

John Remley was born November 29, 1954 and died Thursday last week one month short of his 56th birthday. I like to think that when John died our Mother welcomed him with open arms expressing love and joy.

I am bewildered about why John had to suffer as much as he apparently did this past year while he was in two long-term care hospitals. I have spent much of my adult life trying to figure out God's plans – in recent years I have realized that is an impossible thing to do.

I am very grateful to God for putting him into Edgar and Mary's family. John was truly a special gift to us.

My memories of John when he was a small boy are that he was all about joy and love. I can remember the joy I felt playing and wrestling with John – that feeling stays with me all these years.

And then, when John was 8 or 9 years, he contracted a horrible bone infection in his leg. He was in excruciating pain. He came home after the infection was cured by the latest generation antibiotic.

Why did John have to go through that? Selfishly, one of the reasons may be that I and others could see my Father being so loving in his care of John. Dad made a special bed for John so that he could be transported to either another room or outside under the sun. John was confined to the bed for several months and then had to learn to walk again.

As our family increased in size Dad and Mom made the difficult decision to place John back into a Lanterman outbuilding residence. When the State closed Lanterman, John lived in a series of four or five group homes. John became very close friends with almost all of his roommates. He was especially close to several. And, he captured the hearts of many of his care givers.

As John grew older I sensed a slight guardedness in him that was probably a result of his childhood illness. But, he always seemed to have a special sweetness, plus a strength of spirit.

We thank you, God, for John's life.