



# Gerald Joseph Wesley

SEP 17, 1933 - DEC 10, 2021



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# Gerald Joseph Wesley

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**G**erald Joseph Wesley, of East China, passed away peacefully at his home, surrounded by his children on December 10, 2021. He was born on September 17, 1933 to the late Aloysius and Anna (Tessmar) Wesley of East Detroit. Survived by his brother Bill, sister Sylvia; children, Jer (Anita), Al (Chris), Don (Julia), Jeannie, Ron, Rob (Julie); grandchildren, Jer, Joe, Tori, Elizabeth (Troy), Jack (Ashley), Christopher, Madeline, Don, Charles, Erica, Mike, Nino, Zoe, Robby, Grace, Anna, Mary, James; great grandchildren, Kaelyn and Conner. He is preceded by his wife, Rochelle, sister Marge, sister-in-law Sophie and brother-in-law Danny.

Dad was born in Detroit, on September 17, 1933. His younger siblings, Sylvia, Marge and Bill were born three, seven and eleven years after. His childhood home not only housed his immediate family but a few aunts and uncles as well. Dad attended St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School where the nuns were unsuccessful in converting him from a lefty to a righty! Upon leaving high school, Dad joined the US Army and proudly defended our country as a medic during the Korean War. Stationed mostly in Germany, he had fond sightseeing memories of Europe's beautiful landscape.

On New Year's Eve 1957, he went on his first date with mom, Rochelle (Palazzolo). However, he had to drive her all the way up to Port Huron to first meet Grandpa Palazzolo, who's band was playing at a local night club. Grandpa stopped the music, brought Dad up on stage and introduced him to the whole audience.... needless to say, Dad and Grandpa Palazzolo were best buddies from that time on. :-)

Ten months later, on October 4, 1958, Fr. Gerald Martin married mom and dad at St. Angela Catholic Church in Roseville, along with mom's sister and fiancé, in the biggest double wedding you could imagine!

Getting married in October posed a slight problem for Dad and his gang of hunting buddies. He tried to pull his first fast one on mom toward the end of their two-week honeymoon in Miami. He came up with some reason to cut their honeymoon short by one day and he drove straight



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through to Michigan only to have mom find out that dad's master plan was to be out in the fields with his buddies on October 20th, opening day of pheasant season! That was the last fast one he ever tried to pull on mom!

Dad started his first job as an orderly at Hutzel Hospital in Detroit and soon became an x-ray technician. He worked his way up the ladder and transferred to Jennings Memorial Hospital in Detroit where he became head of the department. With the promotion dad and mom were able to purchase their first home in Saint Clair Shores and quickly added four little ones to their household. One day, in 1967, dad came home from work and told us he saw a tank driving down the street in Detroit. He was stopped by armed military personnel and escorted into work that day. The riots in Detroit had begun. Jer was only seven at the time and mom was pregnant with her fifth. Soon after Ron was born, the family took a trip to East Jordan Michigan, hoping to buy a resort they had their eye on. The plan was to name it "Wesley's 4 Sea-Sons Resort". It was a beautiful place on the Jordan River, brimming with trout. One of the cabins was already set to be named after Jeannie, the only girl in their crew of five. Fortunately, for Anita, Chris, Julia, and Julie and all eighteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren, Dad's job transfer North didn't go through and they ended up staying downstate, but not for long. God closed a door but opened a window and Dad was promoted to the Director of Medical Imaging at Port Huron General Hospital. In the summer of 1969, the family moved to a small farm in Anchorville, Michigan. Soon after, Baby Robby was added to their 800 square-foot farmhouse in 1971. Honestly, how did mom and dad raise six kids and three white German Shepherds in an 800 square foot one-bathroom farm house?

Dad would go to work every day, come home, put on his work clothes and then proceed to take care of their 600 chickens, dozens of goats and pigs, several cows and who knows what other animals he and mom decided to put on that dang farm. Not to mention the numerous litters of White German Shepherds, their pride and joy! Dad cherished all of his gosh darn hounds: Snow, Lucky, Goliath and dozens of offspring... tripping over every single one of them! One of the many things he enjoyed most on the farm was tilling the soil and planting vegetables with that darn Massey Ferguson tractor that never started and always had to be brought in for repair at C and J Tractor. Dad didn't know at the time, but the owner of that tractor shop had a beautiful daughter that would someday become one of his daughter-in-law's. One of the things us five boys cherished most was waiting for dad to get home from work in hopes he would ask if we wanted to "take a pass"...which was a half mile walk to the back of the property hunting for pheasants. With



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great care, he showed each and every one us how to handle that Ithaca Model 37 Featherlight 16-gauge pump.

