



Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis

May 21, 1938 - December 24, 2022

Justin Joseph "Jay" Kukalis age 84 of Scottville passed away on Saturday, December 24, 2022. Justin was born in Joliet, IL, the son of James and Mildred (Alisauskas) Kukalis and as a family, they moved to Scottville in 1944 where Justin graduated from Scottville High School with the class of 1957. Justin worked for a short time at the Dow Chemical Company in Ludington. He served his country with the U.S. Army Reserves until entering the Michigan State Police academy in 1964.

Justin married his high school sweetheart, Karen Lenora Rahn in 1964 and they have celebrated 58 years by each other's side. Together they raised their two sons, James and John.

Justin was stationed as Patrol Officer in St. Clair, MI & New Buffalo, MI before moving his family to the Detroit area in 1972 to serve as a Detective for the remainder of his career. Justin served in the State Police from 1964 to 1989 achieving the rank of Det. First Lieutenant and was the Command Officer for the Down River Area Narcotics Organization. During his career Justin was recognized as one of the top Law Enforcement Officers in the State of Michigan and chosen to represent the State at the 140th Session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA.

Upon retirement from the State Police, Justin & Karen resettled in Scottville to

the town they loved and the property where he was raised - and together they built the Log Cabin of their dreams. During the first 12 years Justin was back in Scottville, he taught Criminal Justice & Firearms Training at West Shore Community College.

Justin feared God and loved Jesus along with his Catholic faith. He was a committed member of St. Jerome's Parish in Scottville where he was raised and married the love of his life, Karen. Once the Parish closed, he was devoted to St. Mary's in Custer. Daily prayer devotion, scripture reading, and the Rosary were the foundations of his faith life.

Justin was preceded in death by his sister Antoinette (Toni) Milkanin. Along with his wife Karen, Justin will be greatly missed by their sons James Carl (Sandra Dee) Kukalis of Ave Maria, FL and John Michael (Julia) Kukalis of Brighton, MI. He will also be missed by his grandchildren Ciara (Jake) Bond, Evan Kukalis, Ryan Kukalis, Rachel (Christian) Hefner, Rebecca (Daniel) Hussey, & Jack Kukalis; and his great-grandchildren Laila Bond, Luke Bond, & Noelle Hefner.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated for Justin at 11:00 am on Friday, December 30 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Custer with Rev. Daniel DePew as Celebrant. Burial will take place later in the spring at Center Riverton Cemetery. Friends may greet Justin's family on Thursday evening from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at St. Mary's Church where the Rosary will be prayed for Justin at 7:30 pm. Those who wish to remember Justin with a memorial donation are asked to please consider St. Mary's Catholic Church, or Right to Life.

Cemetery Details

Center Riverton Cemetery

2200 West Hawley Road
Ludington, MI 49431

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **29**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
85 South Madison Street
Custer, MI 49405

Rosary Service

DEC **29**. 7:30 PM (ET)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
85 South Madison Street
Custer, MI 49405

Celebration of Mass

DEC **30**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
85 South Madison Street
Custer, MI 49405

Tribute Wall



“ Peace be with you Karen, JC, and John. So many good childhood memories of Jay...weekend treks across the state to visit with your family, the canoe trip in the Ozarks,...He was a father to us all and a great compadre to my own dad. May you be surrounded with the comfort of family and dear friends 💙 - Kristin Robinsin (Beck)

Kristin Robinsin (Beck) - December 30, 2022 at 08:11 AM



“ I have fond memories of Jay throughout the school years. We will be greatly missed at our reunions. Lord willing, we will meet again. Karen, I am thinking about you and keeping you in my prayers.

From Ken Graham and his wife Marty

Ken Graham - December 29, 2022 at 11:37 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis.



December 29, 2022 at 01:26 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis.



December 29, 2022 at 11:02 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis.*



December 28, 2022 at 02:48 PM



“ *Sorry to hear of Jay's passing. I will always remember his wisdom and integrity when we worked together in the MSP. The best boss I ever had.*

Roger Bittell

Roger Bittell - December 28, 2022 at 01:12 PM



“ *Ours hearts and prayers are with you Karen and your family. Its been a long time since we served together in New Buffalo but we have not forgotten all the good times. Jay was an officer to look up to for his dedication to law enforcement, his God, and Family.. May the grace of God grant you peace now and forever.*
Jake & Gloria Toering

Jacob Toering - December 28, 2022 at 10:08 AM



“ *Joe & Mary Alice Lipinski purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis.*



Joe & Mary Alice Lipinski - December 27, 2022 at 12:08 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis.*



December 27, 2022 at 11:18 AM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Justin "Jay" Joseph Kukalis.*



December 27, 2022 at 07:58 AM



“ *Sending our deepest sympathies to Karen, JC & Sandy and John and & Julie and families. Prayers are with you during this very difficult time.*



Jean Robert - December 26, 2022 at 02:04 PM



Just heard with sadness oh J.'s passing! My deepest sympathy to Karen, Jim and John and their families! So many good memories of the years we were neighbors on Lakeside Rd, kids growing up together, the MSP activities, the continuing friendship when we all moved to the Detroit area! J. Was such a good and smart man! Sending love your way, Karen!

Francoise Sudres-Kovac - December 29, 2022 at 02:42 PM

GF

My sympathy to Karen and family. Jay was a friend of mine since Kindergarten. We had a lot of good times with our class and on the farm. Jay was always a person you could respect and admire.

George Ferris - May 25, 2023 at 06:29 AM