



William J Gayda

August 20, 1927 - November 24, 2021

William James Gayda, better known as Jimmy or Jim Gayda, was born in August of 1927, the fifth of six children born to James and Anna Gayda of Detroit, Michigan. His siblings were Evelyn, Helen (Dolly), Ed, Eileen, and Don. As a boy, he spent most of his summers at their family cottage near Flat Rock, swimming, fishing, boating as well as working for a local farmer. Jim had a close-knit group of friends, most of whom were part of the Dukes, a sports club he played for. They were good boys but definitely got into some mischief. There were many stories of the pranks they pulled on each other, especially while working at JL Hudsons on Woodward Avenue. He would share the story of when they had their first slice of pizza. Like many young men of the day, Jim was drafted into the army on his 18th birthday. After completing basic training in Missouri, although he was an Expert marksman, he scored high in other testing and was sent to New Jersey for communications training, specifically Morse Code, where he served through the duration of WWII, then re-enlisted for another tour of duty. In August of 1951, through mutual friends, he was introduced to Audrey Leppek. There was no turning back, he found his match! They were engaged on Easter and married on June 21, 1952. Their first of four children, Lynne, was born in August 1953, followed by James, Kathleen, and Carol. With the help of his father-in-law, he built their first home in Utica, Michigan. They later moved to Warren, then to Center Line in 1965, Almont in 1986, then back to the Utica area when he retired. He and Audrey so easily made friends wherever they

lived, many becoming life-long friends. As a young man, Jim was apprenticed as an electrician, later becoming a journeyman. Being such a hard worker, he was always promoted in his positions then into management, retiring as head of several departments at National Broach and Machine. He used his skills not only as extra income but was always coming to the rescue of family and friends. (One fun story was that he was sent into the red ball at the top of the Penobscot Building in Detroit to get it back working. He had to climb outside on the roof to get to the trap door to enter that ball! He also scaled the high rafters of Nativity of our Lord Church in Detroit helping them in repairs.) Jim enjoyed doing many things. As a young man, he loved to hunt and fish as well as playing football. He was also an avid golfer (made a hole-in-one the morning after his daughter's wedding!) and bowler (scored at least one 300 game!) but played more cards than anything. He would play poker, pass the ace, bull ray, canasta, up/down the river, golf, and especially euchre. He and Audrey made an unbeatable pair! Also, his love for animals was always apparent ... they were drawn to him like a magnet! He would have a treat in his pocket waiting for an encounter! Jim's priorities were God, family, and friends! He was a loving husband, devoted father, and a loyal friend to many! He and Audrey celebrated many, many wonderful anniversaries together, their 69th in June of 2021. They traveled the country with family and friends and Europe as well. He was a wonderful 'Papa' to Brianna, Hannah, Lauren, Michael, Matthew, Jake, Joshua, Justin, Madison, Michaela, and Kyle. (Great grandpa to 7!) His legacy of love and loyalty, and a good laugh, will surely live on in all of them ... he will be greatly missed! Instate 9:30 am Friday, December 3rd at St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 44633 Utica Road Utica until time of Memorial Mass 10:00 am.

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

4200 Belford Road
Holly Township, MI 48442

Previous Events

Instate

DEC 3. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Lawrence Catholic Church
44633 Utica Road
Utica, MI 48317

Memorial Mass

DEC 3. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Lawrence Catholic Church
44633 Utica Road
Utica, MI 48317

Tribute Wall



“ *My sympathy to the family. I remember my dad (John Garczewski) worked with Mr. Gayda at National Broach. If I'm not mistaken they carpooled for awhile as we lived in Center Line.*

Many childhood memories of the Christmas parties at National Broach just came flooding back. I hope wonderful memories ease your loss.

Bernadette (Garczewski) Mellor

Also a member of St. Lawrence Parish

Bernadette Mellor - December 11, 2021 at 06:43 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors - November 29, 2021 at 01:55 PM