



John Ralph LaCoursiere

December 3, 1940 - January 11, 2024

John Ralph LaCoursiere, age 83, of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, entered eternal rest on January 11, 2024. A tribal elder of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Ralph was born on December 3, 1940, in Sault Ste. Marie to parents Walter and Marie (Menard) LaCoursiere.

Ralph grew up between Sault Ste. Marie and his parents' cottage on Sugar Island, Michigan. He attended Loretto Catholic Central High School graduating with the class of 1958. He married his childhood sweetheart, Mary JoAnn (Znamierowski) on August 6, 1960, and they began a family together. After high school, Ralph attended college for a short time before deciding his time was better spent deer hunting on opening day. He found success in helping run his father's business, Soo Gravel & Asphalt, and later took over ownership. He retired from the Operating Engineers Local 139 in Wisconsin and was also a member of Local 324 in Michigan.

Ralph was a founding member of the International 500 Snowmobile Race in Sault Ste. Marie and served in many leadership capacities, including as Race Chairman, over the years. He was very active in the sport and enjoyed race season with his children, family, and friends. Ralph took great pride in being an active member of his community where he was a longtime member of the Elks Lodge, Moose Lodge, Christopher Columbus Italian Society, and Knights of Columbus.

Ralph was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed getting out hunting on opening day. He was known affectionally as grandpa to many, many members of the community and will be dearly missed.

Ralph is survived by his wife, JoAnn; Children, Julie LaCoursiere, Stephen (Denise) LaCoursiere and Scott (Tammy) LaCoursiere; Grandchildren, Jeffrey, Joshua, Justin, Austin, Loni, Jillian, Paul, Randy, Alicia, and Bridgett along with five Great Grandchildren. Sister, Julie (Larry) Peterman; Sister-in Law, Mary Lou LaCoursiere; Cousin, James (Sue) Menard; and nephews, Michael (Sandy) LaCoursiere, Walter (Gretchen) Walsh, Daniel (Denise) Walsh, and Thomas Walsh, as well as many other beloved family members and friends.

Ralph is preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Marie; and brother, Joseph LaCoursiere and grandson, Brian.

A Memorial Gathering will be held at Family Life Funeral Homes, 4951 M-129, in Sault Ste. Marie, on January 16, 2024, from 2-7PM. There will be a Rosary Prayer Service at 6PM. The following day, January 17, 2024, a service at St. Mary's Catholic Church will be held at 11:00am with a luncheon following at the Sault Tribe Niigaanagiizhik Cultural Center.

Memorial Donations in Ralph's honor may be made out to the I-500 Race Committee.

Family Life Funeral Home assisted the family with arrangements.

Condolences may be left to the family at www.galerfuneralhomes.com

Previous Events

Memorial Gathering

JAN 16. 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Sault Ste. Marie
4951 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-4951
flfh@familylifefh.com
<https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/>

Rosary Service

JAN 16. 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Sault Ste. Marie
4951 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-4951
flfh@familylifefh.com
<https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/>

Memorial Mass

JAN 17. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral
377 Maple St
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783-2067

Tribute Wall

RJ

“ Dear Joanne and family, so very sad about the passing of Ralph. Lots of memories of picnics and get togethers on Sugar Island . Such a good guy and he was always fun to be around. So sorry I can't make the service but you will definitely be in my prayers. Have been praying for all of you every day. I understand how hard a sudden loss is but so glad you were with him Joanne. That helped me with Harry. My deepest sympathies and so grateful for the years and times spent in his company.❤️

Ruth Johnston-Pike - January 16, 2024 at 02:12 PM

KK

“ Kristine K. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Ralph LaCoursiere.

Kristine K. - January 16, 2024 at 11:24 AM

KK

“ Our hearts are so very sad with the loss of Ralph. He was a lifelong friend of my mother and became my father's friend also. I was blessed to spend time with he and JoAnn at a few of their class reunions "filling in for my mother" and have such wonderful memories of Ralph. He was an incredible man and loved by so many. Keeping JoAnn and their family in our thought and prayers. Love, Bob Nichols and Kris Kerchen

Kris Kerchen - January 16, 2024 at 11:21 AM

GS

“ Gaylor-Thompson Sales & Service planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Ralph LaCoursiere.

Gaylor-Thompson Sales & Service - January 16, 2024 at 08:41 AM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Ralph LaCoursiere.



January 16, 2024 at 08:41 AM

IC

“ I-500 Race Committee planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Ralph LaCoursiere.

I-500 Race Committee - January 15, 2024 at 06:27 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John Ralph LaCoursiere.



January 15, 2024 at 06:27 PM