025 at 11:58 PM

TS

“ John Esswein's beloved author A.A. Milne reminds us through his children's characters: "How does one become a butterfly?", Pooh asked pensively. "You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar.", Piglet replied. "You mean to die?", asked Pooh. "Yes and no.", Piglet answered. "What looks like you will die; but, what is REALLY you - will live on." Live on dear friend John. You will always be in our hearts. We will miss your joy and humor. In sympathy, love and hope, Theo and Andrzej.

Theo and Andrzej Sikora - August 22, 2025 at 11:46 PM

CS

“ Cyndi Schulein lit a candle in memory of John G. Esswein



Cyndi Schulein - August 22, 2025 at 02:30 PM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of John G. Esswein.



August 21, 2025 at 02:42 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John G. Esswein.

August 21, 2025 at 02:42 PM



“ Marcio, Iara & Gabby Vieira purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John G. Esswein.



Marcio, Iara & Gabby Vieira - August 20, 2025 at 10:49 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of John G. Esswein.



August 20, 2025 at 02:50 PM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of John G. Esswein.



August 20, 2025 at 02:05 PM

SV

“ *Mary, we are so very sorry for your loss. Sending our deepest sympathy to you and your family.*

Susan & John Vogt

Susan Gagnepain Vogt - August 20, 2025 at 07:32 AM

MC

“ *My mother was the oldest in a family of six kids. Her younger brother, Uncle Dickie, was John's father. When I was an adolescent I used to babysit for Johnny, and since I had scant experience and patience with little kids, I thought he was sort of a hellion. He was prankish and full of energy, but once John started school at St. Stephens (my alma mater too) he straightened out and became a model student and growing young man.*

Johnny was the younger generation and like some of us in the family, after completing school he left St. Louis and forged a new life in a new city where he set down roots, built a dental practice and family, and not only made the family proud but now I'm sorry I never traveled back East to take advantage of Johnny's offers of free dental care.

I send my most sincere condolences to John's wife and family, and all the others whose lives were impacted in such positive ways by that former little hellion, Cousin Johnny.

Maureen Entéra, Santa Barbara, CA

Maureen Entera (first cousin) - August 19, 2025 at 07:17 PM

DC

“ One of my fondest memory of John when we were young, and there were many, is how he used to braid the long hair of us girl cousins on the steps leading to the second story of our grandpa’s house. All the cousins used to go to his house every Sunday evening. He got pretty good at it too. 😊

Denice Kun (John’s cousin) - August 19, 2025 at 02:21 PM

DH

“ John was my dentist first, then a friend, when he became a teammate on my husband's bowling team (way back when, lol). He had a sense of humor that was surprising at first, since all we originally knew was, John the doctor. He was truly a joy to talk to, especially around the Seminary picnic, as he would have so many stories leading up to & then of course how much fun he had calling bingo. He will be missed for so many reasons, but I will ALWAYS remember the LOVE that he showed when he shared stories of his family, especially after the birth of Rowan. Our deepest sympathies; Mary, Maria, Anna, Kenneth & of course Rowan, we are so sorry for the loss of such an amazing man. Romans 8:28 "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

Diana & Pete Howe - August 19, 2025 at 09:12 AM



“ John was like a father figure to me. I've known him for several years. We met through a mobile video game (because he was the cool older guy who played games). He joined the party I had and we played together for years until the game ended. We also talked a lot outside the game. Sharing dad jokes, interesting stuff on messenger or playing online PS5 games like Bloodborne. He helped me by listening to me during harder times in my life and even some basic medical advice.



I never got to see him in real life but definitely planned to one day, now I never can but he will always be in my heart. He was a great friend to all he interacted with. He never judged but always listened and was such a fun joyful person full of life.

He is now with God and Jesus and no longer suffering. I hope when I go to see him up there one day in the distant future.

Bless him and his family.

Brian Gundersen - August 19, 2025 at 12:15 AM

GP

“ I am so sad to hear about John's passing. He has been my dentist for more years than I can remember. He was such a kind man besides being such a good dentist. He will be greatly missed by me and so many others. Prayers and sympathy for his family and friends.

Genny Pfaff - August 18, 2025 at 08:45 PM

KF

“ Kevin Richards,Alex Case and Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of John G. Esswein.



Kevin Richards,Alex Case and Family - August 18, 2025 at 08:20 PM

SW

“ When John first came to Perryville, he rented a house next door to us on Edgemont. He was a very kind and caring person. I remember he came over to our house on Halloween and handed out candy with us.

Sue Wucher Weber - August 18, 2025 at 06:53 PM

PY

“ My family has been with Dr Esswein ever since Dr Bey retired, he was such a great dentist and genuinely cared about all of his patients. He will be greatly missed.

Patty Yount - August 18, 2025 at 05:11 PM

VY

“ My heart breaks for all of the family, John was such a kind soul and had such a giving spirit! I know this will leave such a huge void for all of them. Sending thoughts and prayers. 💕🙏

vickie yount - August 18, 2025 at 04:20 PM

KM

“ So sorry for your loss. He was a fine man n great dentist of mine.May God give you, Mary, n family comfort n peace.

Karolyn Marr - August 18, 2025 at 03:32 PM

AB

“ *Angela Brewer lit a candle in memory of John G. Esswein*



Angela Brewer - August 18, 2025 at 03:21 PM

AB

He was a kind dentist, helped me & my son alot, was always there announcing when they use to have halloween costume contest up at the center

Angela Brewer - August 18, 2025 at 03:23 PM

JB

John was a kind individual and a great dentist. i remember many things about John, but the one thing that sticks out the most was when he stayed late on a Friday night on St. Vincent Homecoming to repair my young sons broken tooth. I was with John from the very beginning, but my son at the time was going to a different dentist at that time. His dentist would not stay to help us, so I called John and he was so gracious and accommodating. The tooth was repaired and my son became a patient from then on and still to this day, driving from St, Louis for checkups and treatment. He will be greatly missed.

James Brown - August 18, 2025 at 08:33 PM