



Paul M. Szurpicki

October 11, 1952 - April 2, 2020

Paul M. Szurpicki died on Thursday, April 2, 2020, age 67, after a long battle with cancer, which he mostly won. Despite his illness, he remained his unequivocally independent self throughout, rarely outsmarted, and always ready with a quick word or methodical take. His friends relied on his calm, certain integrity, generosity, utter reliability, and gentle humor.

You may know of Paul as "Ol' Swivel-hips," from his days as a member of the Great Lakes Export, the 1975 national champion touch football team. He had a lifelong love of sports, both as a player and a fan.

His other passions included the outdoors, with an emphasis on the wonders of the national parks, the Great Lakes, grills, hot campfires, walking sticks, a smoothly cast fishing line, cold lakes and rivers, snowy trails, trails without snow, a warm-up from the flask; watercraft of any size; cribbage, euchre, poker, or whatever card game you're willing to be schooled in; and a good scotch, a mediocre scotch, or whatever scotch you've got.

Paul loved to cook and was especially renowned for his soups, golabki, and other Polish fare. He was a skilled woodworker and potter with a clean style and commitment to precision that complemented his wife's more playful aesthetic.

According to his granddaughters, it should be noted that he always liked to wear jeans, was good at math problems, and let them drive the boat.

Paul, a.k.a. Pic, was a founding member of the S.O.s, three of whom miss him today. He joins one on the other side.

Rumor was, he was a retired software engineer who worked in the automotive industry. Certainly, he did love technology and spreadsheets.

Paul is missed dearly by wife Susan (née Isbell); children Sarah Szurpicki (David Iannuzzi), Beth Szurpicki (Daniel Cowen) and David Szurpicki (Carmen); grandchildren Elena, Anastasia and Norah; sister Florence Dargurz (Jim), brother John Szurpicki (Ann), and a large extended family.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Estelle Szurpicki, in-laws Vern and Shirley Isbell, sister Elaine Lockwood and brother-in-law Joseph Lockwood.

A celebration of life will be held once social distancing is over. Please do not send flowers, but a memorial contribution would be appreciated by the family.

Memorial contributions may be made to: (click on link)

National Parks Conservation Association (<https://www.npca.org/give/memorial-tribute-giving>)

The Children's Center in Detroit (<https://www.thechildrenscenter.com/individuals-families/honorariums-memorials>)

Tribute Wall

LK

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Lee konrad - April 08, 2020 at 01:42 PM

LK

“ *When I first met Paul, (always "Pic" to me), I noticed three things. His hands were really big. He had a smile that made me want to smile. He wasn't shy about the dance floor, where he obviously enjoyed a boogie-down with Sue. As I got to know him a little better, I noticed other things. He was freaky-smart. He was straightforward and honest. He cherished his friends. Over the last few years, I've had the luck to see Pic pretty often. Of course, I noticed more things--things that his family and friends have known for a long time. Pic was as stoic as he was quiet. Even in dark times, he was up for an adventure, and loved sharing it. He nurtured Sue and the kids, and continued to do so throughout his sickness. So many things. So much love. He had really big hands--but his heart was bigger.*

Lee Konrad - April 08, 2020 at 01:34 PM

KI

“ We are so blessed a happy to be part of this wonderful family. We share the most beautiful granddaughters. It was always a fun time when we were all together! The girls loved telling us stories about being up at the cottage... all the adventures and especially when Grandpa let them drive the boat! Paul always had that great smile and ready to give a big hug. We are glad we got to be with them on Thanksgiving and share his last turkey. Paul will be greatly missed.
xo

Karen Iannuzzi - April 08, 2020 at 08:14 AM

KV

“ I was so glad to see Paul again at the wedding in Detroit . He was so happy. A really nice guy, 🌲

karen varty - April 06, 2020 at 09:02 PM

KV

“ When I think of Paul I think of a quiet, smiling presence, so grounded, and kind. I didn't know him well, only when he married my cousin Sue, a favorite person in my life. I figured if Sue picked him he must be amazing because she is amazing. I regret that geographical distance kept us from knowing each other better. Paul was a pallbearer when my father died which the Varty family really appreciated. I think a way to know Paul better was to see him through the children he and Sue raised, interesting, smart, socially conscious kids who reflect his/their values. Paul's death is a huge loss, and for us in Texas, a sorrow that we cannot be there in person to be with you. I hope you know that we would be if we could be, and that only a virus is keeping us away for now. Much love.
Kathy Varty

