



Thomas Johnson

December 29, 1948 - October 24, 2009

IRON MOUNTAIN -Thomas K Johnson, 60, of 220 Lincoln Street, Iron Mountain, passed away on Saturday, October 24, 2009 at Dickinson County Memorial Hospital.

Tom was born December 29, 1948 in Norway, Michigan, the son of Marion and the late Curtis Johnson. Tom was a lifelong resident of the Iron Mountain-Kingsford area. He graduated from Kingsford High School in 1967 and Northern Michigan University in 1972, where he received his bachelor's degree in education. He married the former Laurie LaVarnway on October 18, 1980 at the First Lutheran Church in Iron Mountain. Tom retired from his joint position of Iron Mountain-Kingsford Community School Director and Iron Mountain Athletic Director in June of this year.

Tom worked in community education for 39 years ? the first 13 as the Community School Director in Norway and the last 20 as Director for the Iron Mountain-Kingsford Community Schools. He truly enjoyed his profession because it brought him in contact with many different people off all ages. He was very proud of the programs that Community Schools sponsored. Tom also served as the Iron Mountain Athletic Director for 15 years, where he made every effort to attend every sporting event possible, and never missed a downstate tournament in any sport. He loved being a Mountaineer and was named the 2009 U.P. Athletic Director of the Year.

Tom was active in many fund-raising activities during his career, initiating the idea of \$100 sport raffles, which have been widely used ever since. He secured two \$400,000 grants, one for the track at Norway High School and the other for equipment in the Izzo-Mariucci Center. Tom was a committee member for the Iron Mountain Centennial Celebration, the Gus Macker basketball tournaments, and the Izzo-Mariucci Golf Classic.

Tom was past president of the Upper Peninsula Community Education Association, the U.P. Fastpitch Softball Association, and the U.P. Independent Basketball Association.

Tom enjoyed an active life. He participated in fastpitch softball and hardball for many years, independent basketball and at the age of 40, spent his free time on the golf course. His hobbies included refereeing basketball, playing cribbage with his "buddies", hunting, and gathering friends for social activities. His many friends were like a second family to him.

Tom leaves his wife Laurie, three daughters, Kristen of Port Washington, Wisconsin, Brooke and Ashlee of Iron Mountain, and two grandchildren Megan Keltner and Collin Punzel. He leaves his mother Marion, a brother Todd (Dawn) Johnson of Kingsford and sister Debbie (Gordy) Jacobson of Felch, mother-in-law and father-in-law Roy and Noleen LaVarnway, his sister-in-law and golf partner Jodi LaVarnway, brother-in-law Michael (Heather) LaVarnway and his nieces and nephews. In addition to his grandparents, he was preceded in death by his brother-in-law David LaVarnway and his dear friend Richard (Dick) Brown.

Tom loved life and fought tirelessly for his, with the guidance of his friends, Dr. Gus Morel and Dr. Steve Leonard.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday from 3:00 until 8:00pm at the Erickson-Rochon and Nash Funeral Home of Iron Mountain. Parish prayers will be recited at 7:30pm at the funeral home. Funeral services will be held on Wednesday at 10:00am at American Martyrs Catholic Church in Kingsford. Fr. Joseph Gouin will offer the Mass of Christian Burial.

A group of his close friends will serve as pallbearers and honorary pallbearers.

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

Condolences to the family of Tom Johnson may be expressed online at www.e rnashfuneralhomes.com

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

Tribute Wall

KL

“ Dear Laurie,
I am truly saddened by Tom's death. He was more than just a friend, he was an amazing person. His passing will not only leave a void in our hearts, but in the hearts of everyone who knew him. Tom's memory will always remain deep within my heart. My sincere thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.
With deepest sympathy, Kelly

Kelly Potter Love - November 01, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ *The Johnson Family, Our community was lucky to have someone like Tom and someone that was such a great influence in so many lives. He will be greatly missed! My thoughts and prayers are with you.*

Jason Bray - October 30, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AH

“ *Dear Brooke and Family,*

I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you all during this difficult time.

