



## Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux

February 19, 1943 - September 11, 2018

Sylvester Hugo Barbeaux, known to most as Butch, passed away on September 11, 2018, at his home in DeTour Village, Michigan. He was a good man, a good father, and someone who was respected by his family, his tribe, and his community. Butch was born on February 19, 1943, in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, to Gordan Barbeaux (deceased) and Ruby Geddert (deceased), the second of six, after Maxine and before Tana, Larry, Jeanne (deceased), and Delbert (deceased).

Following an eventful youth in Fairport, Michigan, splashing in mud puddles, stealing chickens, chasing deer, and commercial fishing on the Great Lakes with his father, he served in the United States Marine Corps from 1960 to 1964 at Camp Pendleton, California. While stationed in California, he met a little surfer girl and made her his bride, Janet Francis Coulombe from Lawndale, California. They married in 1964 and had their first son, Paul Gordon Barbeaux, in 1965. A second son made a surprise entrance in 1970, Steven Jon Barbeaux. Butch did a lot of things over the years to make ends meet. After the Marines, he worked as a gas station attendant, a mechanic, a tunnel rat, iron worker, on the line for Buick, and even owned his own gas station in Garden, Michigan. He eventually settled into the work of his father and back to where he started, as a fisherman in Fairport. In the late 1970's, Butch fought for his tribe in the tribal fish war against the State of Michigan and was jailed for exercising his treaty rights on the lakes. Despite many

setbacks, he and the tribe eventually prevailed due in part to his actions on the lakes and in Washington D.C. Butch served 25 years on the Conservation Committee of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, guarding both the natural resources of the Great Lakes and also the sovereign rights of the tribe. His council was greatly valued, only retiring as his health waned. His position on the committee has been taken up by his son Paul. In 1985, the tribe agreed to fishing restrictions that pushed him out of Fairport, the town he and his forebears before him called home. After a year of searching for adequate fishing grounds he settled on DeTour Village on the eastern end of the Upper Peninsula. He and his eldest son Paul fished from DeTour Village for a year then Butch moved the rest of his family there in summer of 1986 and since then they have called it home.

Butch's son Paul met and married Sharolyn Goetz in DeTour Village and raised three children, Jordan, Kaley, and Kaleb. Jordan, a computer technician for War Memorial Hospital, moved to Sault Ste. Marie and married Aleesha Pasquali of Sault Ste. Marie. In 2015, Jordan and Aleesha gave birth to Butch's first great-grandchild, Harley Quinn Barbeaux. Kaleb continues the work of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather as a fisherman on the Great Lakes. Kaley, not far from the family tradition, works at the DeTour State Harbor. Steven Barbeaux, Butch's second son, attained his doctorate in fisheries biology at the University of Washington and resides in Seattle, Washington, working as a research fisheries biologist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. He is married to Angelia Runger of Nampa, Idaho, and has one daughter Sophia Lynne Runger Barbeaux born on Butch's birthday in 2011. In addition to his brother and sisters, wife, sons, grandchildren, and great-grandchild Butch is survived by numerous nephews and nieces and many great friends he has made over his time on earth. He was a good man and will be dearly missed.

There will be two ceremonies for Butch, a visitation in Pickford at the R. Galer

Funeral Home on Sunday, September 16, from 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. for friends and family in the Eastern UP and a visitation at the Fayette Congregational Church on Monday, September 17, from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. for friends and family in the Western UP with the burial following at Sac Bay Cemetary. A component of the funerals will be traditional Anishinaabe, please bring a small something (pinch of tobacco, venison jerky, piece of candy or other sweet, a small knick-knack, etc.) that Butch might enjoy on his journey and will be interred with him. There will be a birch-bark basket at the funeral for these small gifts.

Please don't donate money directly, any monetary donation in Butch's memory should be made to the DeTour Ambulance Corps, 260 S. Ontario St., P.O. Box 397, DeTour Village, MI 49725.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.rgalerfuneralhome.com](http://www.rgalerfuneralhome.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **16.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Pickford  
24549 S. M-129  
Pickford, MI 49774  
(906) 647-3400  
flfh@familylifefh.com  
[https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/](https://www.familylifefuneralhomes/)

# Tribute Wall



“ Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux

October 05, 2023 at 09:54 AM



“ Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux

October 02, 2023 at 10:14 PM



“ Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux

September 01, 2022 at 07:49 PM



“ My prayers and thoughts are with your family.

**Gilda Ruiz** - September 20, 2018 at 11:25 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.



September 17, 2018 at 11:45 AM

TB

“ Terry And Yolonda Barrette lit a candle in memory of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux



Terry and Yolonda Barrette - September 16, 2018 at 09:34 AM

YR

“ Your friends at Avenue5 Residential purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.



Your friends at Avenue5 Residential - September 15, 2018 at 03:40 PM

MF

“ Mitchell Farley purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.



Mitchell Farley - September 15, 2018 at 04:52 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.



September 14, 2018 at 03:25 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.*



---

September 14, 2018 at 02:48 PM



“ *3 files added to the album New Album Name*



---

**Jenny Coulombe-Dunehew** - September 14, 2018 at 11:06 AM



“ *Our deepest condolences to Janet and family.  
Terry and Sandy Brooks  
Cooks, MI*

---

**Sandra Brooks** - September 14, 2018 at 07:25 AM



“ *Dear Janet and families, Sorry to hear of your loss. You have our deepest sympathy.*

*Ray and Sharon De Jonge  
De Tour Village*

---

**Ray And Sharon De Jonge** - September 13, 2018 at 07:04 PM

TC

“ *THE ALASKA CHAPTER purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.*



---

**THE ALASKA CHAPTER** - September 13, 2018 at 04:09 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.*



---

September 13, 2018 at 02:37 PM

MM

“ *So sorry to hear the loss of our good friend Butch. A good person to spend our winter months with and deepest sympathy to Janet and family*

---

**margaret mckenna** - September 13, 2018 at 09:43 AM

CM

“ *Our deepest sympathy goes to the whole family. He was a great man, who stood for what he believed in. Praying for you all.*  
*The Mandrells*

---

**Cherlyn Mandrell** - September 13, 2018 at 08:53 AM

HF

“ Thinking of you all at this time! Had some good laughs when I was at my grandma and grandpas and Butch and Janet would come for morning coffee. Much love to you all!

Hilary Fountain - September 13, 2018 at 07:23 AM

JK

“ Johnny Sr.,Johnny Jr.,Jason,Hilary, Tom & Kids purchased the Patriotic Throw for the family of Sylvester "Butch" Hugo Barbeaux.



Johnny Sr.,Johnny Jr.,Jason,Hilary, Tom & Kids - September 13, 2018 at 06:46 AM

JG

“ Loved how Butch expressed himself by putting up with no bs and fought hard for what he believed in. He didn't mince his words. Hard worker, dedicated, and passionate about the fishery. Thank you Butch for all the help and guidance you gave me and Meg witch for the sacrifices you went through to reaffirm our treaty rights. May God bless your soul. Rest In Peace

Jason Grondin - September 12, 2018 at 09:20 PM

CB

“ Dear Janet & Family~

*So sorry for your loss of Butch. He sure fought  
the good fight!  
May he rest in peace.*



*Sincerely,  
Cheryl & Dennis*

---

**Cheryl Bernard** - September 12, 2018 at 08:47 PM