

**PASSING OF FORMER CAROLINE COUNTY COMMISSIONER
JOHN W. "JACK" COLE**

Former Caroline County Commissioner John "Jack" W. Cole, 69, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, June 16.

Mr. Cole served as a Commissioner for 14 years beginning in 1996. After receiving a gubernatorial appointment to complete an unfinished term, he subsequently won three consecutive elections in 1998, 2002, and 2006. Mr. Cole served with distinction as the President of Board of County Commissioners during each of his four-year terms and is remembered fondly by County employees as a champion of public service. During his tenure, he strove to increase public understanding of County government and to enhance appreciation of County employees.

A lifelong Caroline resident, Mr. Cole was deeply dedicated to preserving the County's rich rural heritage. He served a member of the Planning Commission and helped to craft innovative programs that continue to balance the competing interests of green space conservation and individual property rights. A passionate and articulate advocate for keeping Caroline the "Green Garden County," Mr. Cole was a standard bearer for local agricultural land preservation. Through his efforts and those of other local leaders, Caroline County has more than 40,000 acres of permanently preserved land and ranks as one of the top counties in the state for land preservation.

Mr. Cole often said that the best part of his job was the ability to work with and for the young people of the county. During his time as Commissioner, he represented the County on the Caroline Human Services Council, the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, and the 4-H and Youth Park Board. Mr. Cole loved visiting local schools and Recreation and Parks programs. In his retirement years, he became a substitute teacher to continue his legacy of working with young people.

As a County official, Mr. Cole also led the effort to support local school construction and renovation. Among the projects accomplished during his three-and-a-half terms were renovations of North Caroline High School, Federalsburg Elementary School, and Colonel Richardson Middle School. Perhaps no single undertaking represents Mr. Cole's legacy as well as the County's acquisition of the old Armory in Denton and its renovation into the Fretterd Community Center. This lovingly restored building combines three of Mr. Cole's passions: youth, historic preservation, and public service.

The County government joins Mr. Cole's family, friends, and the Caroline community in mourning his loss. The County Commissioners extend their deepest sympathies to Mr. Cole's family have ordered County flags be flown at half mast to honor the memory of his public service.

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