Angela Hammill - October 30, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TK

“ Laurie:
My thoughts & prayers go out to you & your family. Tom was an outstanding person & great friend. To say he will be missed is an understatement. I live in St Louis and did not see as much of him as I would have liked , when I did it was like we were back in High School again.
My Best to your family

Tim Kearney - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CP

“ Laurie & family,

What a wonderful tribute to a remarkable man. You never realize how many lives one person has touched until they are gone. Wishing you comfort in your memories and peaceful hearts. I'll keep you in my prayers. If I can ever be of any help (from someone who's been there) please let me know.
With Deepest Sympathy,
Chris

Chris Hanson Paoletti - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LT

“ *Our sympathy goes out to you and your family, Tom was one of the good guys. I remember how much he did for the community schools program.*

lynn and walt theeck - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

EO

“ Laurie and family,
My thoughts and prayers go out to you at this difficult time. I will always remember everything he did for us during my coaching time at Iron Mountain. He truly impacted not only my life, but everyone that knew him. He will be deeply missed, but forever remembered. May the love of your family and those surrounding you get you through this difficult time.

Erin O'Brion - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DN

My name is David Nyquist, Tommy was a fraternity brother of ours. One time when we were freshmen at northern we all went to Daytona beach for spring break. Anyone who knew Tommy would understand this. On the very first day we arrived Tommy took a running start wanting to be the first one in. In those days very few of us had all of our original teeth. Well Tommy hit the first wave with his mouth open and from then on his teeth were gone. Great guy true story. Love you Tommy Bismarck

David Nyquist - April 23, 2025 at 06:57 AM

SP

“ Marion and the Johnson Family, I am thinking of you during this most difficult time. Tom was a great man and did so much for the community. My sincerest sympathies to you. Shannon Pickett Powell

Shannon Powell - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family during this time of sorrow. Those of us here that had the privilege of working with Tom as fellow athletic directors knew him as a dedicated public servant who devoted his career to doing the right thing for kids. He will be sadly missed. Tom now has "the best seat in the house."

Munising Public Schools - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KK

“ *My deepest sympathies to the entire family. Tom will be greatly missed. God bless you all.*

Keith Keltner - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BT

“ *My sympathy to Tom's family and to the community for this loss. You just do not find people like Tom everywhere, but everywhere you went, there he was. He was a tireless guy who really knew what it meant to take care of people because it was those little things that meant alot. He will be missed.*

Brian Tass - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JR

“ *Tom was the kind of guy who you walked away from always feeling, better, even if you just lost 20 bucks to him in a cribbage game or counting cars as we went down state. The community looses a true good guy. I was lucky enough to work with 4 of the nicest people in the world Tommy , Dick, Bobby and Bill. Tommy was always unbelievable nice to me. I feel like I lost an older brother I will miss him, my condolences Laurie.*

Jerry Roberge - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ *Tom was a very special person. I'll remember him in my heart as will everyone who knew him. His legacies are the friends he helped and the family he cared for. God Bless.*

Glenn Sjolholm - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

HR

“ *Dear Laurie and family,*

My prayers go out to you, your family, and friends. I enjoyed talking to Tom, and may God bless you and comfort you during this time

Henry Krell Jr. RPh PharmD

Henry Krell Jr. PharmD RPh - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CK

“ *My deepest condolences to Laurie, Brooke, Ashlee & Family. Tom was always there supporting us and has had a major impact on so many lives. I am truly thankful for everything he has done for me over the years. He will be greatly missed by everyone. My prayers are with your family.*

Chris Kelm - October 28, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AR

“ *Laurie and family,*
My sincere condolences. I remember Tom as a tireless worker at the U.P Community School Games. He worked so hard and yet always kept a smile on his face and retained his sense of humor. My daughters benefited from the wonderful community school programs that he helped make possible. Our community has lost one of it's finest people.

Alice (Ouimette) Reed - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ *Brooke and Family*
I am very sorry for your loss.
To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die. Thomas Campbell

Kevin Braspennickx - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LI

“ TO Tom's family : Tom was a pleasure to take care of, he never lost his sense of humor A great loss to all of Dickinson County

lisa(steen)wangerin - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

GL

“ Dear Laurie, Brooke, Ashlee, and Family,
My deepest condolences to you. Tommy was one of the greatest people I knew and I will always have the utmost respect and appreciation for everything he has done for me and the Community. He will be greatly missed by many, many people. I am thinking of you and praying for you in this most difficult time. With warmest regards and memories, Gabe

Gabe Leonard - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Dear Laurie and Family. Although our paths have only crossed a few times over the years, I can not express the admiration and the respect I have for Tommy. He was always at the door with a smile and a handshake before and after every game. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

James St.Onge - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LF

“ I just want to thank Tom for all of his help and support that he gave my family over the years in wrestling, football and in life. His passion for sports and compassion for the students/community will be missed but not forgotten. My deepest sympathy to all of the family.

