



Wilford Swanson

January 19, 1926 - March 21, 2024

NORWAY - John Wilford “Willy” Swanson, age 98 of Norway, died Thursday afternoon, March 21, 2024, at the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center in Iron Mountain after a morning visit with his family.

Willy was born January 19, 1926, in Norway, the son of the late Charles and Agnes (Pohlson) Swanson.

Will grew up in Norway, attended Norway High School and proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corps during WWII. After basic training he was deployed to Iwo Jima where he was severely wounded and received a Purple Heart after 43 days of active combat duty. One of his proudest moments was seeing the American flag raised in victory at Iwo Jima.

He eventually recovered from his injuries and found work in Racine, WI. There, Will met his future wife, Betty Jane Olson, they soon married and went on to have five children. She preceded him in death on June 8, 1997 after 49 years of marriage.

Will and Betty enjoyed going to football games, both being avid Lions fans, traveling to Las Vegas and local casinos as well as being known for raising a garden, and yard, full of tomatoes. Will and Betty enjoyed taking drives to Amasa to enjoy their summer home. They spent those early summers fishing and visiting with friends in the beautiful U.P.

Will was never short of the company of friends. Many friends visited Will while he was in the VA. The family thanks Ron and Kathy, as well as Pete and Deann, for the hours they spent visiting Willy. Will was always up for a visit and never forgot a story or a face. Many hours were spent sharing stories with his friends and family about his life’s adventures. Will lived his life as a quiet example of how hard work, and love of family, is the secret to a good life. His family will continue to pass down these lessons to our future Swanson generations.

He was a lifetime member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Norway, a life member of the Norvulet Post #4581 VFW and life member of Hall-Dewinter Post #145 American Legion in Norway.

Will is survived by his son Gary (Marsha) Swanson of Kingsford; daughter Judy (Steve) Peterson, of Cincinnati, OH. thirteen grandchildren; many great grandchildren; great-great grandchildren; son-in-law David Johnson of Waucesha; daughter-in-law Karen Swanson of Wyoming; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife Betty; son Donald Swanson; and daughters Debra Sadorf and Lynn Johnson; brother Carl Swanson; and sister Betty Wenzel.

The Swanson family especially wants to thank the VA Hospital staff for the exceptional care that was given to our beloved family member while he called the VA his home for over a year.

The family suggest memorial contributions may be made to the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Visitation will be held on Monday, March 25 from 10 - 11:30 a.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Norway.

Funeral Services will be held on Monday at 11:30 a.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church with Rev. Dr. Michael Langlais, officiating.

Interment will follow at the Norway Township Cemetery, then Will's family invites friends and family to a luncheon at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Cemetery Details

Norway Township Cemetery

Norway Township, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 25. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
805 Iron Street
Norway, MI 49870

Service

MAR 25. 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (CT)

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
805 Iron Street
Norway, MI 49870

Tribute Wall

BE

“ Uncle Willy was one of my favorite uncles. He was always so happy-go-lucky. I admired his upbeat, optimistic personality from a child on. He was such a genuinely nice person.

Benetta - April 26, 2024 at 08:45 AM

MM

“ Mary McCarthy-Bray lit a candle in memory of Wilford Swanson



Mary McCarthy-Bray - April 04, 2024 at 11:19 AM

ME

“ Our condolences to Willy’s Family. He was well respected and will be missed. Mark & Mary Kay Ebeling

Mark ebeling - March 25, 2024 at 03:27 PM

CG

“ Uncle Will was the kindest man. He always had a smile on his face and sincere interest in others. I’m sure his children and grandchildren will miss him greatly. My sincere condolences to all of you. Cathy Swanson Glassford

Cathy Swanson Glassford - March 24, 2024 at 09:57 AM

FK

“ He was an awesome person and was good to my daughters Tara and Kristie He will be missed 😭

Faye Kirchoff - March 23, 2024 at 10:35 AM

GS

“ Gary: Sorry for the loss of your father, I always enjoyed visiting with him.

Gordon Sorensen - March 22, 2024 at 09:03 PM