Kathy Varty - April 06, 2020 at 07:38 PM

JH

“ *Gretchen and I send our deepest sympathy to you Sue, and your entire family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all..... Jeff Hurlbert, Lake Angelus, MI*

Jeff Hurlbert - April 06, 2020 at 07:14 PM

MD

“ How can you enjoy the outdoors in the middle of winter? Well, if you are friends of Paul you join him for a Nordic ski trip to the middle of the Hiawatha National Forest in the middle of the U P. It takes teamwork to haul your gear and food and libations, (good Scotch for Paul), a mile or two thru deep snow and quickly you learn you can depend on Paul. If your sled gets stuck, or god forbid tips on its side, Paul will drop his gear and come and help.

At the cabin Paul is the best of companions. For one thing, the guy can cook. I mean really create a meal on the wood stove that is amazing. And he knows all the card games, and has so many stories to share, and when the fire dies at 4:00 AM and its -10F outside, guess whos up and throwing on some logs? And if you forget to bring something just ask Paul, with his attention to detail he probably brought it.

It has been our great pleasure to share so many good times with Paul. Our hearts break for his family, it was always clear they were Number One for him.

Peace to Paul. Peace to all who had the happiness of knowing him.

Marcia and Kevin



Marcia, Kevin & Dave - April 06, 2020 at 05:31 PM

JS

“ Sarah and family. I am sorry to hear of your father's passing. May the Lord comfort you during this especially difficult time.

Jill Shopinski - April 06, 2020 at 03:08 PM

CV

“ I didn't know Paul very well. I do know that whenever we were together, he was so warm and welcoming, always with a wonderful smile on his face. Words don't suffice at times like this so please accept our love and sorrow at the loss of your husband and father.



Candace Varty - April 05, 2020 at 11:19 PM

MV

Paul certainly qualified as an honorary member of the Varty clan. I swear he had some Irish wrapped somewhere in his DNA . It showed in his love of scotch whiskey, dry sense of humor , calm demeanor and generosity. I remember he once offered me tickets to the U of M vs Northwestern football game in Ann Arbor. I should have taken him up as Northwestern finally beat Michigan ...a rare event. Paul will be missed as a dear family member.

Mike Varty - April 06, 2020 at 03:07 PM

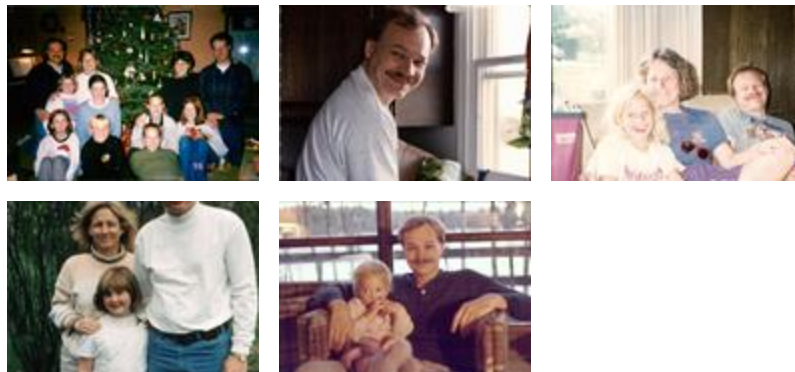
HV

“ I remember Paul before Sue met Paul. We were college age and I met him through Terry Fouchey and Tim Hefferon. He was so shy you could hardly get him to talk to girls. Then Sue came along. We were sitting in the Isbell vacation home up north and a group of us overheard Sue and Paul talking about having kids some day. We were much amused by that.

