



John Lesko

January 11, 2026

John Lesko peacefully passed away on Sunday, January 11th, 2026, in High Point, NC, surrounded by family.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Lesko; his brother, Peter Lesko; his sister, Bernie Kirch; his children, Jack (Holly) Lesko, Jim (Kim) Lesko, and Maria (Mike) Maul; his grandchildren, Christinia Maul, Juliana Maul, Nick (Amy) Maul, Sam (Lindsay) Lesko, and Teig Lesko; and his great-grandchildren, Patrick Maul and Paige Maul. He was preceded in death by his mother, Mildred Lesko; his father, John Lesko; his brothers, Joe Lesko, Mike Lesko, and Jim Lesko; and his sister, Barbara Lesko.

John attended St. Wendelin's grade school and high school. After graduating, he enlisted in the United States Navy in 1955 and served with distinction until 1959. During nearly four years of service, he achieved the rank of Aviation Electronics Technician Second Class. As an Aviation Electronics Technician, he maintained and repaired advanced radar, navigation, and communication systems aboard naval aircraft, gaining expertise that would shape his professional life. After his service in the US Navy, he attended the University of Pittsburgh, PA, where he earned an Electrical Engineering degree in 1962. Following graduation, John married his wife of 63 years, Mary Ann, and moved to Maryland, where he began his career at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. He worked there until 2004. His engineering work involved planning, designing, and building satellite systems for projects such as Nimbus, Earth Resources Technology, the Hubble Space Telescope, and

Earth Observation Satellites. He also worked in the Aeronomy and Meteorology Divisions and the Engineering Division.

John's contributions to these programs helped save lives through weather warnings and search-and-rescue, protected public health by supporting the ozone layer treaty, contributed to food security through agricultural monitoring, and advanced human knowledge of both Earth and the universe. These contributions continue to benefit society today through ongoing satellite operations and programs.

In 1994, John received one of NASA's most prestigious honors, the Silver Snoopy Award, for his role in the historic Hubble repair mission. The Silver Snoopy is unique among NASA awards because it is personally presented by astronauts to recognize individuals who have made exceptional contributions to human spaceflight safety or mission success.

In 2004, John and Mary Ann retired to Lake Norman, NC, and are now residents at Pennybyrn Retirement Community in High Point, NC.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, January 20 from 10:00-11:00 AM with a service following at 11:00 AM at St. Therese Catholic Church, Mooresville. Burial will follow the service at 2:30 PM at Salisbury National Cemetery.

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory, Mooresville, is serving the Lesko family. Condolences may be made to the family at www.cavin-cook.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Therese Catholic Church
217 Brawley School Road
 Mooresville, NC 28117

Mass

JAN 20. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Therese Catholic Church
217 Brawley School Road
 Mooresville, NC 28117

Graveside

JAN 20. 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Salisbury National Cemetery
501 Statesville Blvd
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall

PF

“ Patti & Gary Schmaltz & Principe Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lesko.

Patti & Gary Schmaltz & Principe Family - January 19 at 12:38 PM

PF

“ Patti & Gary Schmaltz & Principe Family purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of John Lesko.



Patti & Gary Schmaltz & Principe Family - January 19 at 12:38 PM

CF

“ Carol lesko & family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of John Lesko.



Carol lesko & family - January 17 at 06:30 PM



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



January 16 at 02:27 PM

JL

“ 1 file added to the album Dad



Jack Lesko - January 14 at 04:58 PM

JS

“ I have many fond memories of Uncle Jack. As my Dad's eldest brother he really looked up to him. My Dad Joseph was very proud of his big brother and always spoke often of him and in high regard. Even though we lived on the other side of the country (“The Left Coast Leskos” as Uncle Jack would tease) we got to see him a lot while I was growing up. Uncle Jack came to Southern California often for his work. I loved driving around with my Dad and his Brother to all the Aerospace companies in our area. Sometimes he would even bring Aunt Mary Ann and my three cousins. Great memories of our time together visiting their house back East as well. I will never forget all the fun times we had together growing up. Much love and prayers for you all for comfort and peace in this very difficult time. I was glad I got to see Uncle Jack not too long ago at my Dad's Memorial.

Jennifer Carol Lesko Schults - January 14 at 03:57 PM