



## Joseph Haferkorn

March 11, 1943 - May 8, 2026

NORWAY – After a courageous battle with cancer, Joseph “Joe” Roy Haferkorn, age 83, passed away on Friday, May 8, 2026 at Marshfield Medical Center – Dickinson, surrounded by his loving family.

Joe was born on March 11, 1943, to Richard and Eleanor (Albert) Haferkorn at Penn Hospital in Norway, Michigan.

Joe grew up on the family farm on County Road 577 in Vulcan. He was a mischievous, adventure hungry kid. He grew up among siblings who arrived in two “batches,” as the family liked to joke: the older three—George, Joe, and Ellen—and, six years later, Tracy, Jim, and Mary.

Life on the Haferkorn farm meant work—real work. The farm bustled with cows, pigs, and chickens. In school, Joe attended Vulcan High School and became a stand-out in basketball, cross-country and track for the Giant Killers.

Joe married his high school sweetheart Nancy Groeneveld on October 5, 1963. They bought their home and moved in on Nancy’s birthday, September 18, 1965, with their six week old daughter Kathy in tow. Over time their family grew to include Tom and Susan followed by several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Rather than staying on the farm, Joe opted for work elsewhere. His working years included the cemetery, canning factory, cedar woods, the printing plant, and finally for the City of Norway as a mechanic, heavy equipment operator, volunteer fireman and shop foreman. He retired after working for the City of Norway for 25 years.

Beyond family, farming and work, Joe had another passion—racing. Joe built his own first racecar—a 1957 Chevy, with a two barrel carburetor and the number 102 painted proudly on the side. Over the course of 43 years, Joe's racing career included several different car classes which took him to tracks across the Upper Peninsula and Wisconsin.

One of the greatest joys of his life was racing and building cars alongside his son Tom. Together, they secured major sponsorships as a team and enjoyed many successes and years of race nights filled with determination, teamwork, and father son pride.

Joe suffered devastating health issues that resulted in the amputation of his leg, and doctors told him racing was over. Joe proved them wrong by climbing back into the car and raced for several more years. His resilience earned him Hall of Fame honors at four racetracks and an enduring reputation as a man who simply refused to quit.

When Joe retired from racing, he never left the sport behind. He and Nancy continued to camp at racetracks with friends, spending weekends watching races and staying connected to the community that had become a second family.

Joe is survived by wife of 63 years Nancy; daughters Kathy (James Malone) Allen and Susan (Steven) Sheski, and daughter-in-law Michele Haferkorn;

grandchildren Justin (Christine) Allen, Jacob (Brooke) Allen, Jenna (Jim Peterson) Allen, TJ (Alexa) Haferkorn, Mandy (Kyle) Larson, Nick Haferkorn, Paige (Cory) Edwards-Blunt, and Allison Sheski; bonus grandchildren Stephen (Rochelle) Malone, Tim (Stephanie) Malone, and Val (Benji) Busbani.

Also surviving Joe are his brothers George (Tina) Haferkorn, Jim (Tonja) Haferkorn, Tracy (Janice) Haferkorn; sisters Ellen Fontana and Mary (Martin) McFarlin-Bader; brothers-in-law Jerry (Michele) Groeneveld, David (Kathy) Groeneveld, and James Groeneveld; many great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Joe was preceded in death by his parents Richard and Eleanor Haferkorn; son Tom Haferkorn; infant great grandson Jonah Allen; in-laws Ray and Ruth VanGinkel; sister-in-law Merry Haferkorn; niece Sandy Erickson; nephew Cory Groeneveld and brothers-in-law Bob Fontana and William McFarlin.

Family will greet friends on Monday, May 18, 2026 from 9-11 a.m. at St. Barbara's Church in Vulcan.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Monday, May 18, 2026 at 11 a.m. at St. Barbara's Church with Fr. Abraham Mupparathara officiating.

Interment will follow at the Norway Township Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Norway Township Cemetery

Norway Township, MI

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 18. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Barbara's Church  
159 Mission Street  
Vulcan, MI 49892

## Memorial Mass

MAY 18. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Barbara's Church  
159 Mission Street  
Vulcan, MI 49892

# Tribute Wall

TO

“ Enjoyed watching Joe drive for the Naults at the Door County Fair Grounds in Sturgeon Bay. He was the best !!!

Tom - May 18 at 12:51 PM

JV

“ The world truly lost a great man in Joe Haferkorn. A tough, old-school racer who took pride in building much of his own equipment, you'd be hard-pressed to find a nicer guy at the track. Kim and I send our condolences to the family.

Joe Verdegan  
Dunbar, Wisconsin

Joe Verdegan - May 17 at 01:46 PM

TH

“ Torrey and Danielle Hawley purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Joseph Haferkorn.



Torrey and Danielle Hawley - May 15 at 10:09 AM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Joseph Haferkorn.



May 14 at 12:15 PM

GH

“ George, Sharon, Chrissy, Laura Haferkorn purchased the Love Everlasting Bouquet for the family of Joseph Haferkorn.



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**George, Sharon, Chrissy, Laura Haferkorn** - May 10 at 06:58 PM

GH

“ George, Sharon, Chrissy, Laura Haferkorn planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joseph Haferkorn.

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**George, Sharon, Chrissy, Laura Haferkorn** - May 10 at 06:58 PM



“ Forever Our Angel Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joseph Haferkorn.



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May 09 at 10:38 PM



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

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May 09 at 10:38 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Joseph Haferkorn.*



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May 09 at 02:32 PM



“ *Nancy and Family, you have our deepest sympathy. It was an honor to know Joe through the racing community.*  
*Dan and Kathy Wautlet*

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**Kathy and Dan Wautlet** - May 09 at 01:59 PM



*Joe and I were classmates and friends. Our class was small and close. I have many good memories of Joe and our classmates. So happy you and Joe had a long and happy marriage. My sympathy Nancy to you and your family.*

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**Pat Steffel** - May 10 at 10:21 AM