



John Richard Sparks

June 28, 1930 - March 30, 2025

John Richard Sparks, age 93, passed away peacefully at Freighter View Assisted Living in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, on March 30, 2025. He was born on June 28, 1930, in Sault Ste. Marie to Edward and Viola (Gooderman) Sparks.

John spent his early years in Sault Ste. Marie and began his service to his country on December 13, 1948, when he joined the National Guard. His commitment to serving led him to enlist in the United States Armed Forces in February 1949. He was stationed in Anchorage, Alaska, and was honorably discharged on September 17, 1952.

John married the love of his life, Isabelle Grace Martin, on November 8, 1952. Together, they raised five children, two sons and three daughter and built a life filled with love, laughter, and cherished memories.

John worked at the tannery; a leather company known for crafting shoe soles in the 1950's. In 1960, he moved his family to Racine, Wisconsin, where he worked as a truck driver. By 1968, John returned to Sault Ste. Marie and began his long career with the Chippewa County Road Commission. He remained a dedicated employee until his retirement in May 1993.

John was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, and

playing cribbage. He especially loved deer hunting and took pride in teaching his sons the art of the hunt from a young age. He was also an exceptional horseshoe player and spent several years competing in a league, earning a reputation as a formidable opponent. A lover of country music, John often listened to the timeless tunes of Hank Williams, Patsy Cline, and Johnny Cash.

John was a member of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

John is survived by sons, Melvin (Susan) Sparks and John (Colleen) Sparks; daughters, Carol (Gary) Maleport and Lisa (Frank) Killips, all of Sault Ste. Marie; grandchildren, Mandy (Dan) Emplit, Domine King, Michelle Shoe, Jenifer Perks, Niki (Brad) Pfluger, Michael Sparks, Jody Sandhagen, Zackary (Tiffany) Maleport, Kayla (Orlando) Garibay, Jesse Killips, and Frank Killips; sisters, Lorraine (Richard) Brown, Loretta McCormick; as well as many great-grandchildren.

John was preceded in death by his wife, Isabelle; daughter, Deborah Kellis; his grandson, Billy Killips; parents, Edward and Viola Sparks; his brothers, Edward, William, and Donald Sparks; sister, Shirley Brosco.

A Visitation will be held on Monday, April 7, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon at Family Life Funeral Home, 4951 S M-129, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. The Funeral Service will follow at 12:00 Noon and will be officiated by Carol Maleport. A luncheon will be held immediately after the service.

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

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens

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

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 7. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

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

Funeral Service

APR 7. 12:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ *Sparks and Maleport family. Thinking of you, asking my Dear Friend Jesus to comfort you and hold you close. ❤️🙏 Sherry Bertram*

Sherry - April 05, 2025 at 07:45 AM