



Monty L. Draper

January 6, 1939 - October 29, 2017

Montrose “Monty” Lee Draper, age 78, passed away October 29, 2017. Beloved husband for 51 years of Esther Lee Draper of Royal Oak, Michigan. Monty was the original owner of Monty’s Grill on Woodward Avenue in Royal Oak. Born January 6, 1939 in California, Monty was raised in Virginia with special care and love by his mother Lolita and grandmother Edith.

After serving in the U.S. Army, Monty settled down in Michigan and eventually worked at Darby’s where he met and married the love of his life, Esther Lee Rennie Draper. Monty and Esther moved to Royal Oak, Michigan where they ran a small diner and had a lunch wagon eventually creating and running the infamous “Monty’s Grill” on Woodward Avenue for more than 10 years. Today, some 35+ years later the restaurant still bears his name and anyone who went to the original “Monty’s Grill” will smile when they hear the name. Monty’s crazy food creations were in part because, in his own words, “I am not a chef, I am a cook, I make food people can eat!” And how true that was!

After selling Monty’s Grill, Monty and Esther took some time off, relaxed and went on a trip of a lifetime journey to Israel and the holy lands. Monty then got restless and opened another restaurant “The Red Den” in Warren, but the passion had dwindled and he closed the restaurant in less than two years and “retired”, but not for long. Monty worked for “Cars” in Rochester for many years until his health took a turn and he was forced to retire this time for good.

Monty's job became caring for Esther, which he did fearlessly and with passion, he earned the title "Saint Monty".

Monty was a member of Royal Oak Missionary Church, now "Royal Oak Church", where he greeted and communed with everyone every Sunday morning.

Monty is survived by his beloved wife of 51 years Esther Lee Draper. Having had no biological children, Monty mentored many children throughout the years and was an all-in "Dad" to Dr. Paul Benson, Jessica Newton, Lisa Ralph, Joseph Jacobs, Heidi Swift Smith and Lavonne Pettway. He is further survived by nieces and nephews, Daniel Dutcher (Leigh-Ann), Dwayne Dutcher (Deborah), Melissa Draper Brunner, Brian Schaible (Heidi), John Schaible, Mark Trimper, Sharon Stone (Eric), Cheryl Willingham (Fred) and Tom Dolson; many great and great-great nieces and nephews.

Esther specifically wants to acknowledge and thank her wonderful neighbors/her safety net, Paul Taylor and George and Julie Delgado for their constant concern, care and love.

"I will miss him always, but ours was an everlasting love." Esther Lee Draper

A memorial service will be held Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. at Royal Oak Church (ROC), 411 E 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak, MI 48067.

Memorials to the Royal Oak Church College Fund or Michigan Humane Society in Detroit are appreciated.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV 4. 1:00 PM (ET)

Royal Oak Church
411 E. 11 Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Tribute Wall

CM

“*Monty was so faithful at the church. Always opening and closing up and doing anything that needed doing from cooking for outings, ushering, security but mostly being a friend to all. I always enjoyed talking with him since we are about the same age, we experienced a lot of the same things. He was a wonderful man and husband to Esther and she was lucky to have him and him her. The dynamic duo, Esther and Monty. I will miss him.*

Cindy McCormick - November 04, 2017 at 11:47 AM

DB

“*Rest in Peace, old friend, you will not be forgotten. Monty's Grill holds deep memories in my family. What a nice guy, what a great sense of humor.... Love to you Esther....*

David and Anne, Nels and Hanna

David Brogren - November 02, 2017 at 01:54 PM



“*Uncle monty as leigh ann sister living in pa I only saw you and aunt ester a few times..you always had a smile..when I make it up to mi.we made it a point ti visit you and aunt ester loved the stories when I ledt everytime it was kike leaving family and yes I would cry..not because qe didnt get along inly because I would you ..thank you for making me and my kids feel like family I promise no one will ever forget you..love you and thanks for the memories...*

Janet Price - November 02, 2017 at 06:20 AM



“ You are in my thoughts Esther.



Charles Kesner - November 01, 2017 at 11:59 AM

DB

“ I was sad to hear the news of Monty's passing yesterday. My wife asked me how long I had known him. I told her I don't remember not knowing Monty. My first job was at Monty's Grill as a dishwasher/busboy/potato peeler or whatever else needed to be done. I learned a lot from Monty and Esther, least of which was not to "shut the refrigerator door."

He was a good man, no other way to describe him really, just a truly good man. Always willing to help. I can remember more than once using the old van he bought from the Chruch to haul this or that. But Monty didn't loan that van out, he always insisted on coming along and helping with whatever needed to be moved.

The impact Monty made on the lives of so many of us helped us to become to men and women we are today. We should all take comfort in know that Monty isn't really gone, he is just waiting for the rest to show up.

Dave Bateman - October 31, 2017 at 05:42 PM