



## Alan LaPlante

June 9, 1988 - June 9, 2011

Alan M. LaPlante, 23, of Traverse City, MI, formerly of Norway, died tragically in an accident on Thursday, June 9, 2011 in Traverse City.

Alan was born November 29, 1987 in Iron Mountain and lived most of his life in Norway. He graduated from the 8th grade at Norway Public Schools and finished his education in the special education classrooms of Mona and Steve. Life was not always easy for Al, coping with autism and bi-polar disorder, but he fought his demons as best he could. Al participated in Special Olympics and won many blue ribbons in swimming. Even though he hated the color blue, he was proud of his first place finishes. The past year, Al had made an independent life for himself living in a group home in Traverse City. He was very happy in his new home and had just started a new job as a janitor. He thought cleaning toilets was fun. Try to remember that the next time you are cleaning. The “hundreds and hundreds of dollars” he was making probably helped too. Al had a great sense of humor and loved bad jokes. He enjoyed building things with his dad and always looked forward to a trip to the casino where he always won. Al also enjoyed volunteering at the Salvation Army and wanted to be an organ and tissue donor. Shed a tear for the loss of such a precious life too soon, but mostly remember the laughter, the twisted sense of humor and the love he had for us all. “ANYTHING ELSE NEW THERE MOM?” Just that we will miss you so much Al and will love you forever. “OK, GOODNIGHT.”

Al leaves his parents, Linda and Dana LaPlante of Norway, who were so proud of the young man he turned out to be. Al cared so much about his family and friends. He also leaves his loving grandparents, Arlene and Glenn Butterfield of Iron Mountain, who Al loved going to camp with and playing poker with, most of the time winning all of the pennies. Also surviving are his grandma, Alice Brault of Sebring, FL, and many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and so many other people that cared so much about him.

Visitation will be on Thursday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home in Iron Mountain.

Memorial services will follow at 6 p.m. at the funeral home. Pastor Joe Basso will officiate.

Burial will be in Iron Mountain Cemetery Park.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial will be established in Al's memory.

Condolences to the family of Alan LaPlante may be expressed online at [www.ernashfuneralhomes.com](http://www.ernashfuneralhomes.com)

The family has entrusted the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home of Iron Mountain with the arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN **16**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Erickson-Rochon and Nash Funeral Home  
901 Carpenter Ave.  
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

## Memorial Service

JUN **16**. 6:00 PM (CT)

Erickson-Rochon and Nash Funeral Home  
901 Carpenter Ave.  
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

# Tribute Wall

JA

“ *I don't know you but I have to say this is the most loving obituary I have ever read. I hope you are all at peace.*

jane - January 13, 2014 at 03:58 PM

GW

“ *The Niles Hiltunen Memorial Family Support Fund would like to extend our heart felt sympathy. We lost our 14 year old son, Niles, May of 2009. We know how great the loss of a child can be and know there are no words to take away the pain..... just know you are in the thoughts and prayers of many. Grace*

Grace Michaud - WI - June 15, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ *Linda and Dana,  
Please know I am thinking of you and remembering you in prayer.  
Please accept my heartfelt sympathy.  
Blessings,  
Lori Manier*

Lori Manier - Norway, MI - friend -Norway School cafeteria - June 15, 2011 at 12:00 AM

B-

“ *Dana & Linda  
My deepest sympathy in the loss of your son Al. Hold those great memories close to your heart and let them comfort you in these days of sorrow. God Bless!*

Barb Menghini - Norway, MI - Retired Secretary - - June 15, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Dear Linda and Dana  
My deepest sympathy to you on the loss of your son, Alan. Please know many are thinking of you both and keeping you in their prayers. God be with you .

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Margaret Bray - Vulcan, MI - Friend/ NHS Food Service - June 15, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ To the LaPlante's,  
I'm sorry to hear of Alan's accident. I'm sure you have no idea who I am, but I thought should write something to let you know how Alan impacted my life. In 1997, I was a Senior at Norway High School. The second semester of my Senior year I became a student assistant. My first day of the semester, I was told to head down to the elementary and see Ms. Topjan. I was kind of nervous as I walked down there, because nobody had told me what my duties as a student assistant would be. I remember walking into the class and talking to Ms. Topjan. She told me about Alan. She asked if I would be able to take Alan to lunch, direct him through the lunch line, watch him during lunch, and then take him out to the playground and keep an eye on him. I remember thinking, "That's all? Sounds easy enough". Then came time to take Alan to lunch! I quickly realized this was going to be more difficult than I thought. My time with Alan really opened my eyes to the struggles of others. I enjoyed seeing him everyday. Seeing his smile and hearing him laugh was a way for me to forget about the stress of graduating and deciding on which college to attend. Even though I only spent an hour a day with him for a few months, I will never forget him. My thoughts and prayers go out to you in this time of need.

