



## Eugene Kowalski

May 22, 1931 - December 25, 2011

Eugene Noel Kowalski, age 80, a resident of Royal Oak for the past 54 years, died December 25, 2011 at Beaumont Health System in Royal Oak. He was born May 22, 1931 in Detroit to the late John and Minnie Kowalski of Pompano Beach, FL. Mr. Kowalski was an Oak Park police officer from 1955 to 1990, retiring as a lieutenant. In retirement, he was a court officer for the City of Berkley for 10 years. He served during the Korean War as a corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps. He enjoyed woodworking, hunting, fishing, evening pontoon boat rides and spending time with his wife and family. He is survived by his wife, Virginia Raymus Kowalski; the couple married May 22, 1954 in Detroit; children, Linda Kowalski of Gladwin and John Robin Kowalski of Troy; daughter-in-law, Joanne Ken Meyer Kowalski-Meyer; brother, Neil Kowalski of Ft. Lauderdale, FL; grandchildren, Jason Lindsey Paulick, Tara Nick Schmidt, Brandon Kowalski, Douglas Kowalski, Kelly Angus and Kerrie David Hinkle; and great grandson, Jacob Paulick. He was preceded in death by his son, Walter Kowalski, on January 10, 2001. The visitation will be Tuesday 5-8 p.m. and Wednesday 1-8 p.m. at the Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W Eleven Mile Road 4 blks. E of Woodward, Royal Oak. Mr. Kowalski will lie in state Thursday 10 a.m. until the time of service 11 a.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Royal Oak, with the Rev. Thomas Scherger officiating. Memorials to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 814 N. Campbell Road, Royal Oak, MI 48067. Share your memories at [www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com](http://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com).



# Tribute Wall

DH

“ *The Kowalski Family, one of my first memories of Uncle Gene is a ceremony of putting his service revolver away in a locked box on the top shelf of the coat closet when they came to visit. It was important to him that us kids learned guns were not a curiosity, not to be handled. My brothers and I learned to respect guns, it was a good lesson. One of many, I'll miss uncle Gene and my dad and all the things I learned from them. Love and happy memories Dawn Haase.*

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**Dawn Haase** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ *To Ginny, I met Gene when he was my first boss at the Capital Theater in Detroit where I was the candy girl. I thought he was cute but then he introduced me to his best friend Donald. From then on it was Gene & Ginny and Don & Joan. We dated while Don & Gene did their time in the marines then married in the summer of '54 celebrating only 2 weeks apart. We raised families together visiting often, even vacations at the lake. Gene has now gone to join Don, Gene P. and Ed in heaven, in my heart I can hear their laughter and reminiscence, best friends forever. I keep him in my heart with love, Joan Haase*

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**Joan Haase** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JT

“ *Dearest Kowalski family, I have such fond childhood memories of all the cherished times my family shared with your family. Gene's contagious laugh and smile will never be forgotten by those of us who were honored enough to have known him. God bless each and everyone of you. Stay strong for each other.*

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**Jacquelyn Treffert** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BG

“ Dear Linda, family and friends, Each in our own way, we know what a gem we had in Gene Kowalski. Friendly, kind, happy... A special man that will be remembered for making our lives brighter. Our thoughts are with you.

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**Bob and Deb Galler** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ Dear Linda, Our heartfelt condolences to you and your family at this time. Memories and love for your dad live now forever in your heart and his spirit with you always. A father's love is especially cherished. God bless! Denise & Bill

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**Denise & Bill Willis** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ Sorry to miss your services Thursday I understand it went quite well. Rest now in the knowledge that you touched the hearts of so many and will be greatly missed by them.

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**Larry Cain** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ Linda, Sorry to hear about your father's passing. My heart goes out to your whole family. I can not begin to express the deep sorrow I feel for you and your family. Don & Jan Silk

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**Don and Jan Silk** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ John, My condolences to your family. My thoughts are with you at this time.

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**Tim Berrington** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ Dear Linda, You never really know how your parent affects the lives of others. Say the name Gene Kowalski and the first thing that comes to mind is waking up to the neighbor at the lake whistling as he worked in his garage. His heart was big and his laughter even bigger. I have missed those sounds for a few years now. No matter what age you are, when a person loses a parent they grieve as a child. My prayers are with you.

