



Steven A. "Steve" Ketchum Sr.

JUN 29, 1955 - APR 2, 2023



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Steve Ketchum made people smile. He genuinely wanted others to be happy and went out of his way to make sure they felt seen, appreciated, and loved. He often greeted friends, loved ones, even strangers, with a twinkle in his eye and welcoming words, like “Hi, sweetheart.” He had a sense of humor and took every opportunity to crack a joke. He kept a journal and would document all the details of his day, from his morning coffee and newspaper to the weather. He ended each entry with a sign off. After a toe amputation in the fall, he began signing, “NO TOE STEVE K.” Shortly after, he shaved off his mustache, and from there on he signed, “NO TOE NO MUSTACHE STEVE K.”

Steven Anthony Ketchum Sr., 67, died at his home Sunday, April 2, 2023, after a long illness. Steve’s life wasn’t without struggles. He carried childhood trauma in a bag he never unpacked, and the ways he coped with his adversity shaved years from his life. He is survived by his loving wife, Kristine, his son, Steven Jr., his daughter, Sarah (Drew), his mother-in-law, Fran, his stepmom, Jean (Dan), his grandson, Tyler, and many loving relatives and friends. He is predeceased by his parents and his special friend, his sister-in-law, Debbie.

Steve was born in Colorado but spent most of his childhood in the area of Muskegon, Mich. He settled in his home in Blue Lake Township where he raised his family and spent his final years with his wife and his cat, Slicky. Steve was employed by the State of Michigan over 36 years, retiring in 2010. He began his career at Muskegon Regional Center, and with its closure in the early 90s, he transferred to the Department of Human Services. He served for several years as a Chief Steward for the UAW. His co-workers described him as “a force to be reckoned with—a warrior who was always ready to defend.”

Steve’s many passions included volunteering with Blue Lake Township Fire Department in the 1980s and 90s. He rose to the rank of lieutenant before stepping down to spend more time with his kids. Steve also had a passion for food. From his paper bag apple pies to pig roasts, cooking



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was one of the many ways he showed love for his family and friends. Still working full time, he enrolled in culinary school when he was 40 and obtained certifications and knowledge he used for catering and consulting. Steve was a bargain hunter and collector of coins, trinkets, and other treasures he found at yard sales and thrift and pawn shops. He always wanted a deal and haggled often to get one. He also had a fondness for collecting jewelry, for which he created an ornate display across his bedroom wall. Steve loved wildlife and the outdoors. His home, nestled among the forest, truly was his paradise. He spent his final years at his dining room table painting, a hobby he rekindled at the start of COVID-19. He loved watching birds outside his picture window and often painted them. He also got inspiration from the dozens of magazines and newspapers he regularly collected to fuel his other passion—he loved to read.

Most of all, Steve loved his family and friends and would do anything to make them happy. He was strong-willed, hard-working, and a fierce advocate for his kids. His mission in life was to make sure they had a better childhood than his—and they did. Thank you, Daddy, for all your love and sacrifices. You gave me life and taught me to fly, and I will miss you always—Love, Sarah.

A celebration of Steve's life will be held 1:00 PM Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at The Lee Chapel of Sytsema Funeral and Cremation Services, 6291 S. Harvey St., Norton Shores, MI 49444 (231) 798-1100. Visitation with the family will be one hour prior to the service. To make a donation in Steve's name, please consider the Blue Lake Twp. Firefighters Association, c/o Blue Lake Twp. Town Hall, 1491 Owasippe Rd., Twin Lake, MI 49457.




Events

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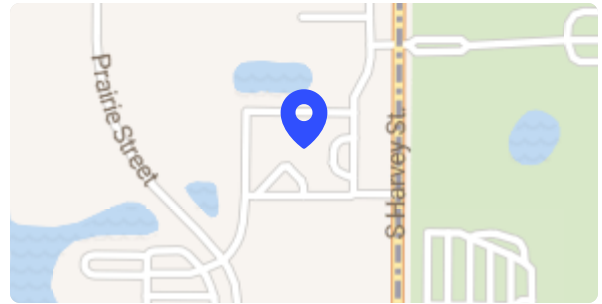
Visitation

 **Wednesday**, April 12, 2023

 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET

 **Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The Lee Chapel**

6291 Harvey St., Norton Shores MI 49444



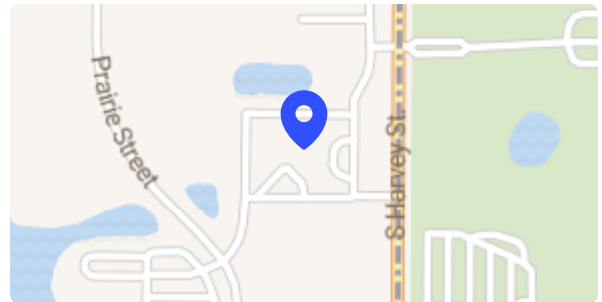
Celebration of Life

 **Wednesday**, April 12, 2023

 1:00 PM ET

 **Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The Lee Chapel**

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Tribute Wall

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JS

Joyce Kerstein-Schaalma posted:

Kris, sorry for the loss of Steve.

July 3 at 6:16 PM

JL

Jane Solem (The Neighbor Lady) sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Ketchum family.



April 7 at 7:16 AM

RB

Roger Brown posted:

Kris, Sarah and Steve. The news of his passing came as a shock to me as i wasn't aware he was so sick. I wish we lived closer so I could have gotten to know him better but knowing Kris loved him was good enough for me. I remember being amazed at his strength when we had to carry Gram and her chair up the stairs when I brought her up to visit. Such a slight man but so much strength! Maybe he's cracking Eino and Toivo jokes with Putz now. Remember I always have a shoulder to cry on if you need it, Kris. Uncle Roger.

April 6 at 10:03 PM



Anonymous sent a Medium Dish Garden to the Ketchum family.



April 6 at 9:53 PM

FE

Felicia posted:

Sarah: This tribute to your Dad is lovely. I'm keeping you and all of your family lifted up. May good memories sustain you in the weeks and months to come. Felicia MasonHouston, TX

April 6 at 11:12 AM



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DP

Diane Prause posted:

My big brother, whom I looked up to and admired as a child. I wanted to draw like him, and as a young girl, actually copied some of his drawings because I thought they were so cool. He called me Dunny Lowiss and said it was Spanish for Diane Louise, and I believed him. It made me feel special. He was sweet, and stubborn, and kind of wild sometimes, but I loved him with my whole heart exactly as he was. Rest now, big brother, you lived life to the fullest, and suffered with ill health and pain.....but fought so hard to stay with those you loved. I will miss you. ❤️. Love, your little sis, always. Diane

April 5 at 1:17 PM

JP

Judy Pearce posted:

Not only did we work together for many, many years at the Department of Social Services, but we also attended kindergarten together! Steve was always such a nice guy & ready to lend a hand when needed,,, A few months ago, we were lucky to see Steve presented with a special award from the Blue Lake Township Fire Department. So sorry to see Steve has passed on, way too soon. R.I.P. Steve, I'm sure you'll be missed.Judy Pearce (& Janice)

April 5 at 1:17 PM

DA

Dana Arends posted:

So sorry to read this. He was a wonderful friend and a great co-worker. Thoughts and prayers to the family.

April 5 at 12:47 PM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Ketchum family.



April 5 at 12:05 PM

MD

Margaret Deming posted:

Rest In Peace Steve. You were among many of the fine people that I worked with at the Center .

April 5 at 11:17 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Steven by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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