



## Robert James Varda

January 15, 1945 - February 22, 2019

VULCAN- Robert James “Hammer” Varda age 74 of Vulcan, died Friday, February 22, 2019 at his home in Vulcan.

He was born on January 15, 1945 in Norway, the son of the late Henry and Henrietta (Richards) Varda.

Jim graduated from Vulcan High School in 1964 and served 22 years as part of the Michigan National Guard.

Jim grew up on a farm and continued to run a hobby farm deep into his adult life. He started working for Western Electric in 1965 before finding a career at the Dickinson County Road Commission in 1970. Jim enjoyed his time at the Dickinson County Road Commission, an experience that lasted the next 37 years when he retired as Superintendent in 2007. Although officially retired, you may have spotted Jim plowing snow for the county until last year, 2018. He loved to help out. Jim spoke highly of all his past work adventures, his friends and the experiences he had along the way.

Jim believed in helping his community and was very active. He proudly volunteered for the Norway Fire Department for over 40 years, he was on the Dickinson County Fair board, and a member of the Hall-DeWinter Post #145, American Legion.

Jim was committed to everything he participated in. He could fix almost anything, and he often used that gift to help others. If you knew Jim, you loved Jim. You also quickly understood what hard work is and why lending a helping hand to those that needed it was so important. Jim didn't need to say it but instead displayed it as he lived a life of gratitude and respect for others.

Jim had a great big smile and an even bigger heart dedicated to loving his family. He spent most summers camping with his wife Kathy, family and friends. He was the perfect guy to sit around a campfire with. Jim always had a great story to tell.

Jim loved his pets especially his little dog(s). You would often see Jim driving with his little dog by his side as he passed through town. They were a big part of his daily life.

He enjoyed cutting wood, hunting, and playing cards. He was a devoted Green Bay Packers fan and didn't miss a NASCAR race. He even coached baseball for many years. Jim loved family get togethers. One thing he never missed was going out for breakfast on a Saturday or Sunday morning with his son and grandson and anyone else who was available. Jim loved his family and his family loved their father, papa and husband.

Jim is survived by his wife Kathy; sons Dean Varda and Neil (Danielle) Varda both of Vulcan; daughters Pam (Mike) Mahoney of Australia, Karen (Joe) Smith of Iron Mountain and Shenan (Colin) Kernen of Iola, WI; grandchildren Sadie (Tony), Alex, Hailey, Nick, Lauren, Zach, Danika, Cameron, Matina, India and Wyatt; great grandson Gracin; brother Justin (Sally) Varda of Vulcan; sisters Lorraine (Phil) Hagedorn and Jean (Paul) Betters both of Milwaukee; sister-in-law Rose Varda of Milwaukee; many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his brother Hank Varda.

Family will greet friends on Tuesday, March 5 from 3-7 p.m. at the Ortman Funeral Home in Norway.

A Memorial Service will take place at 7 p.m. at the Ortman Funeral Home with Fr. Timothy Ekaitis, pastor of St. Mary's Church officiating.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 5. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Ortman Funeral Home  
618 Norway Street  
P.O. Box 155  
Norway, MI 49870  
(906) 563-5700  
ortmanfuneralhome@norwaymi.com  
<https://www.ortmanfuneralhome.com/>

## Memorial Service

MAR 5. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Ortman Funeral Home  
618 Norway Street  
P.O. Box 155  
Norway, MI 49870  
(906) 563-5700  
ortmanfuneralhome@norwaymi.com  
<https://www.ortmanfuneralhome.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Robert James Varda.*



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March 05, 2019 at 08:13 AM



“ *Kathy, So sorry for your loss. He was a good man. Always friendly I don't get the paper so just saw this..If I can do anything to help you let me know.*

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**Jeanne Gardipee** - March 02, 2019 at 08:49 PM



“ *Sorry for your loss Kathy and family. I enjoyed his humor and personality. He was a special man and enjoyed talking to him when I worked at FNB Niagara.  
Sue Holmes, Niagara, Wi*

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**Susan Holmes** - March 02, 2019 at 07:48 PM



*Kathy Roach Varda?  
So sorry for your loss. Please contact me at  
mmannreed51@yahoo.com regarding a Quinnesec School reunion.  
Marilyn Mann*

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**Marilyn Reed** - April 12, 2019 at 05:45 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Robert James Varda.



