



Ralph Edward Bentley

December 11, 1940 - May 26, 2024

Ralph Edward Bentley passed away May 26, 2024, at his home after battling colon cancer throughout the past year. He was born in Athens, Ohio, to Joseph and Patience Bentley. He is survived by his wife Betty Gay "France" Bentley, his daughter Ernestine Bentley Brady (Jim), his grandchildren Jonathan Brady (Samantha) and Jennifer Brady (Seth), his great grandchildren Dean James and Jason Lane. He is also survived by another daughter Donna and a sister Elsie. Ralph was preceded in death by his parents; and 3 brothers: William "Bill," Joseph "Louis," and James; and daughter Diane.

I am not sure when I gave my dad Ralph his nickname "King Ralph" but it was shortly after he moved our family up to Detour Village in 1985. He lived life to the fullest during his 40 years of retirement. Hunting and Fishing was his thing. He had always loved the Upper Peninsula and he thrived here.

We have thousands of game camera pictures of wildlife such as deer, turkeys, rabbits, grouse, fox, coyotes, bobcat, an occasional cougar and what he loved to bait and hunt the most the black bear. He tended to his wooded acres like a person would tend to their back yard. He knew every bend of every path. He knew the paths the wildlife traveled. In 2022 just a couple months before the cancer diagnosis, he got the biggest black bear of his life. His patience meticulously baiting and keen woodsman skills were just as sharp at 81 years

of age if not better than when he was a younger man.

St Mary's River was where he enjoyed his summer months. He learned the river and every rock pile in it. He was out there every day at 5 am from opening of walleye season in May until end of the annual Detour Village Salmon Derby. He won first place 4 times in this derby. The first time was in 1994 (24.71 #). The second time was with his biggest salmon over 30 pounds in 1999. Then again in 2001 (24.945#) and in 2012 he placed first, third and fourth (19.55#, 16.75# and 16.4#).

He developed close friendships with his fellow neighbors who also shared the same love of fishing and hunting. They cheered each other on in good times and supported each other when needed. He smoked fish every year in his homemade smoker and made sure everyone in the neighborhood got a sample. And it was delicious! If anyone needed a hole or trench dug, my dad was out the door eager to help with his backhoe. He loved to stay busy in his own slow and steady pace.

Besides his passion for the outdoors, my dad was there every day for his grandchildren Jonathan and Jennifer. He found a property near his house where my husband Jim and I decided to move in 1995. My dad along with my mom and grandma became our "babysitters". He shared his love for the outdoors and wildlife with both Jon and Jen.

Ralph lived life fully up until the end. He has given us countless precious stories to remember and share about all our past adventures with him. He will be missed greatly!

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 4:18, "For we fix our attention, not on things that are seen, but on things that are unseen". At death you won't leave home - you'll go home.

Family Life Funeral Homes assisted the family with arrangements.
Condolences may be left to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

Obituary as submitted by family.

Tribute Wall

JK

“ A note to the Bentley family. I have fond memories of fishing with your husband Mrs. Bentley. While in River Rouge my brother and I had many trips to the Detroit River fishing for (Walleye, Perch, Smelt, etc.) along with or in the boat Mr. Bentley owned. He was always a favorite of my Dad (John Keeley and my Uncle Pat Keeley). So sorry for your loss. Joe Keeley

Joseph Keeley - June 10, 2025 at 04:03 PM

BB

“ My heart and prayers go out to Betty and family. My memory of Uncle Ralph is how much he looked like my father . I would think I was talking to my dad and here it was Ralph I was just a little kid. Ralph and my dad I know are together catching up. Ralph and my dad had the same Bentley silliness, warmth and the gift of gab they both could talk to anyone about anything. He will be missed! Love you Uncle Ralph Belinda Bentley

Belinda Bentley - June 21, 2024 at 06:29 PM

CB

“ Ernestine, Jim & Family,

So sorry for the loss of your Dad. This is a beautifully written tribute to him!

Sincerely~
Cheryl & Dennis



C. Bernard - June 03, 2024 at 02:20 PM

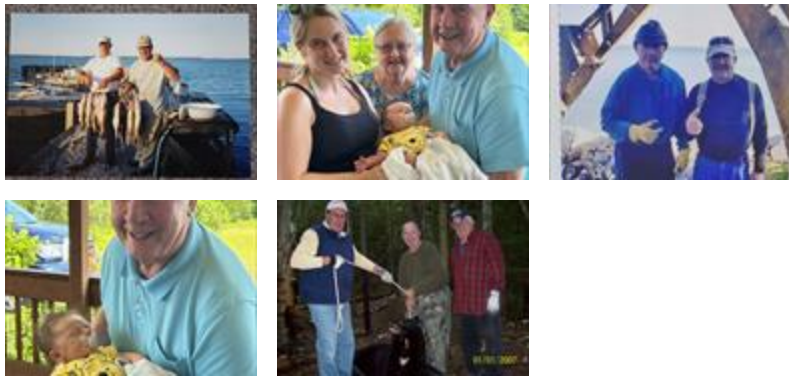
JR

“ I’m so sorry for your loss, sending love and prayers for comfort to you all. Mommy (Julie Ruth and I used to talk all the time about living close to you all in Rouge and she couldn’t wait to get to visit with you all when you came home to visit. Love you all..

Jenny Dawn Hopson Ray - June 02, 2024 at 04:32 PM

EB

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Ernestine Brady - May 31, 2024 at 08:53 PM

SB

“ I am so sorry to hear about your loss . He is the big reason I love to eat fish. I used to love it when he got turtles the were delicious
SAM BAKER

Sam Baker - May 31, 2024 at 07:24 PM

CN

“ So sorry for you loss. May He be wrapped in the arms of the Lord.
Your Batavia st. Neighbors. The Branch family.

Cindy Branch Neff - May 31, 2024 at 07:18 PM

TA

“ *I am so sorry for your loss, love and prayers for all of you. I remember fondly living in Rouge next door. I love you guys!* ”

Tina Hopson Akers - May 31, 2024 at 06:50 PM

JO

“ *So sorry to here about lose* ”

Joannenelson504@gmail.com - May 30, 2024 at 05:33 AM