



## Joseph Parsons

October 30, 1916 - August 14, 2011

Joseph M. Parsons Sr, 94, of Kingsford passed away peacefully in his sleep on Sunday, Aug. 14, 2011 at Dickinson County Memorial Hospital.

He was born October 30, 1916 in a farmhouse on the Old Dixie Highway, just south of Norwood, Michigan (Upper Lower Peninsula near Charlevoix). He was the grandson of John W., who sailed from Cornwall, England in 1855 and found his way via Canada and southern Wisconsin to the northern Lower Peninsula where he became a pioneer homesteader in Banks Township. Joe's mother, Sadah, as a teenager, came by horse and wagon from Indiana to northern Michigan in the 1890's and married Joe's father, Albert, in 1898. Joe grew up in a small farmhouse on a hill overlooking the east side of Ellsworth Lake in Ellsworth, Michigan. As a young man he sometimes would swim home after a day's work at the Canning Factory on the west side of the lake. Joe was the youngest of four boys in the family and brother to three sisters. As a youth he thought nothing of walking nine miles from Ellsworth to Norwood to visit a favorite aunt. Joe graduated from Ellsworth High School in 1936 (one of seven graduates). After graduation he worked for Bon Ton Bakeries (renamed Michigan Bakeries in the 1940's). Joe was married to Betty Lone Bird on November 14, 1940 in Petoskey, Michigan. They were happily married for 69 years.

During World War II Joe entered the service from St. Ignace and trained at Soldier Field in Chicago. He served in England (1942-1945) with the Army

Airways Communication Squadron as a ground radio operator/direction finder and played a part in and earned a D-Day Invasion Ribbon.

Joe's working years as a Driver Route Salesman for Michigan Bakeries took him to most of the small restaurants and grocers in the northern part of the Lower Peninsula. Before the Mackinaw Bridge was built he would often deliver bread, buns, and bakery products on his day off to Mackinaw City restaurants swamped by traffic backups for the car ferries going to the Upper Peninsula. Joe was an avid fisherman and hunter in his younger years with brothers and friends gathering at his home in Petoskey, Michigan for the annual deer hunt. Joe and his wife, Betty, drove their truck camper to Alaska in the early 1970's and spent their later retirement years camping, fishing, and making friends at their favorite camping site, number 14, on Pretty Lake, north of Newberry, Michigan. Joe stayed active cutting wood, hauling water the old-fashioned way by hand-pump and celebrating life with good friends over "chimney fires" at their campsite. Joe and Betty moved from their Newberry apartment to Kingsford in 2008 to be closer to their son.

Joe is survived by a son, J. Merle (Elizabeth 'Betty') Parsons of Iron Mountain; a granddaughter, Lori (Shawn) Smith of Minneapolis; a grandson, Jeff Parsons, of Salt Lake City, Utah; a great-grandson, Ryan Paul Parsons, of Salt Lake City, Utah.

Joe was preceded in death by his wife, Betty, on August 19, 2010; by his parents, Albert & Sadah, by brothers Jack, Lloyd, and Harry and sisters Ruth, Mary, and Jane.

Graveside services will be at the Ellsworth Cemetery.

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

The family has entrusted the Erickson-Rochon and Nash Funeral Home of Iron Mountain and the Hasting Funeral Home of Ellsworth, Michigan with the arrangements.

# Tribute Wall

JS

“ Dad,

*You are at peace, at last. So long as memory lasts we will never forget you and your love of life and people. We pray that you are reunited in peace and tranquility with Mom and all those friends and family that have gone on before.*

*Your son*

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**J. Merle Parsons, Jr. - Iron Mountain, MI - son - August 20, 2011 at 12:00 AM**

JC

“ Dear Merle,

*Our sympathy to you and your family.*

*Your father lived an extremely interesting life! Thank you for shared it with us.*

*Parting brings such bittersweet sorrow. We believe there is a season for each of us to part...and this season has come for you and your "dad".*

*May your blessings be plentiful, your memories be comforting, and your father's long lived legacy live on in you and your grandchildren.*

*+ Joseph Merle, through the love and mercy of God, may He grant you rest and eternal peace.*

*+ God bless you Merle.*

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**Jeff and Lana Smith - Iron Mountain, MI - parishioners of I.C. Church - August 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM**

BF

“ *Merle So sorry to hear about your dad. I hope you take comfort in the fact that he lived a full and vigorous life. His history shows he was from the old school. Although I never met him sounds like the kind of man i would have liked to call friend.  
My deepest sympathy to you and Betty  
Bob McCauslin*

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**Bob McCauslin - Florence, WI - Friend** - August 16, 2011 at 12:00 AM

WF

“ *I'm sorry to read about your Dad's passing. I hope that everyone stays strong and endures this great loss as best that can be expected. Our prayers are with you.*

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**wayne dolatowski - goodman, WI - friend** - August 16, 2011 at 12:00 AM