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**Cheri Burnash Martin** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ So sorry to hear of the passing of Gene. Will always remember the time we had with all of you at Pratt Lake. He was a special person. Love and prayers to all of the family

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**Jim & Sandy Baker** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ My condolences and prayer go out to you & your family John during your time of loss. I know that you are very proud of your father & that he was a very important part of your life. May his memories live on in you, your family & friends. God Bless...

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**David Szlezynwier** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LE

“ Dear Friends, I am so sorry for your loss my thoughts and prayers are with you in this time. I wish the best for you all and peace for your heart that the one you love has gone to a better place and one day you will see each other again. God bless you all may you not leave a open spot in your heart from your loss but fill it with the memories of this amazing person that God has blessed you with for a part of him will never leave you.

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**Lyndsay Eaton** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

YR

“ To my dear friend, Linda, and her family, my thoughts and prayers are with you. May you find solace knowing that your beloved father, husband, and grandfather is experiencing a peace-filled life with God in Heaven, and that he will continue to be with you in spirit, until you meet again. Yvonne

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**Yvonne Rousseau** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ So sorry to hear about your father John. Not an easy time for you and Robin but I hope you find comfort from everyone around you. Sending my hugs. Jean

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**Jean Facer Brown** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

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**Jean Facer Brown** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RT

“ I started working With Oak Park Public Safety in June 1963 I had met Gene, then I retired in 1989 I worked with him as a patrol Officer and in later years as a Desk Officer I was in that position working with the shift commanders with Gene being one of them. My respect was always very high for him and I always referred to him as Lt. Kowakski I only referred to him as Gene prior to my retirement in 1989 he influenced a lot of Officers including myself over the years and I was proud to know him. I'm deeply sorry for your loss. Russ

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**Russ Thomas** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RC

“ Ginny and family: Very sorry to hear about Gene's passing. I have very fond memories of our time spent together especially at Oak Park DPS. Take care. Dick Cain

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**Richard Cain** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JK

“ I am so sorry to hear of Gene's passing. I met Gene when he worked at the City of Berkley in the court. He was always smiling and whistling. He was such a pleasant man. My prayers and thoughts go out to the family at their time of loss.

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**Janice Kobert** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LG

“ Papa Geno will be greatly missed by so many. His warm smile, a twinkle in his eye, a hearty laugh & a big bear hug. Since I met him 20 years ago he always greeted me with "Hey Lee, how ya doin?" so glad to have known this wonderful man. XO

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**Lee Ann Gonyou-Ather** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JK

“ Gene Kowalski became my father in law in 1982 but that was just the start of a wonderful and special relationship. He soon became the strength that got me through the rough times. I knew I could call him any time of day and he would rush over and take charge when I needed him to. Many people told me that he considered me more of a daughter than a daughter in law. I considered him my second dad. After my dad passed, I found myself asking Gene for the fatherly advice I could no longer go to my own dad for. We loved spending time with him. We have special memories of times at Pratt Lake together, a place he loved and enjoyed so much. The boys loved to go on the pontoon boat fishing with Bapa. I am pretty sure it was more for the conversation than the fishing. Gene was one of the special ones that come into your life and touch your heart and soul. I will never forget the special times we shared. You were many things to me but most of all, my friend. I will love you forever.

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**Joanne Kowalski-Meyer** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

GK

“ It was 1979 when I started working for the Oak Park Public Safety Dept. Despite being a bit unsure around the Dept, Lt Kowalski always had a way to make me feel at ease & welcome. If you messed up he'd let you know about it, but then that would be the end of it. Like everyone says, you always knew where you stood. His great big beaming smile & loud booming voice, were Gene's trademarks, as well as always having a song he was willing to share. There was NO doubt that he loved his job & his food, but more importantly enjoyed life to the max. Table 17 in the sky awaits Papa Gino, I'm sure he'll be a frequent guest. Take care big guy, eternal rest & peace.

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**GARY KOESTERS** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ Dear Kowalski family, Cannot tell you how much Popa Gino affected my life. So many great memories that will remain forever... He was loved and respected by all. Jim Babbish

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**Jim Babbish** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BG

“ We only met Mr. and Mrs Kowalski once, when we were visiting our daughter Robin and her husband John in Michigan, so we really didn't know them well. All I can say is that parents that raised a son as loving and dependable as their son John have to be really good people. Through Robin and John we know how Mr. Kowalski has kept up a good outlook and never gave up, showing great strength of character. All our thoughts and sympathy to the family at this time of great sorrow. Bud and Sandy Gamble

