



Henry Joseph Opolka

November 20, 1932 - November 28, 2018

NORWAY- Henry Joseph Opolka age 86 of Norway, went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, November 28, 2018 surrounded by his family.

He was born on November 20, 1932 in Norway the son of the late John and Mary (Babula) Opolka, who were immigrants from Zawatka, Poland.

Henry lived his entire life in Norway. He worked for the A&P Store, and at Norway Gravure beginning as a pressman working his way up to Plant Manager. He retired in 1994, after 41 years.

He enlisted in the National Guard in 1950, serving for 8 years.

Henry married Kathleen Bouffiou on October 6, 1956 at the Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Kingsford.

He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Sons of the American Legion, St. Mary's Catholic Church in Norway, the Holy Name Society and past member of UCT.

Henry loved spending time at his hunting camp, the "Waucedah Hilton", and he loved being with family and friends. He enjoyed polka music, playing the concertina and the drums. He also played with several bands, including The

Polka Cats, Sid Peterson Band and the Opolka Brothers Band.

Henry had a passion for old cars. Throughout his life he owned and operated 49 cars and trucks. Four Model "A" Fords kept him busy, especially the 1930 five window coupe with a rumble seat.

Many knew Henry as Yashek and he was JaJa (polish for grandfather) to his grandchildren, great grandchildren and their friends. He was a man of strong faith with a deep love for his family. Henry was an avid Packers and Norway Knights fan, often found listening to games on his transistor radio. He liked working in his garage and with a little Polish ingenuity he could fix anything.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years Kathleen; and their six children Mary Jean (Bernie) Larson, John (Sherri) Opolka, Kathy (Neal) Johnson, Janice (Jim) Heipel, Douglas (Joan) Opolka and Karen (Tyler) Stoner; grandchildren Allan Larson, James (Christina) Larson, Kathryn (Rick) Wright, Kimberly (Derek Seilbach) Opolka, Eric Opolka, Zachery Johnson, Zachary Heipel, Jacob and Jordan Stoner, Joseph and Angela Opolka; great grandchildren Henry, Emma, Olivia, Kylie, Isaiah, Kayla, Ava, Axel, Jace, Alivia and a baby boy on the way in spring; he is also survived by sisters-in-law Irene Opolka, Elaine Beyer and Lillian Bouffiou; and many nieces and nephews.

Henry was preceded in death by his brothers Walter, Joseph and Anton Opolka; and his sisters Ann Stanek and Sophie Kanyuh.

Visitation will be held on Friday, December 7 from 9-11 a.m. at St. Mary's Church in Norway.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Friday, December 7 at 11 a.m. at St. Mary's Church with Fr. Timothy Ekaitis officiating.

Interment will be held in the spring at the Norway Township Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Norway Township Cemetery

Norway Township, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 7. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Church
401 Main Street
Norway, MI 49870

Memorial Mass

DEC 7. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Mary's Church
401 Main Street
Norway, MI 49870

Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.*



December 06, 2018 at 01:11 PM



“ *The Ostrowski family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.*



The Ostrowski family - December 04, 2018 at 01:26 PM



“ *Your friends at Central States Tower purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.*



Your friends at Central States Tower - December 03, 2018 at 03:47 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.*



December 03, 2018 at 03:43 PM

IF

“ Irene, Rosemary, Tony and Family purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.



Irene, Rosemary, Tony and Family - December 03, 2018 at 11:07 AM


Barbara Ann Frechette

“ I am deeply saddened by the news of your father, Hank's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you, Karen and your family. Hugs, Love Barbie.

Barbara Ann Frechette - December 02, 2018 at 06:48 PM

KA

Thank you. Appreciate the thoughts and prayers.

Karen - December 13, 2018 at 11:18 AM

SH

“ Dear Janis, Jim and Family,
There aren't enough words to express how sorry I am for your loss. I didn't know your father was in a Polka band. How cool is that!
Sending prayers and love your way.
Sharon Heipel

Sharon heipel - December 02, 2018 at 11:38 AM

HM

“ *Holly Mccarthy-biolo lit a candle in memory of Henry Joseph Opolka*



holly mccarthy-biolo - December 02, 2018 at 11:21 AM

SF

“ *In the Love that surrounds you,
May you find Strength..
In the Memories you Cherish,
May you find Peace.*



God's Love, Blessings, and Prayers, The Parish Family of St Mary's

St Mary's Parish Family - December 01, 2018 at 09:09 PM

IF

“ *Irene, Bob, Judy Opolka and family. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.*



Irene, Bob, Judy Opolka and family. - November 30, 2018 at 07:25 PM

MB

“ *Melinda, Toni, Trish and Bela purchased the Fair est of All for the family of Henry Joseph Opolka.*



Melinda, Toni, Trish and Bela - November 30, 2018 at 12:35 PM

JH

“ We will miss Henry at all of the family gatherings. They are getting fewer as those from that part of the family are leaving us for their heavenly home.

I remember when he and Kath were married and I was 16 and the maid of honor. What a truly Polish wedding. I couldn't sleep that night because my feet were sore from all the dancing. It was like no other wedding I had ever seen before.

Love and Hugs to all of you. He was a very kind man.

JoAnne

JoAnne Helgren - November 29, 2018 at 06:39 PM

DC

“ *I remember, as a young child, dancing at Uncle Yashek and Auntie Kath's wedding upstairs at the Moose (?) Hall on Main Street in Norway. Also dancing the polka in the kitchen on Chestnut Street while Uncle Y played his concertina. Then there was the 50th anniversary party. Many good memories of a kind man. He will be missed.*

Donna Clutter - November 29, 2018 at 06:32 PM

SS

“ *Hank. I don't think I ever saw him mad. He always had a smile and a joke. He made you feel part of the family. Being part of the Opolka family, even as a guest, was a high honor and probably the most fun you'd had that year. Thank you Hank and Kathy, for having wonderful children and for raising them to be wonderful, fun-loving, caring people. And Hank, thanks for spraying that water repellent spray on my windshield back when I was 22 years old. (He was so happy when that product came out- I think he sprayed it on all our windshields)*

Shannon (Jensen) Lindgren (Friend of Karen)

Karen- Love you, wish I could fast forward the grief and get you to the time when it's softer, missing your Parent but memories make you smile not cry. It will happen.

Shannon Stanek - November 29, 2018 at 06:10 PM