helen varty - April 05, 2020 at 07:35 PM

MP

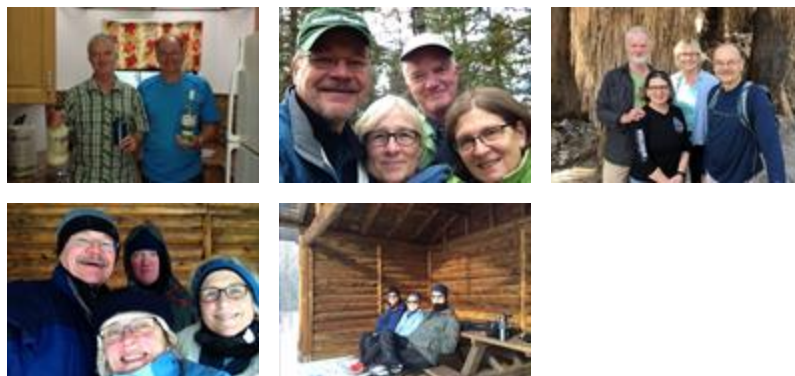
“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Mary Paul - April 05, 2020 at 03:47 PM

NP

“ From the early days of being friends with first two, then three and up to seven kids between us, till now when we share our grandkid stories, we've had so many good times we can't count them all. A forty year friend is one of life's great blessings. Love to all you Szurpickis. Our hearts are broken alongside yours.



Nancy Paul - April 05, 2020 at 02:31 PM

AP

“ *In September 2018 we slept on the floor of Sue and Paul’s camper after deciding (at midnight) that a chilly wind and rainstorm was a bit much to withstand in our little tent on the side of Lake Superior. I have many great memories camping with all the Szurpickis from childhood and it was fun to get to camp with them with our little one!* ”



Alison Paul - April 05, 2020 at 02:19 PM

DS

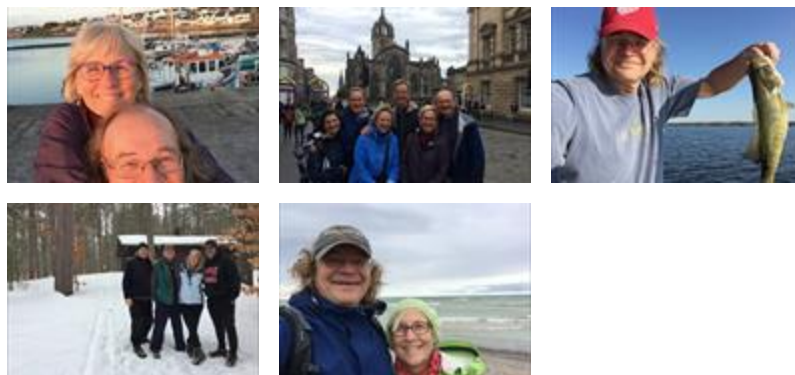
“ *3 files added to the tribute wall* ”



David Szurpicki - April 05, 2020 at 02:12 PM

BS

“ *15 files added to the tribute wall* ”



Beth Szurpicki - April 05, 2020 at 01:19 PM

KB

“ I shared many a New Year’s Eve with Paul & Sue, Steve Isbell, Tim & Lee Hefferon, Tom & Sheila Addison, Paul & Kathy Wiluszc. It was very clear that Paul not only loved his family & friends, but also most thoroughly enjoyed the time he spent with them. He really knew how to have fun! I’m glad to have had the opportunity to get to know him.

Sue, I can only try to express my sorrow to you at this time. Grateful you have those great kids and grandkids.

Look forward to a gathering to laugh & talk & share memories of Paul.

Love to all,

Kathy Fikany Bott

Kathy Bott - April 05, 2020 at 01:04 PM

DI

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



David Iannuzzi - April 05, 2020 at 11:16 AM

TH

“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Tim Hefferon - April 05, 2020 at 12:54 AM

TH

March Madness Ping Pong Tourney!

Tim Hefferon - April 05, 2020 at 12:56 AM

TA

“ Pic was a master of scotch. On our first of too few up north scotch tasting outings, he amazingly named four scotch brands accurately out of four possibles in the correct order as he drank them! Truly amazing!

