



Raymond Edward Vitko Sr.

April 29, 1937 - February 7, 2023

Raymond "Ray" E. Vitko Sr., age 85, of Albia, IA, passed away on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, at Oakwood Specialty Care in Albia, surrounded by his loved ones, under the care of Care Initiatives Hospice.

Ray was born on April 29, 1937, in Albia, IA, to John F. and Mary Agnes (Stofko) Vitko. He grew up attending school in Albia, graduating from the Albia High School with the class of 1956. Ray then served his country in the United States Army, stationed in the Philippines from 1960-1962. On March 2, 1964, he married Jane Fleener and was blessed with 2 daughters, Sandi and Deb before the birth of their son, Ray Jr. Ray and Jane later divorced.

Ray was a lifelong mechanic. Upon returning from the service, he worked at Phillips 66 and Duesenberg Chevrolet in Albia. In 1980, he purchased and began operating Vitko's DX in Albia, which later became Sunoco and lastly, Sinclair. Ray owned and operated the gas station for 37 years before retiring in 2017.

Ray was a lifelong member of the Eagles, the Knights of Columbus, and the American Legion in Albia. Along with his mechanical talent, he had a passion for older vehicles, especially his Model A, which he enjoyed entering and driving in parades, and Chevy trucks. Ray enjoyed visiting with others and having a beer with friends. He had a great sense of humor and loved to laugh. He was a proud father, grandfather, and great grandfather and enjoyed

following his grandchildren's and great grandchildren's events.

Ray is survived by a son, Ray (Lori) Vitko Jr. and a daughter, Deb (Jimmy) Ballalatak, both of Albia; 7 grandchildren, Ryan (Amelia) Dunham of Ottumwa, Kristin (Ryan) Kirk of Pella, Sammy Jo (Dustin) Albert of Albia, Andrea Ballalatak of Maxwell, Tyler (Kimber) Vitko of Sioux Falls, SD, Tanner (Bethany) Vitko of Lincoln, NE, and Kaitlyn (TeJay) Meredith of Albia; 12 great grandchildren, Jenna, Anthony, Capri, Lux, Vale, Aubree, Holden, Brinley, Rylee, Raegan, Jaxsen, and Axl; a sister, Janet Vitko of Rowlett, TX; and 2 sisters-in-law, Ruth Ann Vitko of Ottumwa and Lea Weldon of Iowa City. Ray is also survived by several nieces, nephews, cousins and good friends.

Ray was preceded in death by his parents, John and Mary Agnes Vitko; a daughter, Sandi Dunham; and 3 brothers, James John, Robert, and Andrew Vitko.

Visitation will be held from 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. on Friday, February 10, 2023, at the Tharp Funeral Home in Albia, with Ray's family present from 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. to greet family and friends.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 11, 2023, at the Tharp Funeral Home in Albia with Pastor Richard Grimes officiating and military honors provided by the American Legion of Albia, Lovilia, and Melrose. A private family burial will be held at St. Mary's Cemetery in Albia at a later date.

An open memorial has been established to be used for scholarships for Auto Mechanics students.

Cemetery Details

St. Mary's Cemetery

Albia, IA

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 10. 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Tharp Funeral Home
116 Benton Ave.
Albia, IA 52531
(641) 932-3129
<https://www.tharpfh.com/>

Funeral Service

FEB 11. 10:30 AM (CT)

Tharp Funeral Home
116 Benton Ave.
Albia, IA 52531
(641) 932-3129
<https://www.tharpfh.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Raymond Edward Vitko Sr..*



February 10, 2023 at 08:34 AM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Raymond Edward Vitko Sr..*



February 09, 2023 at 03:59 PM



“ *Meredith, Loveland, Vander Linden Family purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Raymond Edward Vitko Sr..*



Meredith, Loveland, Vander Linden Family - February 08, 2023 at 08:26 PM

JP

“ During our farm trips to Albia in the 80s and 90s , my father, Jim Pasut, and I would stop by the station so my father could visit with Raymond for a hour or more. Raymond always made me feel welcome as a young boy at the station. He would offer me a choice of candy bars, tell me to grab a soda and grab a seat. This allowed Ray and my dad time to catch up and reminisce without a little boy interrupting them itching to go. I enjoyed all the men hanging around the station talking and joking with each other similar to a barber shop. Good memories, Rest in peace Raymond.
James Pasut

James Pasut - February 08, 2023 at 08:12 PM

CM

My sincere sympathy to Debbie, Ray & families in the loss of your Dad & Grandpa. Colette Kenworthy Mason

Colette Kenworthy Mason - February 11, 2023 at 07:27 PM

-H

“ - Janet Vitko, Jeff Carr & The Hobaugh's purchased the Heavenly Grace Spray for the family of Raymond Edward Vitko Sr..



- Janet Vitko, Jeff Carr & The Hobaugh's - February 08, 2023 at 08:06 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Raymond Edward Vitko Sr..



February 08, 2023 at 05:11 PM