



Eugene Ronald Massey

April 18, 1936 - February 11, 2023

Eugene “Gene” Massey, a lifelong resident of St. Ignace died, Saturday, February 11, 2023, at the age of 86. He passed peacefully, surrounded by his loving family. He was born on April 18th, 1936, in Detroit, Michigan, to Lloyd and Elma (Latva) Massey.

Gene graduated from LaSalle High School in 1954. He was a gifted athlete and earned many varsity letters and honors during his high school years. After graduation, he enlisted in the US Army. He spent the majority of his service time at Fort Knox. During his military tenure, he was selected as a member of Honor Guard Detail and became the captain and drill master of the 5- and 12-man Honor Guard Drill Teams.

After an honorable discharge from the Army, he relocated to Sault Ste. Marie for a brief time working as a loan officer for Liberty Loans. He was introduced to, Joan Crockett, by a mutual friend and asked her out on a date. After their first date, he found her earrings in the visor of his car. He then realized, she was ‘the one’ he was destined to marry and would refer to her as, ‘the love of his life’. They married on October 29th, 1960, at St. Mary’s Church in Sault Ste. Marie. They soon moved to St. Ignace and it become the permanent residence.

Gene was a member of The St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church and the Sault

Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Always devote to his church, he served as an usher, lector, Eucharist Minister and taught religious education classes for several years. He began working at the Mackinac Bridge Authority in 1963 as a Toll Collector and retired as the Operations Supervisor in 1994. After a 'brief' retirement, he worked Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry Company for 21 years. He was their brochure distributor and public relations ambassador. He finally retired at the age of 80, to 'help Joanie hold down the home front and stay on top of his honey do list', as he would say.

During his time at the Mackinac Bridge, Gene also worked for Pemble Bros. Wholesale, Seldon's Gas Station and refereed high school and college football and basketball. He was extremely proud of being selected as a Michigan High School Athletic Association (MSHAA) football State finals referee for 2 finals. To this day, he and Jim Lamoreaux, hold the MSHAA state record for the longest referring duo. They referred together for over 50 years on the same crew.

Gene was a devoted family man, often working 2-3 jobs at a time, so his wife, Joan, could stay home to care for their two children and their home. He took great joy in providing for his family. He will always be remembered for his work ethic, kind heart, infectious smile, and outgoing personality. He was known to have the "gift to gab" and tell endless stories. He loved talking about sports and telling stories of his military time and the time he spent on the family farm with his beloved grandparents, Henry and Mary Latva and his cousin Jimmy Massey.

Considered a true patriarch by his family, Gene blessed his children and grandchildren with the gifts of hard work, selflessness, kindness to others and a simplicity of life. He left his family with a legacy of faith and family first, to support one another, and the feeling of pure unconditional love by his actions and words. His greatest joy were his three grandsons: William, Patrick, and

Michael. He would follow, “his boys” and their interests from New York to California and everywhere in between to cheer them on and support them.

Gene is survived by his daughter, Ann Massey of St. Ignace; daughter-in-law, Chris Massey of Dyer, Indiana; grandsons, William, Patrick and Michael, sister-in-law, Emma Crockett; uncle, Howard Latva; and many beloved cousins, nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Gene was preceded in death by his wife, Joan Massey; son, Michael Massey; parents, Lloyd and Elma Massey; grandparents, Henry and Mary Latva; brothers-in-law, Charles, Jack, and William Crockett; and sister-in-law, Mary (Crockett) Cleveland.

Services were held on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church in St. Ignace.

His final resting place will be next to Joan at Oaklawn Chapel Gardens in Bruce Township, Michigan, in the spring.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to: Fr. Frank Ricca, Ruby Shaffer, and Kim Hagen.

Galer Funeral Homes & Cremation in Pickford, Michigan is serving the family. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.galerfuneralhomes.com.

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens

15264 South M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **15**. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church
120 Church
St. Ignace, MI 49781

Mass of Christian Burial

FEB **15**. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church
120 Church
St. Ignace, MI 49781

Tribute Wall



“ Eugene Ronald Massey

October 05, 2023 at 09:54 AM



“ Eugene Ronald Massey

October 02, 2023 at 10:14 PM



“ I just wanted to say I ALWAYS found Gene to be just a great guy in every way- down to earth, classy, great family man and yes, super referee also. The rare kind that you couldn't find a single negative thing to say about him if you tried. Glad I knew him and my condolences to his family. (Sorry for the late post, but didn't know right away and then was travelling until a couple days ago)

Tom North - March 16, 2023 at 06:30 PM



“ What a great compassionate human being. He will surely be missed. condolences to Ann Marie and the Family.

Dick Soczek - February 15, 2023 at 11:55 AM



“ Geneva Bentley lit a candle in memory of Eugene Ronald Massey



Geneva Bentley - February 14, 2023 at 10:14 PM

KF

“ Keith Frosland lit a candle in memory of Eugene Ronald Massey



Keith Frosland - February 14, 2023 at 09:52 PM

NP

“ He was a part of our family. So many wonderful memories of him and my Dad. They just didn't miss a beat with each other and it hurts my heart that he gone. I know that he and Joan are reunited and I am sure he is hitting golf balls with my Dad. I am sure my Dad is already teasing him in a way that was missed by each of them. My heart goes out to you all . I wanted to send flowers but he needs more of a tribute from us. I am hoping to donate in is honor to something that was dear to him. If you have something specific please let us know if not I will donate to the sports boosters in remembrance of Gene and Chum. Out hearts are with you all. Nikki and Matt Price (aka) Nikki Frazier

Nicol e Frazier Price - February 14, 2023 at 09:10 PM

RL

“ I'm so sorry for your loss, Ann. Not sure there's ever been a dad so proud of his family! Our thoughts are with you. Hugs

Rick and Clarlyn Ledy - February 13, 2023 at 07:48 PM