



Ronald Matonich

March 13, 1944 - August 27, 2025

VULCAN- Ronald Michael Matonich age 81 of Vulcan, passed away peacefully at home on August 27, 2025, surrounded by loved ones after a courageous 12-year battle with prostate cancer.

Ron was born on March 13, 1944 in Ironwood, the son of the late Michael and Rose (Pertile) Matonich of Bessemer.

He graduated from A.D. Johnston High School in Bessemer, class of 1962. After graduation, he decided to further his education by attending Gogebic Community College, Michigan State University and graduated from Northern Michigan University with a bachelor of science degree in Biology.

Ron was employed by the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department in 1967 as an environmental health director, where he worked faithfully for 41 years until his retirement in 2009. His strong work ethic and commitment left a lasting impression on his children, coworkers, and community. During his tenure, he received the "UP Public Health Merit Award" issued by the Upper Peninsula Public Health Association and the "Distinguished Service Award" issued by the Michigan Association of Local Environmental Health Administrators.

Ron married JoAnn Degenauer on August 26, 1972 at St. Barbara's Catholic

Church in Vulcan. Ron and JoAnn celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 26, 2022 with family and friends.

He had a passion for sports at a very young age, learning to play them on the street in front of his house, and became a very good pitcher during his little league career with several no-hitters. Later in life, he fell in love with fast pitch softball and played for several years at the Northside ballfield in Iron Mountain. He was also a lifelong Green Bay Packers fan.

An avid outdoorsman who enjoyed fishing and hunting, at the age of 8 he started trout fishing in the Powdermill Creek location in Bessemer and later began lake fishing. He spent many summers camping at the Lake Chippewa Flowage in Hayward, WI., with his wife JoAnn, daughter Nikki and son-in-law Kevin and their children, where he caught many fish.

One of his favorite past-times was deer hunting. He loved telling everyone how much he enjoyed sitting in the deer stand before daylight waiting for the woods to come to life and listening to the wildlife wake up, even hearing a bobcat every once in a while. Another past-time he enjoyed was playing poker with his friends. They played nearly every week for over 50 years.

Ron is survived by his wife of 53 years JoAnn; daughter Nicole (Kevin) Nelson; son Todd (April) Matonich; grandsons Noah Nelson and Troy (Angel) Matonich; granddaughters Teagan Nelson, Brandi (Wyatt) Yost, Abigayle Matonich and Izzabella Matonich; sister Virigina (Kim) Langdon; brother Michael (Jody) Matonich; along with many great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his infant brother Gerald; sister Barbara Charles; and brother-in-law Ron Charles.

Family will greet friends on Friday, October 10 from 9 to 11 a.m. at St. Barbara's Church in Vulcan.

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

Interment will follow at Norway Township Cemetery with a luncheon to follow in the Church basement.

He will be deeply missed and remembered always and forever.

Cemetery Details

Norway Township Cemetery

Norway Township, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **10**. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

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

Memorial Mass

OCT **10**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

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

Tribute Wall

KB

“ Thinking of Ron and your entire family today. So many wonderful memories I have of Ron and all of you. From sledding down your hill all those winter days/nights, cookouts, cocktail hours, meeting in Randville for deer season and the countless nights of poker in our basement in Norway. Ron was a great friend, not only to my dad, but to all of us. He will be missed, especially that wonderful smile and laugh! Rest in Peace Ron and may God Bless the entire family.
Kevin Braspennickx

"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die," - Thomas Campbell

Kevin Braspennickx - October 10, 2025 at 11:08 AM



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

October 08, 2025 at 07:15 PM



“ Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Ronald Matonich.



October 08, 2025 at 07:15 PM

SC

“ Dear Joann and family-I'm so sorry for your loss and heartache you are going through. Ron was always good to me. I had fun being his partner in tournaments of cribbage and smear. Always a smile. When I was just married I lived close to his store and the first check I ever bounced was at his store. I went as fast as I could get to the store and gave them a good check. I avoided Ron in the office, I was so embarrassed. One day he asked one of the girls why I was avoiding him and they told him. The next time I saw him in the office he came up to me and put his arm around my shoulder and said I know why you've been avoiding me an is ok I'm not mad. Tears rolled down my face and thanked him. And I never bounced another check. May God Bless you and keep you in the palm of his hands.
Sandy Michaud

Sandy Rons co-worker - August 29, 2025 at 08:45 PM