



Dean Schneckloth

Francis Drake

IRON MOUNTAIN - Francis R. "Smokey" Drake, 67, of 708 Houghteling St., Iron Mountain, died Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2004, at Dickinson County Memorial Hospital in Iron Mountain, after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Smokey was born on Feb. 3, 1936, in Crystal Falls, son of the late Francis W. and Mary (Process) Drake. He was raised in Mansfield and attended the one-room schoolhouse there until consolidation with the Crystal Falls School District. Smokey graduated from Crystal Falls High School in 1953 and then enlisted with the United States Marine Corps in 1954.

Smokey was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and the Good Conduct Medal for his service to his country. Upon being honorably discharged as a corporal, Smokey began employment with the Milwaukee Road Railway while attending Northern Michigan University. Working alongside cousins and lifelong friends, this was an experience he forever cherished. He graduated from Northern Michigan University in 1962 with a bachelor of science degree in geography.

Smokey married Carol Sue Larson on Feb. 1, 1964, at St Mary and St. Joseph Catholic Church in Iron Mountain.

He continued working with the railroad for a few years before enjoying 32 years as a social worker for Dickinson County, retiring in 1996.

Upon retirement he fulfilled his lifelong dream of building a cottage on his Mansfield property.

Along with dedicated Mansfield residents, he restored the one room schoolhouse bell and constructed a platform from which it now hangs and once again rings in honor.

He loved to travel and this took him back to his old Marine base in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. Smokey also visited Indiana Amish country where he made friends and was taught some time-honored wood working techniques which enhanced his already wonderful skills. He enjoyed trips to the western states and Canadian ski resorts with the Iron Mountain "Over the Hill" ski club. Smokey was a member of the St. Mary and St. Joseph Catholic Church in Iron Mountain and the American Legion Post 50. He loved people and had limitless interests and hobbies.

He is survived by his wife, Carol Sue; a daughter, Kerry Drake of Iron Mountain; a son, Todd (Jodi) Drake and their children, Kailee and Logan, all of Iron Mountain; a sister, Karen (Blair) Semke of Sheboygan, Wis.; a sister-in-law, Beverly Hendricks of Oklahoma; two aunts, Easter Rampanelli of Iron Mountain and Dorothy Utter of Detroit; two nieces, Kristen and Becky; three nephews, Lee, Mark, and Robert; and many cousins, friends, and his dog, Emmy.

Visitation will be from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday at the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home in Iron Mountain.

Funeral services will follow at 1 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Iron Mountain. Fr. Daniel Zaloga will offer the Mass of Christian Burial.

Burial will be in Cemetery Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Parkinson's Foundation.

Condolences may be expressed to the family of Smokey Drake at www.ernashfuneralhomes.com.

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

Tribute Wall

SB

“ My husband was diagnosed of Parkinsons disease 2 years ago, when he was 49. He had a stooped posture, tremors, right arm does not move and also a pulsating feeling in his body. He was placed on Senemet for 8 months and then Sifrol was introduced and replaced the Senemet, during this time span he was also diagnosed with dementia. He started having hallucinations, lost touch with reality. Suspecting it was the medication I took him off the Siferol (with the doctor’s knowledge) and started him on PD-5 natural herbal formula we ordered from AKNNI HERBAL CENTRE, his symptoms totally declined over a 3 weeks use of the AKANNI HERBAL Parkinsons disease natural herbal formula. He is now almost 51 and doing very well, the disease is totally reversed! (Visit [w w w.aknniherbscentre .com](http://www.aknniherbscentre.com))

susan baker - April 22, 2025 at 04:28 AM

SN

“ Mrs. Drake, Kerry Sue, and Todd. My condolences to all of you on the passing of your husband and father. Smokey was a great husband, father and friend to many of us. It was great to know him. I trust you find comfort in the Lord and cherish your memories. All the best from my family to yours. Stu

Stu Nelson - February 18, 2004 at 12:00 AM

GG

“ Dear Kerry,
Having heard of your Dad's illness some years ago, you come into my mind when visiting in Iron Mountain. Long illnesses are hard, but as you probably know, the grieving starts right when the illness starts. I know you will all miss him, but remember the good times shared. Give your Mom, brother and family our sympathy.
Gail and family

Gail F. Gustafson - January 21, 2004 at 12:00 AM

PL

“ Dear Kerry
So sorry to hear of your dad's passing. Having just lost my dad last month, I know how hard this time is. Hang in there, be strong and know that SOOO many people are praying for you and your family.
God bless!!!

Patty Lemke - January 21, 2004 at 12:00 AM

JF

“ Mrs Drake and family. My condolences to all of you..I was so sorry to learn of Smokey's death. We graduated together and rode the Mansfield bus to school all our lives. He was a friend and we will all miss him. With deepest sympathy.Jan Fruik

Janet Engstrom Fruik - January 19, 2004 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ *Mrs. Drake, Kerry Sue and Todd.*

I'm so sorry to learn of Smokey's death. I know today will be difficult but I hope you find it to be a celebration of his life and a comforting reminder that he not only touched your family but countless others. Have hope that you will be reunited one day. I know that was and is the conviction that made the loss of my father less painful. I'll be thinking of and praying for you all today and in the weeks to come. Kerry, I'll call soon.

*Love and sympathy,
Shareen*

Shareen Connors - January 17, 2004 at 12:00 AM