



## Mr. John Monroe Colyer, Jr.

March 24, 1961 - April 24, 2016

John Monroe Colyer, Jr., of Florence, South Carolina, died on Sunday, April 24, 2016. He was born on March 24, 1961, the son of John Monroe and Virginia Snapp Colyer at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. His father's military assignments took him as a small boy to live in Japan and London, finally settling in Woodburn, Oregon. He loved all kinds of music, sports, the Oregon Ducks, and was the captain of his football and baseball teams. In 1983 he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Southern Oregon State University.

John said he was very fortunate to have been recruited from college by Sonoco, a great company with fine people. After moving around the world with Sonoco, he was eventually able to make Florence and Hartsville his beloved home.

He had a genuine love for life. He travelled the world and was excited to experience new cultures and people. He was a passionate hiker and adventurer and in quiet moments spent time gardening or enjoying music. But he was happiest spending time with his family and friends.

John loved challenges and climbing mountains. His bright blue eyes and cheerful smile would cheer up anyone anywhere, in all situations – from hiking trails to board rooms. He had a unique ability to focus and be fully present with whomever he was with and whatever he was doing. Whether at work or play, John wanted to make sure everyone was doing well and having fun.

Following a distinguished 33-year career John retired from Sonoco as Senior

Vice President of Global Industrial Converted Products and Protective Solutions where he demonstrated visionary leadership, dedication and a unique ability to grow a business. He was active in numerous industry associations and served on the Board of Directors of the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics Foundation.

He was the recipient of the Major James Lide Coker Award for Leadership from Sonoco, which honors individuals who embrace change and support individuals and teams in their career and personal development, while consistently displaying leadership and courage, leaving a lasting impression on Sonoco and its people.

It was often said that no one exemplified superior leadership more than John Colyer. He never followed the status quo, in life or at work. He spent his entire working life at Sonoco, working his way up from the warehouse to the board room. Along the way, he asked the tough questions and took the time to compassionately mentor people, leading the company into the future.

John's most difficult mountain to climb was his battle with cancer, during which time he never ceased to have strength, love for everyone, praise and trust in God. He will be remembered as an extraordinary man, with a loving heart, physical, mental, and emotional strength, courage, and relentless optimism.

John is survived by his loving wife, Karen Pace Colyer of Florence; son, Jonathan of Edwardsville, IL; daughter, Katie and her husband, Derek Blair, of Carthage, NY; brother, Jeff, and his wife Xiao Yan of Granbury, TX; and his grandson, Cole Jonathan, son of Katie and Derek.

A visitation will be held on Friday, May 13th from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at Brown Pennington Atkins Funeral Home in Hartsville, SC. A memorial service celebrating John's extraordinary life will be held in Florence, SC on May 14th at 2:00 pm at the First Baptist Church. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to the Robert Preston Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke University; the SC Governor's School for Science and Mathematics Foundation and the First Baptist Church of Florence.



# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 13. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home  
306 W. Home Ave.  
Hartsville, SC 29550  
(843) 332-6531  
info@bpafuneralhome.com  
<http://www.bpafuneralhome.com>

## Service

MAY 14. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Baptist Church Florence  
300 S. Irby St.  
Florence, SC 29501

# Tribute Wall



“ *Brown - Pennington - Atkins Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. John Monroe Colyer, Jr.*



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**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - May 12, 2016 at 06:08 PM



“ *Brown - Pennington - Atkins Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. John Monroe Colyer, Jr.*



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**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - April 26, 2016 at 03:14 PM

MW

*I lost a great friend and mentor on Sunday. Words cannot express all that John did for me both personally and professionally. He lives now in my memories, and makes me smile.*

*Mark Whittington  
Former Elkay employee and colleague.*

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**mark whittington** - April 29, 2016 at 10:46 AM

EI

“ So very sad in so many ways...love, Sissy

Eileen - December 21, 2016 at 12:19 PM

HS

“ My heart is broken over the lost of my good friend, John. John was the catalyst for our small group of friends who regularly met on Thursday nights for wine and fellowship. He introduced us to new adventures and venues. Through John, we learned to appreciate good wine, how to enjoy and appreciate all types of music (yes, even hard rock, head banging music, which was his favorite) and how to just sit in his back yard and enjoy conversations on all topics. We were just a group of good friends who enjoyed our time together. John guided us through Napa Valley showing us the craft of wine making and the beauty of wine country. We went to concerts that I never imagined myself at. John was compassionate, understanding, a great leader, tremendous asset to Sonoco and a true friend. We will truly miss him

Our love and prayers go out to Karen, Katie and Johnathan. We were thrilled to meet his beloved Karen and he talked about Katie and Johnathan so much that we feel like we know you. It is so sad that he didn't get to meet his first grandchild. Just know that he will always be watching over his loving family.

We will always remember -

THE GIRLS

Helen Sherrill - May 13, 2016 at 01:03 PM

MC

“ Leaders who give the best of themselves get the best from others.

*My thoughts and prayers are with the family.*

*Sadly missed by all.*

*Mark Chenhall.*

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**Mark Chenhall** - May 12, 2016 at 07:45 PM

KI

“ Thoughts and Prayers to the family. John loved life and those he touched became better because of it. Kathy Isom

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**kathy isom** - May 11, 2016 at 08:27 PM

JG

“ Am Joe Gomez John was a Grate Friend I first met John in Chicago when he was a plant manager. I new him to be very straight shooter he always made sure that you understand where are Gold was and what we needed to accomplish. He was one of the best leaders and he will be mist.



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**Joe Gomez** - May 09, 2016 at 09:24 AM

AT

“ My deepest sympathy to the family of John Colyer. He was always happy and always took the time to stop by my office when on the hall to speak and chat a few minutes. I admired him as a leader and his love for his busy schedule traveling all over the world for Sonoco. John will be missed.

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**Abby Tyner** - May 09, 2016 at 08:36 AM

RJ

“ Sorry to hear about Mr Colyer. I met him while working at Sonoco. It was an honor to have known such a nice man who always smiled and was very successful. I know he will b greatly missed. Prayers to the family that you will find comfort and peace thru the days ahead. Cherish your memories and they will get you thru this. Rip,my friend



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**Rhonda Jones-Norton** - May 04, 2016 at 05:23 AM

LA

“ Long time ago, I was a new engineer in our Mexico City plant, and John was the Area Manufacturing Manager. John visited Mexico often, and always made the point of stopping by my desk and chat, he supported our projects and celebrated our small successes. Years later, I crossed paths with him in USA and Asia, he always had a smile and encouraging words for me. He contributed to so many lives in Sonoco, he will be missed.

*from Laura Buen Abad*

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**Laura Buen Abad** - May 02, 2016 at 10:33 AM

LL

“ R.I.P. my friend! You will be greatly missed as a friend and fellow employee. May your family find peace through God's grace and love.

*from Laura Lester*

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**Laura Lester** - May 02, 2016 at 10:33 AM

AN

“ John will be truly missed. At one time, he was the area Manager for our plant in Henderson, KY. He took the time to talk and discuss no just business related topics, but he took the time to get to know us and to even share a piece of himself. We both had a love for rock bands AC/DC and Metallica. I am so sorry for your loss. He made a positive impact in so many ways. May that knowledge and the loving memories you have of him, give you comfort and peace during the difficult days ahead.

*From Angie Newcom, Sonoco Products Company, Henderson, KY*

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**Angie Newcom** - May 02, 2016 at 10:32 AM

RS

“ As you may have heard, John Colyer passed away [Sunday, April 24]. John selflessly served our company since 1983, with visionary leadership and dedication.

*Before he retired last month, we presented John with the Major James Lide Coker Award for Leadership at the Global Operating Summit. The award honors individuals who embrace change and support individuals and teams in their career and personal development - and those who consistently display leadership and courage, leaving a lasting impression on our company and our people. No one exemplified these traits more than John Colyer.*

*John never followed the status quo, in life or at Sonoco. He spend his entire working life at Sonoco, working his way from Warehouse Manager to Senior Vice President. Along the way, he asked the tough questions and he took the time to compassionately mentor people, leading our company into the future.*

*The award's inscription reads: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." That statement truly describes John's philosophy, which is why so many people will miss him.*

*Every now and then, you meet someone like John Colyer, with leadership and managerial skills that are truly extraordinary. Every now and then, you meet someone so complete, you wish you could be more like them. Every now and then, you're lucky enough to call such a person a friend. We'll all miss our friend and colleague.*

*From Roger Schrum*

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**Roger Schrum** - May 02, 2016 at 10:32 AM

ST

“ On behalf of the Paperboard Specialties team I want to extend our personal condolences to John and his family at this time. Although we reported to John for just a short period of time, we found his honesty and candor refreshing. John was always an encourager and supporter of our team and we will never forget him. May we all remember his enthusiasm and love of Sonoco and life in general!

