



John V. Heiser

February 27, 1935 - February 12, 2026

John Vail Heiser, 90, of Essex, beloved husband of Judy Heiser, passed away Thursday, February 12, 2026. Born in New Haven, CT, he lived in Ivoryton, CT since 1967. A graduate of Hamden High School, he received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Connecticut. It was at UConn where he met Judy and started down the path to their 60 years of marriage.

John spent his early years living in several Connecticut communities, Bronxville, New York, and in post-World War II Austria, where his father served as a diplomat. John excelled in high school track and was a terrific athlete. After starting college, John joined the U.S. Air Force, including a tour in Guam. He was very proud of his service to the country. John returned to UConn where he completed his studies, enjoyed college life with many friends and as a Chi Phi fraternity member, and, most importantly, met his future wife and friend for life, Judy McCann. From the time they started dating, and until her passing in 2023, John and Judy were nearly inseparable.

Following college, John started a long, successful, and rewarding career in computer programming, which was at that time in the early 1960s a new and fast-growing field of technology. He worked for Travelers, Electric Boat, and then more than 30 years with Phoenix Mutual. After his retirement from Phoenix, John continued to work as an IT consultant for several years while starting a local lawn-care business which he ran well into his 70s.

John and Judy were a constant presence in Essex and the neighboring communities for 60 plus years. He coached both his sons in Little League

baseball and beyond. Long after his sons had moved on from Little League, John remained the president of the Essex League, eventually receiving an award from Little League Baseball for his longtime service. Nothing pleased him more than seeing or hearing from one of his former players and catching up on how they were doing. John was present for every one of his sons' soccer, basketball, and baseball games throughout high school. He has continued to do the same with his grandkids, and been a constant presence at Valley Regional baseball, volleyball, and other events for years.

John went back to running later in life and competed for many years in countless 5K and 10K road races, as well several marathons, including multiple runs at the New York City Marathon, the Marine Corps Marathon, and the Newport Marathon.

John was a selfless volunteer who was very involved in Friends in Service Here (FISH), a local organization that coordinates rides to and from medical appointments, serving as a driver, a dispatcher, and its president over the course of many years. In fact, John was still making sure patients throughout the shoreline got to appointments just days before his passing. He was a longtime member of the Essex Rotary Club and served as the club's president. Along with Judy, he was very involved in numerous other volunteer and charitable organizations doing work, or serving in a board capacity, with the Essex Art Association, the Essex Library, the Ivoryton Library, the Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley, and the First Congregational Church of Essex. John was an elected Registrar of Voters in Essex and held that position for many years. He was very proud to serve the Town he loved so much and cherished the friendships he had at the Town Hall. He continued to work the elections at the Town Hall through last November's local elections.

Above all else, John was a beloved, husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, brother, uncle, and second "dad" to many of his kids' local and college friends. We take comfort knowing that John has now joined Judy, his wife of more than 60 years. John leaves two sons, Richard "Dick" Heiser and his wife Kathryn of Pittsburgh, PA; and Theodore "Ted" Heiser and his wife

Catherine of Chester, CT; a sister-in-law, Jean Nathan and her husband Howard of San Diego, CA; a brother-in-law, Hugh Richard "Dick" McCann and his wife Lynn of Long Boat Key, FL; four grandchildren, Emma Kathryn Heiser, Genevieve "Vivi" Heiser, John "Finn" Heiser and Sara "Sadie" Heiser; and six nieces and nephews. His longtime friends from high school, college, work, and the local community are too numerous to name, but you all know how much he loved you.

John was the quintessential New Englander who never let the weather impact his plans and passionately, if not somewhat obsessively, celebrated the Boston Red Sox and UConn sports, especially women's and men's basketball, attending several Final Fours with Judy. He loved and rarely missed attending his grandkids' sports, dance, and theatre events and was seen at virtually every one of those events until his passing.

John was simply tireless and never seemed to stop moving forward until his sudden passing. He lived life in perpetual motion, always with a positive purpose, and an innate and unwavering commitment to being involved and helping others. His life will be measured by the thousands of little things he selflessly and quietly did and accomplished for his family, friends, and the community. John's constant grace, kindness, patience, and pure motivations are a constant lesson to his family.

A Memorial Service will be celebrated on Saturday (February 21, 2026) at 1:00 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Essex, 6 Methodist Hill, Essex. There are no calling hours. A reception for those able to attend will be held immediately following the Memorial Service at a local establishment to be announced. John will be buried with Judy and next to his mother overlooking the Connecticut River in a private service in the River View Cemetery in Essex.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, 49 Main Street, Middletown, CT, 06457 for the Judith M. Heiser Memorial Scholarship Fund (payments can be made to CFMC with a

designation to the scholarship fund), or to FISH at 3 Bank Lane, Essex, CT 06426. Carlson Funeral Home, New Britain is assisting with arrangements. Please share a memory or note of sympathy at www.carlsonfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Funeral Service

FEB 21. 1:00 PM (ET)

First Congregational Church of Essex
6 Methodist Hill
Essex, CT 06426

Tribute Wall

JT

“ I had the pleasure of knowing John through his service on the Board of the Essex Library as well as his work with FISH. He was unfailingly helpful, friendly and supportive, and there aren't enough people in the world with his appetite and gift for selfless public service. He was a big figure in our town, and will be missed.

JENNY LYNN TRIPP - February 25 at 04:40 PM

AZ

“ Ann Zeender lit a candle in memory of John V. Heiser



Ann Zeender - February 19 at 03:06 PM

AZ

Rest in Peace

Ann Zeender - February 19 at 03:43 PM