



## Joseph Dennis Harper Sr.

May 8, 1936 - March 7, 2020

Harper, Joseph Dennis, of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, passed away March 7, 2020, at the age of 83 years old. After a long battle with Pulmonary Fibrosis. Joe peacefully died at home with his oldest son by his side.

Joseph was born on May 8, 1936 in Woodbury, New Jersey to Suzanna and Joseph Harper. He was a soldier, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, and a man who will be remembered for his independent spirit, strength, loyalty, and wit. He will also, be remembered for his Archie Bunker personality!

As a young man, Joe, joined the Air Force, and was stationed in Kincheloe, Michigan, where he met the love of his life, Donelda (Bood) Harper. They were married for over 58 years.

Joe worked as a Dredging Engineer for Local 25 International Operating Engineers for many years.

When Joe retired, he loved spending time with his family and friends. He enjoyed gardening, berry picking, and canning jams and tomatoes. He would plan all winter long what he was going to plant in his garden the following spring. He was a meticulous gardener with a real green thumb. The family always looked forward to his fantastic fruits and vegetables every year.

He is survived by his sons, Joseph Harper Jr., Lawrence (Lyn) Harper; daughters, Donelda (Jerry) Lehman, Vicki Neal-Captain; sister, Patricia (Fred) Jarvis; daughter-in-law, Gail Kott. He was a loving grandfather to Danielle (Todd) Theel, Joe (Kaitlin) Harper, Jared Harper, Jana Johnson, Caleb Captain, Cecilia (Kourtney) Atkinson, Angela (Michael) Daly, Melissa (Richie) Harris, Joe Harper, Justin (Jamey) Lardy, Larisa (TJ) Harig, Christa (Eden) Harper, Tyler Nelson, Misty Harper, Jack Corp and several great-grandchildren. Joe is also, survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Joseph was preceded in death by his wife, Donelda; his parents, Joseph and Suzanna Harper; sons, Donald Harper, Ronald Harper; daughter-in-law, Kim Harper; sisters, Susan Breslin, Francis Smith; brothers-in-law, Lawrence Bood, James Smith, Thomas Breslin; nephew, Keith Smith; beloved dog, Manville (Manny).

Cremation will take place and a memorial will be held this summer per Joe's request.

Donations may be left to Joe's favorite foundation St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

R. Galer Funeral Home in Pickford, Michigan is serving the family. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.rgalerfuneralhome.com](http://www.rgalerfuneralhome.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *Joseph Dennis Harper Sr.*

October 05, 2023 at 09:54 AM



“ *Joseph Dennis Harper Sr.*

October 02, 2023 at 10:14 PM



“ *Joseph Dennis Harper Sr.*

September 01, 2022 at 07:49 PM



“ *Dad,*

*I sure am going to miss our three or four phone calls a day. We sure had some interesting and fun conversations over the years. Life has truly changed for me since Saturday, March 7th! You were such an amazing man, such wit and humor too! I hope you are up there laughing with Manny, your silly dog, Mom, Don, and Ron and your beautiful sisters, Fran and Sue!*

*Love You!*

*Missy*

*XO*

**Donelda Lehman** - March 12, 2020 at 11:59 AM

LT

“ I’m so sorry to read of his passing. What fond memories you have of him! May these bring you comfort in your time of sorrow

*Lori Tomkinson*

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**Lori Tomkinson** - March 11, 2020 at 10:54 AM

JB

“ The most cherished memory I have of you and I as kids is when I would be awoken at 5am by pebbles tossed at my bedroom window so I would come downstairs to open the door for you to come in the house and get warm. That was after you would sneak out of your house, visit the milkman as he was making his rounds (he didn't know you were helping yourself to some free milk), and then maybe if it were cold enough, visit your Aunt Mary and Uncle Frank. Dad always said if it were raining, Joe could be found on top of the lamp post.

*Joe, I will always love our very long conversations about the good old days and how much fun we had growing up. I especially loved your ranting about our favorite president.*

*Thanks for being like a brother and my very best friend. I will love and miss and remember you always.*

*Rest in Peace dear one and give Mom and Dad my love.*

*Joni Harper Bartell*

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**Joni Harper Bartell** - March 10, 2020 at 10:09 PM