Lee Formolo - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

RL

“ Our thoughts are with Tom`s family & friends during this sad time.

Robert & Lori Lohfink - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BA

“ Laurie , girls and family you have our heartfelt condolences all will miss Tom very much. I have so many fond memories from the past and know how much he loved you and all his friends as well as family !! It is hard to believe that he is gone in life but he will never be forgotten by family and friends that is for sure. He touched so many lives over the years that he will be miss by them all. Take care and may God Bless you all Brian

Brian and Cherly Adams - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TH

“ Man, I loved that smirk he always had on his face. He was truly one of the good guys. Our family always respected his spirit for kids and life. Especially GOLF! My condelences to the family. He will be missed.

Trevor Hewes - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ Dear Laurie and Family, Our hearts are heavy with sadness. We will remember Tom's loyalty, energy and enthusiasm for life. Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers.

The Spartan Basketball Family - October 27, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ Laurie and Girls, Thank you so much for sharing your husband and father with everyone. He made a difference in so many people's lives. I hope that his great spirit is passed through to the young generations coming up in your family. I can't tell you how much I appreciated everything that Tom did for athletics. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this sad time.

Amy Papp - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DP

“ Dear Laurie, Brooke, Ashlee & Family,
I pray you will all be comforted by the indescribable love of Jesus, heart-warming memories, and the love and support of friends and family. I have nothing but wonderful memories of Tom Johnson. He was an incredible guy, and I know he will be missed.
Hugs and many prayers for you all,
Devon

Devon Phillips - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ Laurie & Family, Tom was one of a kind. I don't know of anyone who loved life more than he did. He always brought a smile to everyone around him. He will be greatly missed.

Larry Siegler - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you. I will always remember Tom for the giving person he was, his sense of humor, quick smile and sense of community which were his trademarks. I will truly miss him.
God Bless.
Paul & Colleen Polfus

Paul Polfus - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

GM

“ Dear Laurie & Family,
We were so very sorry to hear of Tom's death. In all the many years we have known him....he was truly my best friend while working at NHS.

Gene & Jo Melchiori - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ Tom was a true warrior when it came to enhancing the lives of those in the community.

Jim Hagerty - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DO

“ thoughts and prayers are with the johnson family..you will have so many great memories of this wonderful person. i always considered tom a true friend..may God bless him..

david st onge - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ Tom was a special guy who will be missed by many..
Our deepest sympathy to his family and friends.

Barb & Bill Menghini - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ Tom was simply one of a kind; tireless in his endeavors that enhanced our community. He will be greatly missed as both as a person and a leader. Condolences to his family and to all who called him a friend.

Therese Bujold - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KW

“ Our thoughts and prayers go out to your family at this difficult time. God bless.

Kevin and Joy (Hyrkas) Waldbillig - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

NW

“ I will sadly miss Tom's smiling face coming into the office. He has touched my life in so many ways during the time I have known him. You have my deepest sympathy.

Naida Weinert - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ My thoughts and prayers are with your family at this time. Mr. Johnson was a great guy.

Tiffany Sines - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ Tom will be greatly missed. Sincerest sympathies and condolences from my family and I.

Keith Huotari - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BR

“ My heartfelt condolences go out to all of Tom's family and friends. Tom cared so much for the community and was always working to find ways to improve education around the area. I can remember him being there to present me a trophy at a 4th grade spelling bee as well as following our IMHS Wrestling team to Battle Creek. For that and all the athletic seasons that he was an integral part of, the hot summer days spent organizing youth sports, and the countless hours spent advocating for our community, we all owe Tom a big THANK YOU.

Bill Rosene - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PG

“ As Secretary of the MPC I would like to express sympathies to Tom's family from all the member schools. Tom was a big part of the conference for many years and strove to always make it better. He was a great person to work with.

Patty Gagnon - October 26, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MP

“ May the love of those around you, help you through the days ahead.

Mark Pontti - October 25, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ Tom was such a special person. He impacted my life a great deal for the better. What a kind and gentle soul! My deepest sympathy to all the Family. God bless.

Jill (Welty) Charlier - October 25, 2009 at 12:00 AM