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**Bud and Sandy Gamble** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ I just wanted to say how much I love and miss my Grandpa. He was the best grandpa anyone could ever have. He loved us kids so much and never let us feel anything but loved. He sure was an amazing man. I am forever blessed by him and my "Nana". They have done so much for our family. I love you "Bapa" and you will be forever in my heart. Love always, Tara

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**Tara Schmidt** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

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**Tara Schmidt** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ As my first Lieutenant on ?D? platoon, I can remember Gene arriving at work daily with a smile on his face while driving his light blue ford ranger. As a ?new guy?, I was happy to be assigned to ? D? platoon because you always knew where you stood with Lt. Kowalski. As long as you didn?t write any PA300 violations and did your job; to include a speedy delivery of a Primos box lunch, he made it a point to take care of you. When he retired, he took the ? good ole days? with him. Godspeed Gene Kowalski. Andrew Potter Oak Park DPS-Retired 1989-2006

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**Andrew Potter** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BH

“ Dear Kowalski Family, I was a young officer just starting at Oak Park PD and I was assigned to ?D? Platoon and Lt. Kowalski. After my first month I realized how lucky I was to be assigned to Lt. Kowalski?s platoon. His honesty, integrity and patience were so greatly appreciated and help set a standard for which I have never forgotten. I have never forgotten his infectious laugh and whistling. I was and am so proud of the fact that I was assigned to D platoon and Lt. Kowalski and that I was able to learn from such a wonderful person. He may be gone but he will never be forgotten and the lessons he taught will be with officers for many, many years to come. God Bless you ?papa Geno?, thank you for all you did for us. God Bless. Sgt. Brent Hostutler Retired OPPD 2002

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**Brent Hostutler** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ My Condolence to the Kowalski Family. Lt. Kowalski was a wonderful person. It is ironic that the Lord took him on Christmas Day. My daughter, Bernadette said that he was a Jolly Santa Claus and always had a smile on his face and a hug for you. His laugh could be heard through out the station and you knew who it was. Otherwise he was whistling and you knew who it was. The angels will have his wings waiting for him. God Bless all of the Kowalski's and give them the strength they need during this time of sorrow. Just remember you take your memories with you forever.

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**Barbara Ciesinski** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ I'm going to miss my "Pa" Kowalski with all my heart. He always had a hug, a smile, and a kind word for everyone. When he smiled, the world lit up like sunshine after the rain. He was a wonderful father, husband, grandfather and man. I know Wally had the best Christmas present of all, his father. They are together again in Heaven. May beautiful memories of "Pa" help soften the sorrow of his loss.

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**Darlene Leicy** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JE

“ I will miss my Sunday hug!!!!

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**Jan Eisenhart** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Dear Kowalski Family, I wish to extend my condolences to you for the loss of a wonderful man. He was my first LT. in Oak Park and I respected him immensely. You always knew where you stood with LT. I still remember hearing him whistle throughout the station. I only had a few years with him in Oak Park but he had a lasting effect on my career. I am proud to say that I was one of his boys from the old ? D platoon? he will be greatly missed. God Bless you in this time of sorrow. PSO Martin Smith Oak Park 1987-2005

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**Martin Smith** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MM

“ Dear Kowalski's I had the good fortune of meeting Gene later in life. I knew of Gene and Ginny thru others, but got to personally know them when Gene & my Dad shared a Rehab room a few years ago. What a remarkable man. When Gene & my Dad who was quite ill, as it turned out, living his last days Gene made those days happy, filled with joy, kindness & shared humanity. What a man. When Dad had a medical problem 1 evening in the rehab & the staff didn't answer as quickly as they should have, Gene offered to call the Fire Dept to get my Dad some much needed assistance. I have 8 siblings that will always remember Gene for that kindness towards our beloved Dad. Gene was a gentle Giant to us, much like our own Dad. To all of you Kowalski's we Morrison's cannot thank you enough for sharing your Dad with ours & us! They are now up in heaven together, sharing a tall cold one & having some great laughs. No doubt keeping a eye out for us! As is their way. Hugs to all

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**Maureen Morrison** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ I loved Gene Kowalski for the amazing man he was. He was kind and caring with a great sense of humor. His twinkling eyes and sincere smile would brighten any place he was. In the 41 years I have known him, Mr. Kowalski was everything a good man could be, a family could hope for, a friend could wish for and his legacy of love will live on through those of us who were blessed to have him in our lives. Sending love and hugs to the Kowalski family. May the memories of good times shared bring you comfort. XOX

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**Candy Ather-Putman** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM