

NOV - 5 2020

November 1, 2020

To the Select Board and Planning Board,

Innovative, dedicated, reliable, humble. These are just a few of the many words that describe our late husband and father, John V. Garstka, a past Highway Superintendent of 36 years in the town of Southampton.

**John was respected and admired.** The man who built 60 miles of roadway in the town of Southampton, gave the town much to think about and much to replace when he announced his retirement in 1984. Chairman of the selectmen at the time, James D. Carey, stated that "we can't replace his skill, energy, and enthusiasm." [but] "we wish him nothing but the best because nobody deserves it more than John Garstka." He dedicated his life to the town of Southampton, ensuring that roads, schools, and housing developments were cleared in the winter time, working through the night with very little manpower. In the other seasons, he'd spend time building and paving roads to the highest of quality. Former employee, Frank Kaleta, mentioned that "he is a tough man, a real perfectionist, but there isn't a better man to work for."

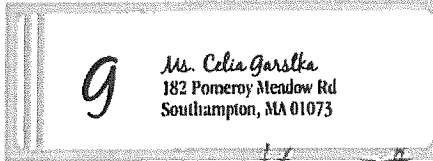
**John was innovative and creative.** After countless hours spent building roads and vast amounts of blacktop wasted using a grader and blade, he decided it was time for a change. He invented an Asphalt Paving Box, or the "Magic Box" as it was commonly referred to, using materials found at the highway yard. The magic box helped to spread blacktop in a more efficient fashion- ensuring that roads were spread straight, smooth and level. In addition to the magic box, he also invented the Patch Pan, a device that hooked onto the back of a truck to make pothole filling safer. Both ingenuities were used in several other communities.

**John was dependable and reliable.** There is much to be said about a man who is hard to replace due to their remarkable and meticulous work ethic. Edward Youmell, selectman at the time, mentioned, "if you have someone who did such a tremendous job, and that you depended on, like we did with John, you hate to lose him." After announcing his retirement, many people in town felt that no one could immediately replace his experience and knowledge of the towns newly built or reconstructed roads, and they were correct. Even after retirement, he ensured that the town would remain in good hands and under his watchful eye and ear until they found a replacement for him. He continued to make himself available to the town even after stepping out of his role as Highway Superintendent.

**Most of all, John was humble.** Anyone who was lucky enough to know him, recognizes that he was a quiet, but hardworking man. He worked assiduously for the town and others while never asking for any favors in return. Therefore, we would be doing him an extreme disservice if we didn't ask for something on his behalf.

Upon the completion of the new bridge on East Street, we would be honored if you would consider naming the bridge after John V. Garstka, providing that the bridge hasn't already be named. After all he has given to the town of Southampton, we feel that his name should be recognized and remembered for all he has done for the town that he loved, and the town that loved him.

Sincerely,  
The family of John V. Garstka



*Celia Garstka*  
*Corinne P. Garstka*