



Francis D. McKinnon

January 21, 1928 - March 30, 2025

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Francis “Frank” McKinnon. A beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend, who passed away on March 30, 2025, at the age of 97. Frank was born on January 21, 1928, in Royal Oak, Michigan and recently lived in Shelby Township.

Frank was a man of many passions, one of them being camping with his late wife, Geneva. They were seasonal residents of Sandy Pines Recreational Community near Grand Rapids, MI and snowbirds in Lake Worth, Florida for over 20 years. A lover of cards, Frank spent countless hours enjoying a game of euchre with friends and family. He even passed on his love of the game by teaching the staff at his nursing home how to play. He was also known for his hearty love of food, especially hot dogs grilled over a campfire and coney dogs, were among his favorites.

Professionally, Frank spent many years dedicated to his work at Chrysler’s Eldon Avenue Axle plant. He retired as the proud president of the U.A.W. Local 961 union, where he served for 12 years. Frank’s dedication to his colleagues and the labor movement was a significant part of his identity.

Frank was passionate about politics, especially an unwavering support for the Democratic Party. He served as the Democratic Field Representative for the State of Michigan in the 1950s. He personally met many influential figures such as Jimmy Carter, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. He also marched in two pivotal Civil Rights protests alongside prominent leaders like Jesse Jackson and John Lewis. Frank’s commitment to justice, equality, and making the world a better place was truly inspiring.

A lifelong sports fan, Frank was especially fond of Detroit’s sports teams, with the Detroit Tigers holding a special place in his heart. Frank’s love for his hometown teams was a constant throughout his life.

Frank loved being the center of attention, and no gathering was complete without a joke or

an entertaining story. He touched the hearts of all who knew him. Frank is the loving father of Lenore (Joe) Gurdziel, Sharon (Elmer) Smith and Debra Lang. Proud grandfather of 6 and great grandfather of 10. He is predeceased by his beloved wife Geneva (Champine), his daughter Kathleen McKinnon, and his four brothers.

A Memorial Visitation will take place on Thursday, April 10th, from 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 8459 Hall Rd. (3Blks E. of Van Dyke) Utica, MI . A Funeral Mass will be held on Friday, April 11th, with instate at 9:30 AM until the time of the Memorial Mass at 10:00 AM, at St. Isidore Catholic Church, 18201 23 Mile Road (northwest corner of Romeo Plank and 23 Mile Road) Macomb, MI.

Rest in peace, Frank. Your stories, jokes, and warm spirit will never be forgotten. Please share a memory with his family at www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com

Cemetery Details

Resurrection Cemetery

18201 Clinton River Road
Clinton Township, MI 48038

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

APR 10. 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Instate At Church

APR 11. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Isidore Catholic Church
18203 23 Mile Road
Macomb, MI 48042

Memorial Mass

APR 11. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Isidore Catholic Church
18203 23 Mile Road
Macomb, MI 48042

Tribute Wall

JS

“ As I think back about my time with Grandpa Frank today, I think of so many stories. Stories including travel, family events at their house on Acadia, and all of the unbelievable experiences he had.

I think Grandpa's favorite story was of how he met Grandma and their courtship. How tough it was to get that first date with Grandma, all the auto parts he had to buy and how tough her parents were to win over. Then all the good times they had while dating, from grabbing Boston Coolers in Detroit to watching tv at his family's house with his brothers and her sisters. Over time they raised 4 daughters together, enjoyed countless vacations, and were blessed to watch their grandchildren grow.

Grandpa Frank was a good Grandfather. I have so many memories of camping at Sandy Pines, all of our family Holidays and parties in their basement, New Year's sleepovers with my cousins, and playing hours and hours of Uecker with he and Grandma. I believe he currently holds the world record for most times "going alone". I need to check on that. Almost everyone here today knows Grandpa had a secret talent – You could name a city almost anywhere in the 50 states, and Grandpa could tell you the best restaurant in that town... and what to order there.

Grandpa Frank had many amazing stories from his career. Playing cards with Jimmy Hoffa, marching with Martin Luther King, and meeting with several United States Presidents. Even with all those amazing experiences, I believe Grandpa's favorite story to tell was about when he operated a Hot Dog cart down in the city. He would get a twinkle in his eye when describing lining a half dozen buns along an outstretched arm and preparing those hot dogs.

I will miss hearing Grandpa tell the stories, but those stories will remain part of all of us.

Justin Smith - April 07, 2025 at 07:08 PM

SM

“ Steven Morr purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Francis D. McKinnon.



Steven Morr - April 07, 2025 at 04:35 PM

TF

“ *The Onnie Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Francis D. McKinnon.*



The Onnie Family - April 05, 2025 at 09:05 AM

TF

“ *The Doug McKinnon Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Francis D. McKinnon.*



The Doug McKinnon Family - April 03, 2025 at 10:45 PM

DM

“ Remembering Uncle Frank

As a 10-year-old, my Uncle Frank seemed larger than life. He was the biggest of the five McKinnon boys—a towering figure in my young eyes, easily seven feet tall and built like a 300-pound linebacker. Of course, he wasn't quite that big, but to me, that's how he appeared.

I remember like it was yesterday when Uncle Frank came up from Detroit to visit his brother—my dad, Ken. That visit to Muskegon wasn't just personal; it had a bit of business to it as well. Apparently, the Democratic Party had helped a local Muskegon business secure a liquor license, but the recipient hadn't shown the expected gratitude. So, they sent Uncle Frank to have a talk.

Whatever was said in that meeting must have gone well. In fact, Uncle Frank returned with a gift from the business owner—something my dad kept as a keepsake in our home for years.

Uncle Frank had a way about him. He was always the center of attention, not just because of his size but because of his personality. Everyone liked him—you almost had to. He had a charm that made people feel special, a way of getting things done, usually the nice way. But if he needed to be firm, well, let's just say he knew how to handle business.

More than anything, Uncle Frank was a storyteller. He could entertain for hours, leaving everyone smiling and feeling good about themselves. But for me, the memory that stands out the most is that special visit when I was 10—the time I got to witness Uncle Frank in action. That was the moment I realized he wasn't just my uncle; he was a presence, a force, someone unforgettable

Daniel McKinnon - April 03, 2025 at 04:17 PM

JS

Awesome story, thank you for sharing Daniel.

Justin Smith - April 04, 2025 at 10:18 AM