



Benjamin Smithson Jr.

November 4, 1929 - August 14, 2015

Benjamin Smithson Jr. 85, of Homestead, formerly of Iron Mountain and Alpha went to be with his Lord on Friday, August 14, 2015 at Evergreen Assisted Living in Kingsford. He was born on November 4, 1929 in Alpha, Michigan, the son of the late Benjamin Sr. and Vienna (La Pisto) Smithson.

Ben graduated from Alpha High School in 1947. He then joined the U.S. Air Force and served from 1947-1952 in the Korean War. Ben lived in Alpha and served as the Alpha Village Manager until 1977, when he moved to Iron Mountain. He worked at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources as a fire officer. For many years, Ben dressed as Smokey the Bear for area parades and school programs.

Ben was always very happy to announce that he was born and raised in Alpha, MI. He had a strong faith and faithfully prayed for his family and loved ones daily. He was a sweet and endearing man, who was generous and kind in heart and spirit. He loved his family and embraced everyone, his family and friends, his children and grandchildren with a compassionate and a giving spirit. He always made a point to tell everyone "I Love You!"

Ben was a faithful member of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and a life member of both the Uren-Cooper-Johnson American Legion Post

#50 and the VFW post in Alpha. He proudly wore his Air Force hat everywhere he went and easily struck up many conversations with others who had served. He enjoyed participating in Bible Studies and Worship Services with family and friends in Iron Mountain, at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Metropolitan, Abiding Word Church in Felch and faithfully attended Catholic Worship Services at Evergreen where he recently lived. He enjoyed traveling and bowling, and loved to attend dinner and dance events. Ben was dedicated to his family and enjoyed spending time with them. He loved to watch his grandchildren play; he was amazed at their energy and loved their hugs. Grandpa Ben (Midge) was always present and was a VIP with all of his family.

Ben married Gertrude L. Bara Kasten in August of 1968 and she preceded him in death June of 1994. He married Doris Lantz Grunlund Nault in March of 1999 and she preceded him in death in January of 2013.

Ben is survived by three children Steven (Heather) Smithson of Fredericksburg, VA, Ken Kasten of Homestead, WI, and Gayle (Ed) Gorman of Ironwood, MI, four stepchildren Regan (Deby) Grunlund of Howell, MI, Leon (Kathleen) Grunlund of Norway Lake, Debra (Allen) Dixon of Norway Lake, and Rosanne (Rex) Cosgrove of Sagle, ID, one sister Rita Pozza of Fairfax Station, VA, brothers and sisters-in-law Marge Smithson of Crystal Falls, Carolyn Smithson of Crystal Falls and Donna Edwards of Oscoda, MI; Herbert (Carol) Lantz, Don (Janet) Lantz and Blanch Lantz all of Felch, Rocky Rasmussen and Delores Lantz of Newberry Park, California, a beloved granddaughter whom he raised Katrinka Peterman, and many grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, including his namesake Benjamin Smithson III, nieces, and nephews.

He was preceded in death by three children Larry, Teri, and Bradley Smithson, brothers Russell Smithson and Lyle Smithson, brothers Earl Smithson and Richard Smithson (who died as small children), one sister Ruthann Weber,

and one brother-in-law Jack Pozza.

Visitation will be Saturday from 10:30am -12 noon at the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home. Funeral services will be Saturday at 12:30 at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Iron Mountain. Monsignor James Kaczmarek will celebrate the Mass of Christian Burial. A luncheon will be held at the Uren-Cooper-Johnson American Legion Hall following the services. Burial will be in the Evergreen Cemetery in Crystal Falls.

Flowers will be provided by the family.

Condolences to the family of Benjamin Smithson may be expressed online at www.ernashfuneralhomes.com

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

Cemetery Details

Evergreen Memorial Cemetery

Crystal Falls
MI 49920

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 22. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

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

Funeral Mass

AUG 22. 12:30 PM (CT)

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
500 Blaine St.
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Tribute Wall

BL

“ *My Condolences to the family of Ben. I was fortunate enough to meet Ben when I was assigned to the 63 rd Bomb Squadron at Davison Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona in the fall of 1950. We were together there until Ben was discharged. I again met up with Ben while working in Iron River and he was in Alpha. I enjoyed many great lunches at his mothers restaurant in Crystal Falls sometimes with Ben. I later worked in Iron Mtn when he came to work at the DNR in Norway. In all that time I only knew Ben as a very kind and caring person and a true gentleman and always having a good word to say about anyone and everyone. I will be unable to attend his services on Saturday as I will be attending a private mass with Bishop Rickens of the Green Bay Diocese in Door county. Ben will be in my prayers at that mass.*

Buck LaVigne

Buck LaVigne - August 21, 2015 at 08:44 PM

DD

Thanks Buck! Your words and you tales of Dad and you are an awesome tribute to both of you. He loved to tell about the "Good Old Days" working for the DNR and the many fine people he had met through the process. And for you to remind us of his mom's restaurant will identify with many friends and family members. Thank you so much for you condolences.

Deb Dixon

Debra L Dixon - August 25, 2015 at 04:37 PM

RL

“ I'm sorry to hear of Ben's death. He was a kind and good man, with a wonderful, subtle sense of humor. May he rest in peace.
Sincerely,
Randy LaLonde

Randall LaLonde - August 19, 2015 at 02:22 PM

DD

Thank you Randy! He will be dearly missed. His presence in our family was one of love and honor. We cherished who he was and were grateful with how he shared himself as "Dad" with all of his children, step-children and grandchildren..

Debra L Dixon - August 25, 2015 at 04:42 PM

RG

“ Thank you for your service to our country, and it was a pleasure working with you. RIP my friend.
Roger Grinsteiner retired fire officer Stephenson

Roger Grinsteiner - August 19, 2015 at 11:40 AM

DD

Thank you Roger, and thank you for your service as well!

Debra L Dixon - August 25, 2015 at 04:43 PM

PG

“ I have heard so many wonderful stories of Ben and know he was the kind and loving man that Rex and Anne told us of so many times. You are so very fortunate to have known him and I know you will miss him dearly. I am so sorry for your loss.

Patsy Gregory

Patsy Gregory - August 17, 2015 at 09:09 PM

DD

Thank you Patsy.....we will miss him yes, but we know that he had other plans to visit his father. He had a wonderful family and was a wonderful father to all.

Debra Dixon - August 17, 2015 at 10:30 PM