*from Smitty Thomas - Sonoco Paperboard Specialties*

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**Smitty Thomas** - May 02, 2016 at 10:31 AM

CH

“ I first met John at one of Bill Wheless's communication training courses right after I joined Sonoco in 1992. His ice-breaker was about the experience of owning a Lexus, and how that fantastic customer service was something that Sonoco should emulate. I'm so sorry to hear of his passing.

*from Catherine Romaine Henderson*

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**Catherine Romaine Henderson** - May 02, 2016 at 10:31 AM

AV

“ John was truly one of the 'good guys.' His encouragement and support to many, myself included, was widely felt. My heart is heavy knowing John is gone. Many prayers and healing wishes to his family.

*from Alice Vasseur*

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**Alice Vasseur** - May 02, 2016 at 10:31 AM

MH

“ It was an honor and privilege to know John and work with him. He will be truly missed by many. Rest in peace, John. My prayers and thoughts are with his family during this trying time.

*from Michelle Hoffman*

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**Michelle Hoffman** - May 02, 2016 at 10:30 AM

AW

“ Sonoco Carrollton, TX Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John Monroe Colyer.



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**Alicia Womack** - May 02, 2016 at 09:54 AM

SP

“ Sonoco Products - Jamesburg Plant purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of John Monroe Colyer.



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**Sonoco Products - Jamesburg Plant** - May 02, 2016 at 09:54 AM

JG

“ I am retired Sonoco de Mexico ex employee and served under John for many years, leading the Méxican Sonoco Organization as vicepresident. I know that same as I am, all the people here in México that had the opportunity to know and work with John, are very sad and will always remember him as the great leader he was and all he did to help Sonoco grow in this country. Good by also to a great Chicago Bears fan!

*Descansa en paz, amigo John*

*Javier García*

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**Javier Garcia** - May 02, 2016 at 09:53 AM

CS

“ I am working at Sonoco HQ Brussels, Belgium for many years now but only knew John for a few ones when he was Senior VP Global Industrial Products. I, then had a chance to meet him and it was always a pleasure to welcome John here in Brussels. He always came with a smile, had a kind word and was "simple and cool". He was dedicated to the company and his job and certainly was one of our best leader -- for sure, a man of his time, a noble-hearted man.

*Tu nous manqueras ... Repose en Paix, cher John.*

*Cathy Schmit*

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**Cathy Schmit** - May 02, 2016 at 09:50 AM

NM

“ Nancy Minter lit a candle in memory of Mr. John Monroe Colyer, Jr.



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**Nancy Minter** - May 02, 2016 at 06:41 AM



“ *Maggie Reidy lit a candle in memory of Mr. John Monroe Colyer, Jr.*



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**Maggie Reidy** - May 01, 2016 at 06:14 PM

RA

“ *John Colyer was clearly a man of international reach. I was always impressed with his ease and capability when it came to any complicated situation. He was decisive and strong-minded. He possessed a practical knack for problem solving, and was a tremendous listener.*

*But what I adored most about John was his clear passion for life, for the people he loved, for good wine, for sports, and for cultivating real camaraderie in any gathering. This was a guy who knew how to enjoy himself; his home is a clear reflection of his love for atmosphere, for natural beauty....and for spoiling his guests.*

*I had truly hoped I would have years - a lifetime - to enjoy his friendship as the precious and revered husband of my dear friend, Karen. Instead I had the bittersweet privilege of bearing witness to a man who lived with strength, dignity, determination and tremendous love, even through the darkest and worst days I can possibly imagine.*

*I will miss his big, warm, welcoming smile, his deep commanding voice, his humor, his hospitality, his sense of adventure....his presence. I will remember him.*

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**Robin Rison Ashworth** - April 30, 2016 at 02:54 PM

SO

“ *Sonoco Products - Jamesburg Plant purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of John Monroe Colyer.*  
*Sonoco Products - Jamesburg Plant - April 26 at 02:01 PM*

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**Sonoco** - April 29, 2016 at 03:06 PM