After saving for several years, dad and mom were finally able to remodel that small farmhouse. Of course, dad and mom had their own room. And dad made darn sure that his little princess, "Thumper", had her very own as well, but all five boys were relegated to the attic. Dad and mom made up for it by giving us boys the coolest jungle themed attic any boy could ever imagine. But nothing compared to dad's expression of joy and pride when remodeling Jeannie's room and finishing it with a brand-new bedspread. That memory will live on forever. Jeannie certainly deserved it after having to put up with her five brothers.

After passing through those pearly gates on Friday December 10th, one of the many beautiful things Dad surely saw was their farm in its most pristine condition. The gigantic vegetable gardens had perfectly ripe fruit and not a weed to be found. The hundreds of animal beddings perfectly clean, not a single outbuilding window shot out by a BB gun, and all their family and friends enjoying their open-door hospitality. Just two days prior to his passing he mentioned he was ready to see "the others". When asked who "the others" were, he said, the ones on the other side. We can only imagine he was referring to the dozens and dozens of smiling faces at past celebratory gatherings; Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, Graduations, Birthdays, Anniversaries, every special occasion you can imagine on the farm. We told him that "the others" were as ready to see him as much as he is ready to see them again!

Dad was a strong man. He tolerated and endured things during his life here on earth that made us all understand the true meaning of strength, tolerance and endurance. He was a Dad that you could count on being there, up in the stands watching you...quietly cheering you on. Always observant but never pushy. Some of you may have never heard dad use a swear word. That's because he saved it for the most appropriate moments and had a way of making them come off as if he didn't actually swear or curse at all. Dad was a big strong man with an intimidating physique, but told us he never got into a fight, never threw a punch....doubtful he ever had an enemy.

Things about dad we'll miss most:

- how he would wink his eyes and take a couple sniffs through his nose just prior to taking a sip of coffee that was so hot it would scold the roof of any normal person's mouth.
- how he would trip over the dog and yell "gosh darn hound" when the poor dog was not even near



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him :-)

-how he would clear his throat if we were separated from him in a store, as if he knew us kids would recognize his throat clearing from a mile away so we could find our way back... we always did find you Dad.

-how he had that shit eaten grin and could turn it into that cocked jaw look of his...which meant we were in trouble.

-how he could take a four-hour road trip up north and not say more than a few words but could always point out a wild animal 400 yards back in a field while driving 75 miles an hour.

-how he was the one that always came home from hunting with a deer, depending only on the good ole lack of showering for days prior and his puffing on a Pall Mall instead of using fancy scent eliminator's and deer attractants.

-how he could quietly take a dance floor and end up having the whole room watching him tear it up.

-how in his later years he would get so excited after the Tigers or Lions would have a spectacular play, followed by another spectacular play and not realize that his TV had auto replay technology. We never had the heart to tell him that it was the same play.

-how he had the strength at 86 years of age to push mom up and down ramps in her wheelchair while carrying her purse and oxygen tank, helping her get in and out of their vehicle along with her wheelchair and walker.

-how every year around this time of year, his job was to make sure the Christmas envelopes for his kids and grandkids were ready. Even the day before he left us, he got up out of his chair walked over to the cupboard in the kitchen just to be sure the cards were ready for Christmas Day...Thank you for taking care of us Dad. We will always love you. Until we meet again...xo

Funeral Mass to be held at 11:00 am on Saturday, December 18, 2021 at Immaculate Conception Church in Ira Township. Visitation preceding the Mass at 10:15 am. In lieu of flowers the family asks that you direct donations to "Council on Aging/Washington Life Center", a local agency that directly aided in mom and dad's care. Please send to Young's Funeral Home, 4061 St. Clair Hwy, East China, MI 48054, C/O Family of Gerald Wesley. Thank you!

To leave a message of comfort visit [www.youngcolonial.com](http://www.youngcolonial.com)



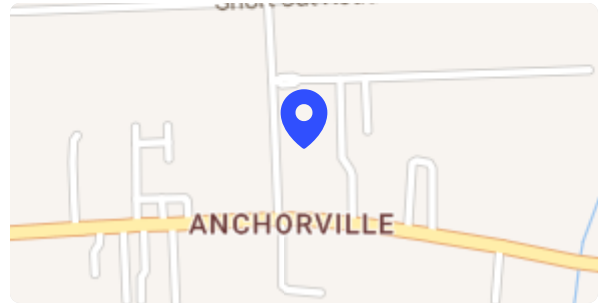
# Events

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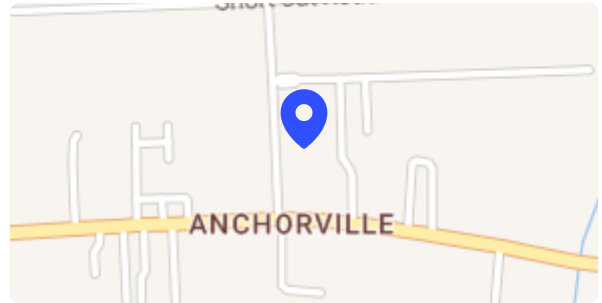
## Visitation

