



Raymond Earl Kay

June 23, 1941 - March 19, 2025

It is with deep sorrow and love that we announce the passing of Raymond Earl Kay, cherished and beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle, and dear friend to many. Earl passed away peacefully on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, after a period of illness with family surrounding him.

Born on June 23, 1941, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, Earl was the son of the late Ray and Elda (Fletcher) Kay. He was the loving husband of Tina Kay and brother to Linda (Charlie) Countryman and Richard (Cheryl) Kay, as well as the late Gary (Patty) Kay. Earl's family also includes his children: Debbie (Tim) Bowers, Bob (Staci) Kay, Terri True, Christie (Art Devlin) Kruchten, Carrie (Steve) Grover, Brian Kay, and James (Tonya Godfrey) Kay. Earl was a proud grandfather to Kimberly (Chris) Hill, Cooper Kay, Kaci Kay, Alexandria True, John Kay, Brianna Kay, Tylor Kay, Takota (Alyssa Rosano) Kay, Tate (Camryn Buskirk) Kay, Les Kruchten, Will (Allison Osta) Kruchten, Ashtin Kay, Molly (Kyle) Lecher, Theodore Grover, and Ellery (Dan Edminster) Grover. He was also blessed to have great-grandchildren: Gracie Hill, Nova True, Mason Kay, Dalton Kay, Cecilia Lecher and Wrenlee Lecher.

Earl was a man of many talents and a deep passion for life. A dedicated sportsman, he cherished the time spent during deer season, but his greatest joy came from being surrounded by his family. Earl also loved traveling and

exploring the country with his wife, Tina, in their RV.

He began his career as a butcher at A&P and Foodland, later taking on a mail route from Sault Ste. Marie to Mackinaw City. Earl also dabbled in real estate and ran the Stagecoach Inn and Bakery in Old Town on Portage Avenue. In 1977, he married Tina, and together they purchased The House of Flavors Ice Cream Shoppe, a business they treasured. Earl's entrepreneurial spirit continued with the opening of a Radio Shack Franchise in 1980, which eventually became Centurytel Cellular, the first to bring cellular service to the Eastern Upper Peninsula. In his later years, Earl operated the Skyline Motel in the Soo.

Earl's dedication to his community was unwavering. He volunteered for many years on the I-500 Snowmobile Race Committee and took immense pride in watching his youngest son compete in the race. Earl also served several terms on the Chippewa County Commission and on the Economic Development Corporation, where he worked tirelessly to secure funding for projects such as the new Chippewa County International Airport Terminal and the much-needed 911 Call Center. His passion for his community also led him to organize seasonal events and parades that brought people together.

Earl's faith was an integral part of his life. He sang in the choir at the First United Presbyterian Church for over 40 years as well as serving on the board of trustees, touching the lives of many through his devotion.

Earl will be deeply missed by all who knew him. His love for his family, his commitment to his community, and his unwavering faith will continue to inspire those who were fortunate enough to know him.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, March 27, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, with the Funeral Service following at 1:00 PM at the First United

Presbyterian Church, 555 Bingham Ave, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the First United Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund or I-500 Project Inc. in Earl's name.

Earl's memory will live on in the hearts of his family and friends, and he will be deeply missed by all.

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

Obituary as submitted by family

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 27. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

First United Presbyterian Church
555 Bingham Avenue
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783

Funeral Service

MAR 27. 1:00 PM (ET)

First United Presbyterian Church
555 Bingham Avenue
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783

Tribute Wall

K.

“ Tina, I'm sorry for your loss. I will never forget how kind Earl was to me when I needed it most. I've thought of you both often over the past 15 years since I left the Soo. God bless you and your family.



K.H. - November 29, 2025 at 08:58 PM

KG

“ Tina, I am so sorry for your loss. I was always grateful to you and Earl for giving me my first real job when I worked for you on Portage. I wish you have nothing but loving memories of him and your time together. Karen Gordon

Karen Gordon - April 04, 2025 at 02:31 PM

PL

“ Tina, we are sorry about Earl. We will remember all the good times at the I-500. we are in Florida right now and just found out. He will be missed.

Pat and Paulette Lightfoot

Paulette Lightfoot - March 30, 2025 at 11:43 AM

GJ

“ Dear Tina and Family,

We were so sorry to learn of Earl's passing. We hope you find comfort in wonderful memories and in the knowledge that Earl lived a full and purposeful life.

Gary and Maggie Johnson

Gary Johnson - March 28, 2025 at 08:10 AM

PR

“ Dear Mrs. Tina and Family,

We express our deepest sympathies for your loss. Mr. Kay was a fantastic neighbor. He voluntarily helped us, showing his supportiveness. We will miss a very kind-hearted and helpful neighbor. May he rest in peace.

Nalaka, Nilmini and Kids

Pradeep N Ranasinghage - March 26, 2025 at 01:12 AM

BB

“ *Tina and family, we are sorry to hear this news, indeed a great man and a better person was hard to find, he will be missed by many many folks. I had the pleasure of serving on a couple boards/ committees with Earl, over 20+ years and respected his wisdom, values and dedication. He always greeted me warmly, and with my name, a true statesman.*

Prayers for comfort.



bruce w beaudoin - March 25, 2025 at 12:13 PM

FS

“ *Extending our condolences to the Kay family and friends of Earl. May you cherish all the fond memories you had the pleasure of having over the years. Fly high with the angels Earl. Rest in eternal peace.*

Fern and Helen Spencer - March 25, 2025 at 09:13 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ray Earl (Earl) Kay.

March 24, 2025 at 03:48 PM