



Lajoice and Mary (Cartwright) Charles

October 21, 2025 - October 27, 2025

Lajoice W. “Tubby” Charles and Mary Ann (Cartwright) Charles, lifelong residents of the Brimley, Michigan area, passed away just six days apart, Mary Ann on October 21, 2025, at their home in Dollar Settlement after a long battle with dementia, and Lajoice on October 27, 2025, at MyMichigan Medical Center in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, surrounded by family.

Lajoice was born on September 6, 1942, in Brimley, to Donald F. Sr. and Catherine Gertrude (Collins) Charles. Mary Ann was born on November 7, 1942, in Sault Ste. Marie, to Harry and Mary (Shields) Cartwright. The two built a beautiful life together in Brimley, raising their son and sharing sixty-three years of marriage rooted in love, hard work, and community.

Mary Ann began her career at Brimley Area Schools in 1968, serving as a secretary and later as the Fiscal Services Director, retiring in 1996. After retirement, she continued working in retail at Das Gift Haus in Sault Ste. Marie. She also gave many years of service to her community as the Superior Township Clerk and later as the Superior Township Treasurer throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

Lajoice began his career with the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service before earning his welding certification from Lansing Community College in 1965. He worked for King’s Machine Shop, where he

specialized in repairs for lake freighters and U.S. Coast Guard vessels. In 1976, he earned his mechanic's license and purchased the Standard Service Station in Brimley, transforming it into a full-service gas and repair station that became a cornerstone of the community. After selling the business in the late 1980s, he worked as a bus driver for Brimley Area Schools, retiring in 2007.

Together, Lajoice and Mary Ann shared a deep love for the outdoors and for the simple joys of rural life. Mary Ann enjoyed walking, feeding songbirds, picking apples and berries from the family farm, and caring for her beloved rescue pets, KiKi and Buddy. Lajoice found joy in hunting, cutting firewood, and working around the family farm. He was also a devoted Civil War reenactor, known for building replica artillery pieces with his son, Steve, and was skilled at restoring classic vehicles. Both loved listening to country music and spending time surrounded by family and nature.

Lajoice and Mary Ann are survived by their son, Steven (Stacy) Charles of Dollar Settlement; grandson, Waylon (Elizabeth) Charles of Brimley; and two great-grandchildren, Chloe and Conan Charles; sister, Helen Heck of Brimley; many nieces and nephews; and a special nephew, Herbert (Lillian) Gordon of Rudyard, Michigan.

Lajoice was preceded in death by his parents, Donald and Catherine Charles; siblings, Monica (Beverly), Catherine, Donald (Bud), Robert, Roberta, Annabelle, Francis (Joe), James, Kenneth, Debra, and George.

Mary Ann was preceded in death by her parents, Harry and Mary Cartwright; sister, Elizabeth Elaine Cartwright; and brother, Clifford H. Cartwright.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring of 2026.

Memorial contributions may be made in honor of Lajoice and Mary Ann

Charles to the Chippewa County Animal Shelter, 3660 S. Mackinac Trail, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783.

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

Tribute Wall



“ They both were a staple in my childhood growing up across the street from the Cartwrights and a later in life running into Mary Ann around town. They both were such a great testament of a hardworking couple who loved each other with everything they had. I am so sorry your family’s loss, my family’s thoughts and prayers are with you. Also thank you for sharing them with the community.

Courtney Fiorucci - November 06, 2025 at 04:30 AM

PD

“ Mary Ann and Tubby were such a great part of our community. They will be missed.

Pat (McKiddie) Dean - November 04, 2025 at 07:00 PM

EW

“ Just Great people. Had a lot of fun at there house of the years .
Condolences to family and friends.

Edward Wilson - November 04, 2025 at 05:00 PM