- Saturday**, December 18, 2021
- 10:15 AM - 11:00 AM ET
- Immaculate Conception Church**  
9764 Dixie Hwy., Anchorville MI 48023



## Funeral Mass

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## Cemetery Details

- Cremation



## Tribute Wall

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CB

**Christa Beattie** posted:

So sorry for your loss. Me deepest sympathy to the Wesley Family.

December 17 at 9:40 AM



**Anonymous** sent an Arrive in Style to the Wesley family.



December 16 at 6:01 AM

MW

**Marilyn H. Wojtas** sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Wesley family.



December 15 at 7:48 PM

SH

**Shelley** posted:

My thoughts and prayers are with the family. Shelley Robinson

December 15 at 4:38 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Country Basket Blooms to the Wesley family.



December 15 at 3:53 PM

JF

**Jeanine Fleming** posted:

What a thoughtful tribute for such a great man. Worked with Jerry for so many years, however the greatest memories I have are the stories he shared of his kids and grandkids. His family meant the world to him. Lifting you all up in prayer for comfort.

December 14 at 11:49 PM



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**Anonymous** sent a Country Basket Blooms to the Wesley family.



December 14 at 1:27 PM



**Chaplain David Gillis** posted:

The members of The American Legion Charles J. Fulton Post 382 Express their deep sympathy to the family and friends of our fellow veteran. We are grateful for his military service as a U.S. Army medic during the Korean War.

December 14 at 11:26 AM



**Mike Kammer** posted:

When the farm across the street went up for sale, I remember my mom saying she hoped they had a kid for me to play with. Well I hit the jackpot because Mr&Mrs Wesley brought me a carload! As a kid, Mr Wesley to me was a gentle giant. He was always kind and soft spoken. I remember him coming back from the fields, his game pouch full, with rooster feathers sticking out the sides. Thanks for making life on Meldrum road better Mr Wesley.

December 14 at 11:24 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Wesley family.



December 14 at 7:54 AM





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DS

**Dave Scheel** posted:

God Bless Mr Wesley for a life well lived and being a special dad, grandpa and great grandpa! He has left the family with great memories that they have beautifully shared in his obit!   UM

December 14 at 6:02 AM

CG

**Claudia Birkenshaw Garabelli** December 15 at 2:31 PM

Joining the family in honoring your father and grandfather. I worked with him at Port Huron Hospital for 15 years when I was the supervisor of the billing department. He was always wise, dedicated and worked hard with me and our teams to resolve billing and collection issues. He was respected. Prayers to you all since none of us leave this world alive; it's a one-way ticket. God's blessings -- Claudia Birkenshaw [Garabelli]

LT

**Lisa Trombley** December 15 at 12:18 PM

Jerry, Anita, and family your father/grandfather sounds like a stellar man. May peace surround your family. Lovingly Mike and Lisa Trombley

BB

**Bonnie Barrett** December 14 at 5:01 PM

I had the pleasure of working with your father at Port Huron Hospital. I didn't know him well but knew he was a Great guy. Sure enjoyed reading his obituary and learning more about this very special man! Bonnie Connolly Barrett

MM

**Maria May** December 14 at 1:15 PM

Our deepest sympathy to the entire family. We certainly had some very good times years ago! Our prayers are with you. Love Maria May, David & Paulette May, Aaron & Taylor May and their families

JG

**John O'gara** December 14 at 11:57 AM

What a wonderful tribute to your Father! I always enjoyed my visits with him and your Mom, bringing them communion until your Mom passed and the whole Covid thing set in. I was fortunate to visit him on a few occasions, before he became ill and it seemed that we picked up right where we had left off. I can see him and your Mom in what Saint John Paul II described as, "Swimming in a sea of ever increasing joy!" May he Rest In Peace! John O'Gara

JL

**Jason London** December 14 at 8:35 AM

Beautiful, as much I wish we were closer to visit I always remembered the Wesley's to be warm and welcoming. My condolences to all family and friends and the many whose lives Gerald touched. God bless, Jason London

MS

**Marion Schwehofer** December 14 at 7:22 AM

I do not know the family, but what a beautiful tribute to their father and grandfather.

KD

**Ken Dubay** December 14 at 6:41 AM



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What a beautiful obituary. Brings back so many memories of great times shared in your home.  
God Bless you all.



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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



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