Brad

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Brad Perry - Norway, MI - June 14, 2011 at 12:00 AM

“ Dear Linda & Dana -- You have been in our thoughts and prayers continually. We are so sad for your tragic loss and love you both so much. You both were such fantastic parents -- Al was loved deeply and well. You both put so much love, devotion, time, and effort into caring, teaching, guiding, and raising your son. We have many fond memories of Al -- his jokes and humor, his thoughtful caring side, our special olympic events -- basketball, swimming, and bowling, as well as many classroom times. Some of the favorites were his concern for the fish so that they didn't get caught in those plastic six pack holders and how he'd be sure to remind us to cut them (we never even knew about this until Al taught us), the pride he took in the recycling program at Norway, how he look forward to and enjoyed our field trips to GAD, Dickinson County Processing Center, Schneider's, etc. The pure joy he took in these trips and in learning was so rewarding for our staff! We always admired his "tinkering skills" and how patient you both were as parents with all the "stuff" that he collected and how you both took time to explore and support his interests. His love and knowledge of the computer was amazing -- he was always showing and teaching the staff and his classmates new things. His love for his family and those he cared about was astonishing. He may have gotten upset over something or we'd have a "shoot out" as he liked to say, but it would blow over and he was always concerned in the end that "we're still friends, right?" He truly cared about the people he had relationships with. He could be very thoughtful and sensitive of others' feelings and that was so touching; he could be so kind at the most surprising times. Of course, the one person that was of ut most concern in his life at all times was his mother; he had such a bond with you Linda! You and Dana have been such unbelievably strong, loving, sensitive, kind, supportive parents -- every son should feel so treasured and loved in life! Al always knew how much he was loved. He felt it too from his grandparents as he'd talk a great deal about them as well. He enjoyed his times with them and would talk about the things he did with them. Thanks to all of you for your fine example! I thank you too, for the beautiful obituary you wrote. Many times it's tough to be in the world of "Special Ed" -- for the families and for those of us

*who work in it -- we all love these individuals so much and their can be so much pain along the way! The road typically isn't easy, but you both paved a way for your son and for many others with dignity, love, devotion, respect, kindness, and always kept your sense of humor. We just thank God for both of you, for knowing Al, and for what he taught us! As a believer in Christ, I truly believe Al is in a place where he is now "pain free" -- no more demons, no more difficulties, no more tears --*

*John 14:1- 3: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. I try to picture Al's mansion but can't -- I know it will simply be overfilled with all sorts of gadgets and all of his heart's desires and he will be content to be tinkering -- but in God's Realm, where he will have total peace, acceptance, joy, and love.*

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**Patrick & Mona Servia - Norway, MI - friends** - June 14, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ Dear Linda and Dana:

*Please accept my sympathy. I enjoyed getting to know Alan. He taught me a great deal about how to teach him. I can remember when we used to work on assignments. He would always approach a topic with a new/different spin on it. I can remember how he made up more "palindromes" than I did and how proud/happy he was to accomplish that. He will be missed.*

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**Carrie Zigman - Niagara, WI - Friend** - June 14, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JF

“ Linda , Dana

*Our hearts feel your loss . Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers . Alan was so special , kind , always had a smile he will be truly miss by all. Gods peace to you and your family .*

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**John and Pam Pietrantonio - friend** - June 13, 2011 at 12:00 AM

AF

“ Dear Linda & Dana,

*My thoughts & prayers go out to you in the loss of your "SPECIAL SON." As you know, over the years Alan and I shared many unique experiences, many of which I will remember forever. The best memory is how much Al loved you. Whenever we needed a "talk," his love for you was a topic that ALWAYS came up.  
GOD Bless you!!*

*Andy Hongisto*

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**Andy Hongisto - Friend/Principal** - June 13, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ Dear Linda and Dane, I have fond memories of Alan working with us in the kitchen. My deeest sympathy. You will be in my thoughts and prayers. Sorry I can't attend the wake; I'm leaving town today. My thoughts will be with you and your family. God Bless. Chris and the kitchen crew

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**Chris VanEynde - Norway, MI - friend** - June 13, 2011 at 12:00 AM

PF

“ Dearest Linda and family,  
I was so sorry to hear the tragic news about Alan. I was impressed with how his obituary was written as it rang true for me regarding his personality, his ways, his strengths and accomplishments. I just know that your heart is aching and I feel bad about this! You will be in my thoughts and prayers. Know that there are MANY people who care about you, your welfare. I hope you reach out when you feel you need to. You certainly deserve this as you have been a wonderful, lovely, strong, selfish advocate and mother! God Bless You, With Sincerity, Pam Witter/DIISD

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**Pamela Witter - Florence, WI - school friend - June 13, 2011 at 12:00 AM**

RF

“ Thinking of you

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**Ruth & Richie Steeno - Niagara, WI - friend - June 12, 2011 at 12:00 AM**

CF

“ It took me a couple of days to decide what I would have to say that would even come close to being a comfort to you Linda. Here is my best try. I spent many years with Al at school and I have a lot of memories of him. I remember doing a lot of school work with him, and I also remember Al trying to get out of a lot of school work! He had a tremendous amount of knowledge of the world and cared deeply about it. Al and I were together at school on September 11, and it left a lasting impression on both of us. I know that he loved his family and he would want you to remember him as he was when he was at his best. Laughing and looking beyond what was expected of him is his lasting legacy.

Love,  
Carol Skog

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**Carol Skog - Norway, MI - Friend - June 12, 2011 at 12:00 AM**