



Ralph W. Patterson

November 30, 1938 - December 20, 2014

Ralph W. Patterson

Ralph went home for the last time Saturday December 20th, 2014 with family and friends by his side. Ralph was born November 30th, 1938. Ralph was the seventh child brought home to the family farm in Hartford Michigan, the son of Clarence and Florence Patterson. Growing up on the farm instilled a work ethic in Ralph that would be with him his entire life. After graduation, Ralph decided to head for the big city of Chicago to make his fortune as a diesel mechanic. Ralph loved the mechanic work, along with his pride and joy of the time, his Porsche. Many a law-stretching fun times were had in this car. But the city was not all it was supposed to be, and Ralph returned home to Southwest Michigan.

Grand Junction was now to be his home, because that is where he and his new bride, the former Darlene Szymanski, were to reside. Ralph began working with his father-in-law John, at JOHNS Manufacturing and Leasing. The years that followed saw Ralphs' mechanical and engineering genius flourish. He helped to develop the JOHNS forklift that revolutionized the Fruit and Vegetable growing industry in the United States. This piece of equipment was like no other, and became the standard in the industry. Although Ralph retired in 2006, the JOHNS BN Forklift still commands top dollar at auctions, and is still in high demand. Ralph could truly say that he made a difference in

the world, and he left it a better place. Ralph was a lifetime member of the Michigan State Horticultural Society, a past Van Buren County Fair Board member, and a member of the Van Buren County Farm Bureau. Ralph also had a soft spot in his heart for the Van Buren Youth Camp, where all of his children attended during the summers. Ralph was honored by the camp as one of the recipients of the Pearl Fisk award for many years of dedication and service to the camp as a lifetime board member.

Ralph is survived by his wife of 52 years Darlene K. Patterson, three daughters, Tammy (Keith) Dykstra of Hartford, Karen (Tod) Kubiszak, of Lawrence, Laurie (Chad) Hamilton, of Grand Rapids, and a son, Randy (Brenda) Patterson, of Butler, Wisconsin. Ralph was also blessed with 10 grandchildren, and one great granddaughter. Ralph also has one surviving sibling, Don Patterson of Monticello Indiana. Ralph was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence and Florence Patterson, two brothers, Dale and Louis, and three sisters, Wanda, Sue , and Lois.

The family will receive well wishers on Monday, December 22, from 5-7 PM at the Bangor Chapel, D.L. Miller Funeral Home. Funeral mass will be at 11:00 am December 23rd, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church Bangor. Memorials in Ralph's name may be made to either Sacred Heart Catholic Church or The Van Buren Youth Camp.

Cemetery Details

Chambers Cemetery

Phoenix Road West of CR 687
South Haven, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **22**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Bangor Chapel
258 West Monroe Street
Bangor, MI

Service

DEC **23**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Church
201 S. Walnut
Bangor, MI

Tribute Wall

MA

“*Darlene, You probably don't remember me, but I lived across the street from Ann Dilley. I am so sorry to hear about Ralph. He pulled me out of a snowbank one winter day many years ago. He was a wonderful man with a wonderful family. My prayers are with each of you. Mary Ann Antrim*

Mary Ann Antrim - January 03, 2015 at 10:04 PM

JG

“*I'm so sorry that I didn't see this sooner. Will be thinking of all of you, that God will give you peace during this time. My time of boarding at the Patterson farm will always be a high spot in my life. Judy (Starks) Gargano*

Judy (Starks) Gargano - January 01, 2015 at 09:40 PM

DG

“*Dear Darlene an family,
We are so sorry to hear about the loss of Ralph. He was truly a great, generous and kind person and will be missed by many. May God help you through this sad time.*

Butch and Sharon Gould

Dennis Gould - December 24, 2014 at 09:18 AM

KM

“ *Darlene, Karen & Tod, Tammy & Keith, & family: I was so saddened to hear of Ralph's passing. May God keep you in his arms and give you comfort. You now have an Angel above looking out for all of you! My prayers are with all of you.*

Karen (Kelley) Manns

Karen (Kelley) Manns - December 23, 2014 at 03:29 PM

CR

“ *Todd, Karen, Holli, Tyler, Evan, Dusti, Spencer and family. I am so sorry for the loss of your dad/grandpa. I remember all of his church activities and then most recently him and your mom coming to be the "clean-up" crew after Midnight Mass and Breakfast. Hold the memories in your heart and know that he is smiling down on all of you. God Bless -*
Chris and Victor

Chris Rigozzi - December 22, 2014 at 04:09 PM

MG

“ *Madeline & Charlie Greeb lit a candle in memory of Ralph W. Patterson*



Madeline & Charlie Greeb - December 22, 2014 at 03:25 PM

JE

“ J & J Acres, LLC - Jason, Jennifer, Marvin, Eric purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Ralph W. Patterson.



J & J Acres, LLC - Jason, Jennifer, Marvin, Eric - December 22, 2014 at 03:04 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Ralph W. Patterson.



December 22, 2014 at 12:47 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Ralph W. Patterson.



December 22, 2014 at 12:34 PM

TF

“ The Ninke Family purchased the Quiet Expressions for the family of Ralph W. Patterson.



The Ninke Family - December 22, 2014 at 10:37 AM

DR

“ *Dave & Judy Rainey lit a candle in memory of Ralph W. Patterson* ”



Dave & Judy Rainey - December 22, 2014 at 05:08 AM

 Marla Hedden

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall* ”



Marla Hedden - December 21, 2014 at 08:40 PM