



## Neal A. Godby

November 22, 1939 - June 4, 2025

Neal A. Godby, Sr., of Brimley, Michigan, passed away peacefully on June 4, 2025, at the age of 85. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, son, brother, uncle, friend, and public servant. He lived a life marked by integrity, service, and deep love for his family and community.

Neal was born in Sheridan, Indiana, to the late Harold and Mary Alice Godby. He was raised on his family's farm where he developed a strong work ethic. He earned degrees from both Ball State University and the University of Michigan, achievements that laid the foundation for a distinguished career in public administration. He served as Assistant City Manager of Kalamazoo, Michigan, and later as City Manager of Albion, Michigan, and Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. His public service continued through his role as the Director of the International Bridge. Neal was known for his commitment to civic improvement; he will be remembered for his judgment, wisdom, and leadership. His service to the public was also evident in his roles as president/chair of many civic organizations, including Rotary International Club (Sault Ste. Marie), Michigan Municipal League, the International City Management Association, and the United Way.

Neal's family brought him immense joy and pride. He is survived by his beloved wife of 59 years, Marjorie Bennett Godby. Together, they raised three children: Lara Johnston (Steven), Dana Smith (Daniel), and Neal Godby, Jr.

He was the proud and loving grandfather and great-grandfather to Mary DeMoss (Michael), Emily Smith, Shae Johnston, Thomas Johnston, Madison Luce, and Melissa DeMoss. He is also survived by his siblings Gail Godby (Melanie), James Godby, and Betty Ayers, along with his stepmother, Rosemary Godby, and his nieces and nephews.

Neal had a keen curiosity in the world around him, a wonderful laugh, a wry sense of humor, and a kindness and regard for all who crossed his path. His family is grateful that he had more than two decades of retirement, in which he enjoyed extended trips to Gulf Shores/Orange Beach, Alabama, and St. Simons Island, Georgia. He was also blessed with trips to Indiana to gather with family, and spent many wonderful winters in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He enjoyed snowmobiling with friends, golf outings, and trips to National Parks. Most importantly, he had years of peace, happiness and love with Marjorie at the lake in their cabin home.

A private family service will be held in his honor. Neal's family wishes to express their appreciation for the encouragement, support, respect, and love that has been extended.

His legacy is one of service, wisdom and quiet strength. He will be truly missed by his family, friends, and community.

Family Life Funeral Homes Sault Ste Marie assisted the family with arrangements. Condolences may be left to the family at [www.familylifefh.com](http://www.familylifefh.com).

Obituary as submitted by family.

# Tribute Wall

BS

“ Our sincere sympathy to you and your family, Marge. We will miss our good friend and neighbor. We enjoyed our visits with you and Neal in the summer. He was such a good storyteller and a kind and generous neighbor. Bob & Sylvia Smith

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**bob smith** - June 23, 2025 at 01:57 PM

GT

“ Dear Marge and family,  
Neal made a difference for good in whatever endeavor he undertook. What a legacy to leave! But such a person leaves a deep absence in our lives, particularly, for those closest to him. May time and happy memories gradually heal your loss.  
Gary and Kathleen Thesing

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**GARY THESING** - June 17, 2025 at 04:04 PM

CS

“ I'm so very sorry for your loss. Mr. Godby was the director when my dad worked at the International Bridge. I would occasionally run into him and he always remembered who I was.

My deepest sympathies to the family.  
Carol (Taylor) Smart

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**Carol Smart** - June 09, 2025 at 05:12 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Neal A. Godby.*



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June 09, 2025 at 09:52 AM



“ *Dear Marge and Family, I was so sorry to learn of Neal's passing. He was such a fine gentleman, a dedicated and accomplished professional, and a great asset for the community in a variety of ways. I always enjoyed his company. He was invariably friendly, congenial, and warm-hearted. I hope you all find comfort in wonderful memories. Gary Johnson*

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**Gary Johnson** - June 08, 2025 at 08:12 PM



“ *My condolences to your family. I remember all the great times me and Dan had at the house with your family. Lots of live and laughs there ! Again, so sorry for your loss.*

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**Chris Cardinal** - June 08, 2025 at 06:09 PM



“ *Neal was a boss I will never forget. He taught me many things when I worked for him at the International Bridge. I will also miss me visits with him at the cabin in Brimley every summer. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family. Robert Kinsella*

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**Robert Kinsella** - June 07, 2025 at 07:23 PM

FE

*My condolences to Marg, the extended family and friends of Neal. May you cherish all the fond memories you have shared over the years. Fly high with the angels Neal. May you Rest in eternal Peace.*

**Fern** - June 08, 2025 at 09:13 AM

SN

*We are so sorry to hear of Neal's passing. Neal was a great mentor for me as I started out as a City Manager in Munising in the early 1980's. I eventually had the opportunity to be interviewed and hired by the City Commission as Sault Ste. Marie's City Manager, a position held by Neal for many years. Neal's mentorship continued while Neal was working as Director for the International Bridge during my first years as City Manager in the Soo. Neal was well respected City Manager and truly a great human being. Condolences to Marg and family on your loss. Our thoughts are with you during this difficult time. - Spencer and Angela Nebel*

**Spencer Nebel** - June 08, 2025 at 09:40 AM

LG

*Marge, Laura, Dana and Neal, my condolences at the passing of "Mr. Godby". Neal was a friend of my father Bill and I have great memories of our families growing up together in the Soo.*

**Larry Gregory** - June 09, 2025 at 12:39 PM