



## John Gray Zimmerman

January 18, 1936 - October 27, 2025

John Gray Zimmerman, age 89, of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, passed away on October 27, 2025, at his home with family by his side. He was born on January 18, 1936, in Athens, Ohio, to Fred and Onota (Murphy) Zimmerman.

John grew up traveling with his mother while his father served in the United States Navy during the World War II era. His childhood took him to many places, from his mother's family farm in Manistique, Michigan, where he attended a one-room schoolhouse with his Aunt Babe, to the south side of Chicago and New Orleans, before the family eventually settled in Sault Ste. Marie.

John had a lifelong love of hockey. He earned a scholarship to Michigan State University to play hockey, which ultimately led to his 34-year career with Edison Sault Electric Company, where he was a proud member of the 25-Year Club. While attending college, he also helped build the Mackinac Bridge, becoming one of the few people to have been both at the

very top and the very bottom of the structure, and he even captured the first home movie filmed from the top.

John also served honorably in the United States Army. Deeply committed to his community, he was instrumental in the founding of the Soo Mohawk over-35 hockey teams in 1980, which supported local youth and the Pullar Ice Rink. Later, he helped establish the local over-45 hockey league, finally hanging up his skates at age 67. Though he laced them up once more to teach his grandson, Ian, how to skate.

John loved watching the I-500 with his brothers (Mike and Pat). He was also a part of the I-500 parking "shack" since its inception and proudly parked his last car there at age 88. He enjoyed the camaraderie and looked forward to the spring meetings where proceeds were given back to local organizations he cared deeply about.

A true Yooper, John loved hunting, fishing, and being outdoors.

John is survived by his wife, Ada; son, Dale Zimmerman; daughters, Mary (Dennis) Boedigheimer, and Heather Zimmerman; grandson, Ian Boedigheimer; brothers, Pat (Nancy) Zimmerman, and Mike (Sara) Zimmerman.

John was preceded in death by his parents, Fred and Onota.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Elks Lodge where he was a proud lifetime member, on Monday, November 3, 2025, from 5:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.

Please leave your kind thoughts and prayers as a donation to the EUP Hospice who helped to keep him in his home with his loving wife Ada.

Condolences may be left to the family at [www.familylifefh.com](http://www.familylifefh.com).

As submitted by family.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

NOV 3. 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM (ET)

Elks Lodge #552  
1111 E Portage Ave  
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

# Tribute Wall

BR

“ Bruce lit a candle in memory of John Gray Zimmerman



Bruce - October 29, 2025 at 06:35 PM

HE

Thankyou

Heather - October 29, 2025 at 11:42 PM

BB

Heather, and all the Zimmermans, we are sorry for your loss. He was a good family man, and a good man overall, and will be dearly missed. I will remember him fondly when I watch thd sport formerly known as NASCAR. ♥♥♥

bruce w beaudoin - October 30, 2025 at 10:45 AM

TK

I babysat for the Zimmerman's. I had many conversations with John when he drove me home late at night. He helped me through a lot of stuff. He was a good man.

Tami Kokko - November 13, 2025 at 02:15 PM