



## Dale T. Ward Sr.

April 14, 1938 - February 13, 2025

Dale Thomas Ward, Sr. , 86, of Iron Mountain, passed away peacefully on Thursday, February 13, 2025 at the Oscar G. Johnson VA medical center in Iron Mountain.

Born in Iron River Michigan to Thomas and Nydia (King) Ward. Dale grew up in Gaastra and attended Gaastra & Stambaugh schools until enlisting in the Navy at the age of 17. He served on aircraft carrier USS Randolph in division V1 maintaining jet catapults, aircraft arresting and recovery equipment.

In June of 1960, shortly after returning home from service, Dale witnessed a cave-in on highway 424 near Gaastra. The road gave way, swallowing a car containing two friends followed by a second car driven by a cousin, Marie Manform. Dale, his Father Thomas, with two others, descended into the cave-in and saved Marie & Richard Bonneti. Dale's good friend, Wayne Halgamo died at the scene. For his bravery, Dale was awarded the American Legion Medal for Heroism, as did his father.

On November 5, 1960 he married Barbara Fedrizzi at St. Cecelia Church in Caspian. In 1962 they moved to Iron Mountain to manage the Rancho Hotel which they co-owned with Barbara's parents, Walter & Rose Fedrizzi.

Dale earned his GED from Kingsford HS and later graduated from NMU's

mechanic's program. Dale worked at Town & Country Ford as a mechanic and service manager as well as a purchasing manager for F.H. Bathke and Michigan Airgas.

An avid golfer, Dale was a member of Oak Crest Golf Course for 50 years, served on the board and worked on numerous projects. As a member of the UPGA and for many years its Secretary Treasurer, he worked with golf courses around the region to orchestrate the annual men's golf championships and a tireless advocate of Jr golf across the UP. In 2018 he was honored for his contributions to golf at Oak Crest GC and across the UP and Northern Wisconsin. Among personal highlights, Dale played Pebble Beach and Harbour Town Golf Courses, and numerous rounds at Callawassie Island GC in South Carolina.

As a member of the Kiwanis Ski Club for 50+ years, Dale helped bring World Cup ski jumping to Iron Mountain. Dale traveled to many ski jumping tournaments around the region, and during a 25th anniversary trip to Austria in 1986, he and his wife, Barbara watched tournaments in Europe as the guests of National Austrian Jumping Coach, Elois Lipberger and his wife, Carlin Wedin.

Dale was also a member of the United Sportsmen's Club and the Amateur Trap Shooting Association of American. He traveled to many shooting tournaments state-wide and out of over 100 shooters was the state class B runner up.

Dale was also valued as a member of the Board at Dickinson County Memorial Hospital for 21 years and helped oversee the building of the new hospital.

One of Dale's prized possessions was the hunting camp he bought near Channing, just off the Michigamme River. There he spent time hunting and

fishing with his wife, sons Tom and Dale Jr, grandson Tony and friends. It was also a place for gatherings, playing cribbage and of course, drinking beer.

Dale formed many travel plans around visiting family. Dale and Barbara spent time during a number of winters with Bill & Cathy Ryan (Fedrizzi) in Florida and with their son Tom and his wife Janine in South Carolina. When traveling north or south they spent time with their daughter Kelly in Springfield Illinois, and made a special trip to see his daughter Kathleen in Boise Idaho.

Of all the great things that Dale had in his life, the greatest of all was the steadfast love of his wife Barbara, with whom he would have celebrated 65 years of marriage on November 5, 2025. Together they had four children of which he was proud, Thomas (Janine), Kathleen Heinze, Kelly Ward Danner (Jay) and Dale Jr (Donna). He also had four grandchildren he loved including Joey Forgette (Kelly), Hillari Runsat (Corey), Tony Ward (Kameron) and Ben Heinze (Chelsea), and great grandchildren, Zach McKinney & Harper Rose Runsat. He is further survived by his sisters-in-law, Cathy Ryan (Bill) and Donna Bertling Ward (Michael), and brother-in-law, Richard Fedrizzi (Connie). Dale also had numerous nieces and nephews and friends. His family gives special recognition to two of those friends, Bill Menza and Jim Flaminio.

Dale was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas and Nydia, his brother, Gerold (Marlene), Dennis (Betty), Carol Jean (Carl), Patrick and Michael. He was also preceded in death by his in-laws, Walter and Rose Fedrizzi.

The family extends its appreciation to all those who visited Dale during his final weeks, and a special thank you to the VA hospital and the Hospice Care Team for helping guide Dale to pass on peacefully and with dignity.

The family will conduct a private service this coming summer at Dale's

request.

Donations in Dale's name may be made to the Hospice Care Programs at the Iron Mountain VA Hospital.

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

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

# Tribute Wall

KL

“ Dale, you will be missed my friend. Dale was always there when I needed a project done at the club. He always offered to help. He loved Oak Crest and would do anything to make sure the club was successful. I will miss our talks and the laughs we had each week. Dale made it a joy to come to work. He came to the course to relax and enjoy the friends that he made throughout the years. Thanks for everything Dale! I hope you can now have that beer in heaven.



Kevin Londo

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Kevin Londo - February 20, 2025 at 03:35 PM

DC

“ Sorry to hear about my buddy Dale. Golfed with him at the U P 's in Sue Saint Marie. He was the only one that called me by my nickname Woodtick or just Tick. Rest in peace my friend. Hold a tee time for me.

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Donnie Curran - February 18, 2025 at 09:35 PM

CS

“ Our sincere condolences to Barb & family. My dad and Dale are probably having a game of cribbage by now with a few empty cans of beer on the table and a fresh one in hand. So many memories were made of two good friends over the years. May you find peace and comfort Barb in so many memories the two of shared.

RIP Dale

With sympathy

Cheryl & Tom Schorman

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Cheryl Schorman - February 18, 2025 at 03:01 PM

LB

“ Sending our condolences to Barb and family. Dale was kind, friendly, and down to earth. He and Buzz had a lot of golfing interaction, and there was not always a winner, but there was always fun. Rest in peace Dale. Sending special hugs Barb.

Lily Buzzo - February 18, 2025 at 02:26 PM

CP

“ My condolences to Barbara and family. Dale was a classmate and a dear friend. He was funny, kind and always concerned about his friends from Stambaugh High. Rest in peace Dale.

Carol Possanza - February 17, 2025 at 07:01 PM

DW

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



DW - February 17, 2025 at 04:37 PM

DJ

My dad played in many men's UPGA Championships, traveling all across the UP and Sault Ste Marie, CA. This was his last - AUG 2022 at Pine Grove.

Dale Ward Jr - February 18, 2025 at 10:56 AM

AD

“ Barb and Family, our deepest condolences to all of you. I sure will miss seeing him at Oak Crest. Dale was quite a guy and we loved harassing each other. He will be missed by many.

Amy Dixon - February 17, 2025 at 11:40 AM

MH

“ He was quite the guy ...condolences to his family □

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**Marian and Butch Hiatt** - February 16, 2025 at 05:40 PM