Tom Addison - April 04, 2020 at 11:20 PM

TH

“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Tim Hefferon - April 04, 2020 at 10:38 PM

TA

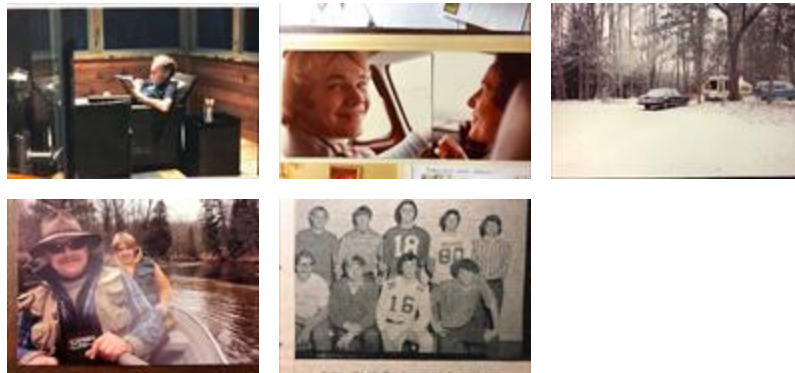
“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



Tom Addison - April 04, 2020 at 08:25 PM

SI

“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



steve isbell - April 04, 2020 at 06:56 PM

SI

Everyone knows that Paul had a deep voice.....very deep if he wanted. At least once a year I'd say "Paul, give us a little: 'You Rang?' " It was so dang funny. He'd lower his head, drop his lower jaw some, start loosening up his mouth while getting his vocal chords ready for that deep, deep YOU RANG? Oh my gosh that was funny.....best Lurch I've ever heard. I'm laughing as I write. I miss you Paul....so many years...so many wonderful memories

steve isbell - April 04, 2020 at 07:12 PM

TH

He could also go deep and do John Wayne. "Now listen and listen . . . tight. John Wayne's gotta go potty."

Tim Hefferon - April 05, 2020 at 12:40 AM

TA

“*Paul was a great friend who made my life rich and full of adventure. From camping trips out west, to Canada, to our annual Dad and kids camping trips, Paul the outdoorsman was always blazing a new trail. He was a man of many ideas, always tinkering with plans to make an event, outing, or adventure that much better. An excellent athlete from football to basketball to many years of golf, his pitching and putting skills were most often unmatched and almost always got him out of any jam. Thoughtful, caring, and modesty were his understated traits and his friendship to me and our group will always be deeply treasured.*

Tom Addison - April 04, 2020 at 06:46 PM

BS



Beth Szurpicki - April 04, 2020 at 07:22 PM

JJ

“*Uncle Paul was really good at encouraging you just enough to do something that was probably not a great idea but would definitely become a source of entertainment. We were up at the cabin in Autrain getting close to bed time. I was sitting on the big red rocking chair in the living room after just getting a 20 oz glass of water for bed. Uncle Paul bet me I couldn't drink the whole thing. Well I showed him and pounded it, then proceeded to throw up all over myself and everything around me. I don't think I have ever seen him laugh that hard. Nana not so impressed. I miss him already. Loosing him is heartbreaking but I know I will see him again and I can't wait!*

John Szurpicki Jr - April 04, 2020 at 06:27 PM

TS

“ U. Paul introduced me to the Moody Blues when he left his record collection behind between semesters at the cottage. I tried to be so careful with the albums and record player. But LOVED the music!!! Had a massive 10 speed I challenged myself to try every time we visited grandma and grandpa. Many times a disastrous spill was narrowly avoided!!!! But, he was so “cool” in my eyes, as he was only 10 years older. !!!! He will truly be missed. God Bless you U. paul

Tamara Smith - April 04, 2020 at 05:33 PM

DI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



David Iannuzzi - April 04, 2020 at 04:10 PM

TH

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Tim Hefferon - April 04, 2020 at 03:57 PM

