

John Thomas Hodge of Parker, Colorado, died June 14th at the age of 85. He was born November 23, 1940, in Lanett, Alabama to R.B. and Corrie Hodge. John married Claydene Doebelin in 1973 and they just celebrated 53 years of married life. In addition to his wife, he leaves behind two sons, Andrew and wife, Olivia, of Germany, and Cameron and wife Heidi of Colorado. He was a proud Grandpa to four grandchildren. Wyatt (12), Colette (10), Harper (10) and Charlotte (8). He loved keeping up with their activities and sporting events and watching them when he could.

John's love of flying started at an early age flying June bugs tied to thread, making kites from newspaper and building model airplanes. He would ride his bike to his hometown airport just to hang around the pilots and watch the planes. He saved and got his pilot license at an early age, which led to a lifelong career doing what he enjoyed. His aviation career took many unique paths. He flew the San Diego Padres Baseball team to their games for four seasons, Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones on their 1981 U. S. concert tour, Ronald Reagan when he was campaigning for President, as well as Mrs. Olive Beech of Beech Aircraft to name a few. He was a pilot for Continental Airlines and later flew all over the world with Polar Air Cargo. When his piloting career ended, he joined the Federal Aviation Administration and served as a Safety Inspector, was on the National Simulator Team and Air Crew Program Manager for the 757/767 fleet for United Airlines until his retirement in 2011. After retirement he became the self-appointed patriarch of the cul-de-sac plowing sidewalks and driveways after snowstorms and mowing any grass he thought needed cutting.

Funeral Services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 18, 2026, at Pickering Funeral Home.

Visitation will be on Saturday, July 18, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the service at the funeral home.

The family requests memorial donations be made to the Laddonia Cemetery or Tunnel to Towers. Memorials may be sent in care of Pickering Funeral Home, 403 N. Western, Mexico, MO 65265.

Celebrating the Life of John Hodge



In Memory Of John Thomas Hodge

High Flight

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, — and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of — wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air. . .*

*Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew —
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.*

~ John Gillespie Magee, Jr

Date of Birth

November 23, 1940

Date of Passing

June 14, 2026

Funeral Services

11:00 a.m. Saturday, July 18, 2026

Pickering Funeral Home
Mexico, Missouri

Officiating

Pastor Bob Stanford

Music

“Over the Rainbow” - Judy Garland
“On Eagle’s Wings” - Walkers to Heaven
“Through the Years” - Kenny Rogers
“My Way” - Frank Sinatra

Pallbearer

Wyatt Hodge

Interment

Laddonia Cemetery
Laddonia, Missouri

Entrusted to the care of:
Pickering Funeral Home, 403 N. Western, Mexico, MO 65265