



John Lester Champlin Jr.

September 5, 1946 - May 18, 2026

John Lester Champlin Jr. was born on September 5, 1946, in Westerly, Rhode Island, to John Lester Champlin Sr. and Margarite Jane DePerry Champlin. He passed away leaving behind a legacy of family, friendship, leadership, and service to his community.

John was the oldest of three boys and shared his life with his brothers, Richard George Champlin and the late Edward Douglas Champlin, as well as his sisters, Cheryl Thies and Melissa Champlin.

He spent much of his youth enjoying the beaches and ocean life of beautiful Westerly, Rhode Island. He loved adventure and fun, water skiing in the ocean, building his own small boat, and spending time with many lifelong friends. One of his favorite stories was skipping school with a friend to fly to the 1964 New York World's Fair. He graduated from Westerly High School. At a young age, John married Rose Mary Smith, and together they were blessed with three children: John Lester Champlin III, James Edward Champlin, and Jodie Beth Champlin.

John was a hardworking provider and a gifted businessman. While attending the University of Rhode Island, he became the youngest manager in the history of W. T. Grant at the age of 19. As his career advanced, the family relocated several times, moving from Westerly, Rhode Island, to Plainville, Connecticut, where he developed a training program used in W. T. Grant restaurants throughout the country. Further promotions took the family to Nashua, New Hampshire, and eventually to Los Angeles, California, where he

served as Regional Manager. Following his time with W. T. Grant, John began a successful career with Arby's as a District Manager overseeing seven western states. He formed many lifelong friendships during his years with Arby's and was later promoted to Vice President of Operations for RTM Restaurant Group, which operated more than 200 Arby's Restaurants. This promotion brought the family to Atlanta, Georgia, to work at the Arby's home office.

Later, John moved to Muskogee, Oklahoma, for an opportunity to purchase Fast Food Systems, which owned the Tastee-Freez franchise rights for Oklahoma, Arkansas, northern Texas, and parts of Kansas, overseeing approximately 150 units. He later purchased Jasper's Restaurant and spent decades building it into one of the premier restaurants in the region. Jasper's proudly served the community for 35 years before his retirement.

Throughout his career, John employed hundreds of people and became known for his commitment to service excellence, mentorship, and strong leadership. Even in retirement, he continued giving back to the community through Grace Episcopal Church, where he helped develop the church meal program and assisted in designing an efficient catering kitchen to provide meals to the elderly and those in need.

John later married Sharon Kay Falling, and together they welcomed their daughter, Jacqueline Kay.

John loved traveling, gathering with family and friends, and spending time with his beloved church family at Grace Episcopal Church. He will be remembered for his generosity, humor, leadership, and unwavering love for those around him.

John is survived by his wife, Sharon, of the home; his children, John Lester Champlin III and wife Leann of Tombstone, Arizona; James Edward Champlin and partner Jorge of Phoenix, Arizona; and Jacqueline Champlin-Smith and husband Logan of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

He is also survived by eight grandchildren: Stephen Champlin and wife Jessica, David John Champlin and wife Kate, Grayson Champlin, Caleb

Swaringim and wife Kallie, Brooke James and partner Brandi, Halle Swaringim-Daniels, Casler Dalati and husband Jabreel, and Rosemary Champlin; along with thirteen plus one on the way great-grandchildren. Additional survivors include his brother, Richard George Champlin of Brisbane, Australia; his sisters, Cheryl Darlene Theis and husband Kurt of Middleton, Massachusetts; and Melissa Champlin and her wife of Lanai, Hawaii.

John was preceded in death by his parents, John and Marge Champlin; his daughter, Jodie Beth Swaringim-Champlin; and his brother, Edward Champlin. Pallbearers will be his grandsons: Stephen Champlin, David John Champlin, Grayson Champlin, And Caleb Swaringim. Honorary Pallbearers: Charles Mason, Dr. John Freie, Ronnie Thorpe, Rick Hicks, and Cary Pruitt
A Celebration of Life service will be held at 11AM, Saturday, May 30, 2026 at Grace Episcopal Church with reception to follow. Instead flowers a donation to Grace's Meals on Wings or to Clarehouse (Hospice) in Tulsa would be greatly appreciated.

Upcoming Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 30. 11:00 AM (CT)

Grace Episcopal Church
218 N. 6th Street
Muskogee, OK 74401