

# Joseph Frank Tometczak, Jr. ("Joe")

- Visitation – Monday, June 5th, 2023 from 10:30am-Noon at TRINITY EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH (7900 Nicholson Rd, Caledonia)
- Funeral Service – Monday, June, 5th, 2023 at Noon at TRINITY EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH (7900 Nicholson Rd, Caledonia)
- Interment – Monday, June 5th, 2023 at 1pm at CALEDONIA MEMORIAL PARK (6500 Nicholson Rd, Franksville)



*July 16, 1936—May 30, 2023*

Joseph F. Tometczak, Jr. was peacefully called "home, home, home" while napping in the sunroom of his home in the Town of Caledonia, WI, at age 86 on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 surrounded by family.

Loving husband of the late Nancy Jean (nee Borger). Dear father of: Carrie (Art) Peavy, Jill (Jerry) Michel, Merry (Guy) DeCheck, and Judy (Mike) Schantek. Grandpa Joe of Michael, Jerry Michel, Jamie (Micah) Milhans; Chris (Brianna), Caleb (Fiancée Gabbi) Peavy; Toni (Eric) Clements, Emily (Chad) Lecus, Guy DeCheck; Alyssa (Jeff) Lieber and Mike Schantek. Great-Grandpa Tractor Joe of Noah, Mason, and Olyver Milhans; and further survived by nieces, nephews, other relatives, and many friends who already miss him deeply as well as grand fur babies: Finley, Graham, Molli, Rufhus, Fritz, Elsa, Dutchess, Lover Boy and Orvelle.

Joe was the youngest of six siblings (Charlotte, Stanley, Edward, and twins Matthew & Bernice) born to Joseph, Sr. and Katherine (nee Furman) Tometczak (all of whom have predeceased him) in the family farmhouse located in the small Town of Finley, WI, on July 16, 1936. He received his elementary school education by walking to and from a one-room schoolhouse and later graduated from Necedah High School as the class president.

He loved the outdoors and was an avid hunter and fisherman. Many a deer and pheasant would cross his path and end up on the kitchen table. The family homestead Up North would eventually become known as the "deer hunting shack" in years to come where friends and family made many memories of stories either to be told or better left untold.

Joe proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force as a mechanic from 1954-1958 where he repaired B-52 bombers returning from Korea and achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant. He served on a few bases, but it was in El Paso, TX, where he was not only baptized but also met a fellow serviceman who would leave a lasting impression on him for the rest of his life, Johnny Cash.

After receiving an honorable discharge and returning home, his sister, Bernice, introduced him to one of her coworkers, Nancy, and the rest is history. Joe and Nancy were married in 1959 at St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church in downtown Milwaukee and blessed with 57 happy years of marriage until her passing in 2016. They moved to Racine due to a job offer and eventually bought their current home in 1963 to accommodate their growing family. Together they tended to the needs of the family as well as raising and harvesting ducks, chickens, geese and as many vegetables as Joe could plant in a garden that expanded each year. Trinity Ev. Lutheran in Caledonia became their new church home.

S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. had offered him a job in Sturtevant, WI, which he never regretted accepting. He was honored with a plaque acknowledging his 40 years of loyal service and was known as "Chief Shipping Dock Joe" when he retired in 1999. When illness struck Nancy in 1998, Joe took an early retirement and became her primary caregiver for 18 years. He quickly adapted into this new role by learning how to cook, do laundry, and well, sort-of clean up—all under Mom's guidance. He also took over most of the canning of their very productive garden produce.

Joe loved classic country western music, and two of his favorite singers were Merle Haggard and George Jones in addition to "The Man in Black". He had a beautiful voice, often sang along to the melodies and was known to do a little karaoke once in a while, if coaxed. He also loved to listen to and dance to polka music. Dance partners were often challenged to keep up with his pace, even as his years increased.

Dad was incredibly strong physically and encouraged us to keep active also. He had many sayings but often told the grandkids to "keep one foot ahead of the other, and always forward." He kept busy after Mom passed by walking daily with his usual long stride for many years, and up to just recently was usually the leader in any group of walkers he was in. It was normal to see him on a tractor plowing snow, hauling wood, tending to his garden or mowing grass. Dad brought a little bit of the North Woods with him, which is reflected in the sunroom echoing that theme where he read his newspapers and generally hung out when not outdoors. He enjoyed watching the myriad of songbirds (especially "Big Red") that relied on him to keep the feeder full. Another pastime included the splitting, stacking and burning of wood in his wood burning stove. Scents of firewood filled the house, and Dad kept it toasty warm and cozy, ready for visitors. He frequented rummage sales, estate sales, and flea markets including weekly visits to Wilmot and seemed to have a knack for finding a good deal. Dad also loved driving his Jeep to Joey's West to see Audra and other friends and enjoy a Spotted Cow in his special Pilsner glass.

Dad was among the first to be out in the fields during strawberry picking season and would return with cartons overflowing with berries to share with anyone who happened to drop in for a visit. He grew all kinds of vegetables, but some favorites were: tomatoes, beans, onions, and cucumbers. Crops of his homemade dill pickles were always a big hit at family gatherings.

He was also blessed with the gift of a big heart. His deep well of generosity never seemed to run dry to the very end. The term "Happy Hour" took on a whole new meaning to Dad. He loved people, and the biggest smile would light up his face when a friend or family member would stop over to share a story or a concern (as well as a cold one) with him. He was always ready to lend a helping hand to whoever needed it. In keeping with his Polish heritage, he enjoyed many of the delicacies the culture has to offer, but you could also find him munching on liver sausage, cheese, venison sausage, foods containing garlic, pickled beets, Hershey's chocolates and raspberries.

Joe often expressed great thankfulness to God for granting him so many years on this earth as well as the good health that he and his family have been blessed with. He was an active participant of family get-togethers and holidays and would look forward to the next one. His sunroom was the go-to place for Packer and Brewers games as well as the weekly dice games.

As Dad's steps started to slow and his hearing to fade, his daughters were privileged to visit a little more often to keep an eye, or two, or four on him and respectfully reflect a small portion of the selfless love he demonstrated throughout his life. Dad's strong spirit and trust in God's promises endured, and perhaps he was learning (as well as teaching us all) one last important life lesson—"Take one day at a time." We find comfort knowing he is now safely by his Savior's side and look forward to seeing him again when our hearts and family circle will no longer be broken.

Special thanks to Pastor David Wierschke for his encouragement to Dad and us through Word and Sacrament and to Mark Reiss from Heritage Funeral Home for his guidance and patience in helping us plan this celebration of Dad's life and transition to his final home – Heaven.

Visitation will take place on Monday, June 5, 2023 at **TRINITY EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH**, 7900 Nicholson Rd., Caledonia, WI 53108 from 10:30 am until the time of service at noon. Interment to follow at Caledonia Memorial Park Cemetery. If so desired, memorials appreciated to Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church or American Legion Harvey Funk Post 494, 4226 Michel Ct., Franksville, WI 53126.

Heritage Funeral Homes  
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