March 01, 2019 at 01:51 PM



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



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

St Mary's Parish Family - February 27, 2019 at 05:37 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Karen Varda-Smith - February 26, 2019 at 03:52 PM



“ Holly McCarthy-Biolo lit a candle in memory of Robert James Varda



Holly McCarthy-Biolo - February 26, 2019 at 10:19 AM

KW

“ Thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of Hammer! He was a wonderful person. It was a pleasure to have met him. R.I.P Hammer❤️

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**kim wilson** - February 25, 2019 at 04:10 PM

LG

“ I'm sorry for your loss. He was a great person and will be missed. May memories of good times help your family through this difficult time.

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**Lynda and Tim Giguere** - February 25, 2019 at 01:29 PM

TP

“ I am so very sad to hear about the passing of Hammar. I have known him all of my life since I was very young and he always had a smile on his face every time I would see him. He will be greatly missed by many... my heart goes out to Kathy and to his family. All of my sympathy and prayers.

Sincerely,  
Tiffany Poupore

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**Tiffany Poupore** - February 25, 2019 at 09:05 AM

PP

“ I have great memories of Hammer...one of favorite stories was when he called in to work and told them he couldn't come in because half his herd got out! What he neglected to tell them was that he only had two cows. We laughed over that for years. God bless Hammer, and all of you. I'm sad I won't be able to attend his funeral. I'll be out of town. You're all in my prayers....all of you. Keep his memories close and you'll keep smiling. What a good guy.

*Blessing to you all,  
Love Paula Pieropon*

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**Paula Pieropon** - February 24, 2019 at 04:13 PM

KV

*Omg Paula I can hear him saying it! He was always saying the goofiest stuff that would make everyone laugh. Thank you for sharing with us:)*

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**Karen Varda-Smith** - February 27, 2019 at 02:39 PM

 Ann Forstrom

“ Pam, I'm so sorry for your loss. Sending prayers.

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**Ann Forstrom** - February 23, 2019 at 09:41 PM

RD

“ I have two excellent memories of hammer. The first one was when I was babysitting at 18 years old and I went to pick up my boyfriend at the time at the guards and the baby needed a bottle warmed up so he was walking by and he took the bottle and warmed it up for the baby. The second excellent memory I have is we had a house fire and when I came into the house after the fire department arrived there he was mopping my floors for me. You just don't forget a good guy like that! I am so sorry to hear about his passing Bob and I are truly sad. May you have comfort in the good memories left behind.

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**Robelle Degenauer** - February 23, 2019 at 07:11 PM

TM

*I loved Hammer. He always made me laugh and smile when I seen him. He was such a happy person. That's how I will always remember him. He will be missed by all who were lucky to know him. My heart goes out to his family and especially Kathy for I know he was the love of your life. My thoughts and prayers are are with you and your family. Love you, hugs.*

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**trena malm** - February 23, 2019 at 07:55 PM

DC

*I have known Hammer and family for many years. My Dad and Hammer worked for years together at the Road Commission and often said he was one of the best guys and workers. Whenever we called him from the Sheriff's Office on a road situation, you always knew the job would get done. Teresa and I will be out of town during the Funeral Service, please accept our deepest Sympathies. Hammer you were a dandy. RIP*

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**Don "Dugan" Charlevoix** - February 28, 2019 at 06:42 PM

TP

*“ Condolences to your family. Hammer was definitely a great guy and will be missed.*

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**Tom Pedrotti** - February 23, 2019 at 04:25 PM