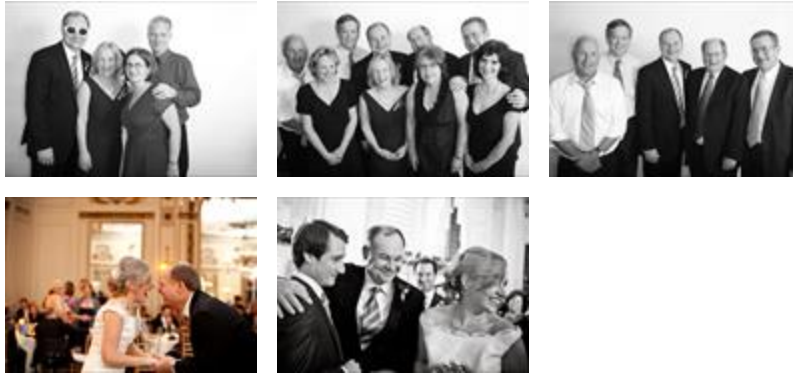
BS

Love these old ones!

Beth Szurpicki - April 05, 2020 at 12:26 PM

SS

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Sarah Szurpicki - April 04, 2020 at 03:54 PM

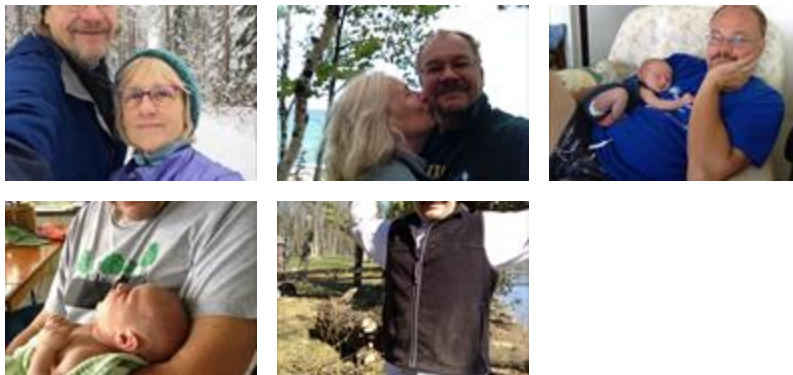
KI

This is the best day..... The day we all became family!

Karen Iannuzzi - April 08, 2020 at 07:56 AM

BS

“ 15 files added to the tribute wall



Beth Szurpicki - April 04, 2020 at 10:59 AM

BS

“ 18 files added to the tribute wall



Beth Szurpicki - April 04, 2020 at 10:46 AM

DI

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



David Iannuzzi - April 04, 2020 at 08:17 AM

TH

“ I remember, shortly after moving to Berkley at age 10, riding bikes with a bunch of guys, including Paul. The group turned north onto Mortenson — except Paul, who decided to go south. That was my first taste of his famous independence. I soon came to know the terrific athlete, the bouncing, cocksure way of walking, the great wisecracks and then, slowly but surely, the amazing range of things he knew and cared about. Especially the outdoors. He was a doer who showed his feelings through his actions. When Pic married Sue (a miracle for an S.O.) and they had the three kids (big surprise, each with that independent streak), he didn't so much change as grow. He became a leader and organizer. Golf, camping, travel - you name it. He didn't have time for vanity or flash (he put huge miles on his cars, teeshirts and golf shoes), was the straightest of straight-shooters, and cared about the world as much as he enjoyed being in it. Paul took such pride in his family, and was the best of friends. I think of his life as a triumph - he was a truly good and happy man. Lots of love to the family and to everyone who will miss him as I will.

Tim Hefferon - April 03, 2020 at 10:57 PM

BS

Thanks for sharing Tim. Love back to you.

Beth Szurpicki - April 04, 2020 at 11:37 AM

BS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Beth Szurpicki - April 03, 2020 at 05:58 PM

BS

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Beth Szurpicki - April 03, 2020 at 05:55 PM

BS

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Beth Szurpicki - April 03, 2020 at 03:02 PM

BS

“ 25 files added to the album Memories Album



Beth Szurpicki - April 03, 2020 at 03:00 PM

BS

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Beth Szurpicki - April 03, 2020 at 02:59 PM