AL

“ *Sonoco Carrollton, TX Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John Monroe Colyer.*  
*Alicia Womack - April 26 at 12:04*

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**Alicia** - April 29, 2016 at 03:05 PM

SO

“ *Sonoco Products - Jamesburg Plant, Alicia Womack sent flowers to the family of John Monroe Colyer.*

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**sonoco** - April 29, 2016 at 03:05 PM

JA

“ *I am retired Sonoco de Mexico ex employee and served under John for many years, leading the Mexican Sonoco Organization as vicepresident. I know that same as I am, all the people here in México that had the opportunity to know and work with John, are very sad and will always remember him as the great leader he was and all he did to help Sonoco grow in this country. Good by also to a great Chicago Bears fan!*

*Descansa en paz, amigo John*

*Javier García*

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**Javier** - April 29, 2016 at 03:04 PM

CA

“ I am working at Sonoco HQ Brussels, Belgium for many years now but only knew John for a few ones when he was Senior VP Global Industrial Products. I, then had a chance to meet him and it was always a pleasure to welcome John here in Brussels. He always came with a smile, had a kind word and was "simple and cool". He was dedicated to the company and his job and certainly was one of our best leader -- for sure, a man of his time, a noble-hearted man.

*Tu nous manqueras ... Repose en Paix, cher John.*

*Cathy Schmit*

*Cathy Schmit - 6 hours ago*

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**Cathy** - April 29, 2016 at 03:04 PM

KC

“ 3 files added to the album *Climb every mountain*



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**Karen Colyer** - April 29, 2016 at 11:55 AM

BC

“ I had the pleasure of working with John for a number of years. His passing is a great loss to all of us who were privileged to have known him.

*Bernie Campbell*

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**Bernie Campbell** - April 28, 2016 at 01:12 PM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



Jeff Colyer - April 28, 2016 at 10:26 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



Jeff Colyer - April 28, 2016 at 10:25 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



Jeff Colyer - April 28, 2016 at 10:24 AM



*John walking his precious daughter, Katie, on her wedding day, May 23, 2015.*

Karen Colyer - May 01, 2016 at 10:15 PM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:23 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:21 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:21 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:20 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:19 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:19 AM

JC

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of my Brother*



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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:18 AM

JC

“ *John, thanks for being there! You were the greatest friend I ever had and the best brother I could have ever asked for. Am so proud of what you accomplished in life and how you went about doing it. You are forever in my heart and I will hold on to all the great memories we shared. You did well big BROTHER and I love you and miss you more than these words can say.....*

*Your little brother....*

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**Jeff Colyer** - April 28, 2016 at 10:14 AM

SH

“ *We are so sorry. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Karen, and family, as you mourn John's passing from this life to be with our Eternal Father. We pray that your faith will help you get through these difficult times.*

*"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me: Your rod and your staff, they comfort me."*

*Psalm 23:4*

*Suzanne & Henry Hayes*

*Statesville, NC*

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**Suzanne Hayes** - April 28, 2016 at 09:31 AM

MM

“ Sorry for your loss. I worked with John at Sonoco and he was well liked by all.

Marlene McConnell - April 28, 2016 at 09:27 AM

CS

“ Although Perry and I only had one visit with John, a little over a year and a half ago, we could sense what a great person he was and what a perfect husband he would be for my great-niece, Karen. We were so happy to begin thinking with them about their spring wedding--and then so devastated to hear he had been struck down suddenly with that brain tumor! We all prayed so continually that a miracle would happen, but now that the tumor has won, we are so relieved to know he is free from the pain and suffering and in such a better place. Our prayers are with you Karen, as well as with the rest of his family. -- Charlotte and Perry Sprawls, Montreat, NC

Charlotte and Perry Sprawls - April 27, 2016 at 08:43 PM

CW

“ So sorry to hear of John's passing A true gentlemen and proud to call him a friend.  
Carl Watkins (Retired Sonoco employee)



Carl Watkins - April 27, 2016 at 09:44 AM

JB

“ So sad to be posting this, such a dear kind friend who accepted all walks of life. I'm not a Sonoco employee, but was a dear friend who shared fun times with an incredible man. Prayers for sweet Karen & John's children. PLEASE LET GOD walk you through these trying times, love to all.

Jill beckham - April 26, 2016 at 06:50 PM