



John Vanko

November 5, 2016

Vanko, John age 92 of Edina, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on November 5, 2016. John was born in Binghamton, NY, moving to Mpls after serving in the Navy. He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Diane; son, John (SueLane) Vanko; 5 daughters, Lori (Jim) Reinstatler, Jody (Dave) Brady, Lisa (Gary) Wignes, Molly (Harry) Schleeter, Ellen (Jeff) Zwiefel; 10 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren; and brother Michael. The family would like to thank Park Nicollet Hospice for their wonderful care. Memorial service 11 AM Thursday, November 17 with visitation 1 hour prior to the service and reception to follow all at: Washburn-McReavy.com Edina Chapel 952-920-3996 West 50th St. & Hwy 100

Tribute Wall



“ *Sweet Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of John Vanko.* ”



November 14, 2016 at 11:14 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Vanko.* ”



November 13, 2016 at 06:05 PM

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“ We treasure our memories of those we love. The following are some early memories of the Vanko family

The roots of our family go back to a village in Semetkovce, Czechoslovakia (now Slovakia). With the internet and Google earth you will find a small hamlet nestled in the Carpathian Mountains. The dominate feature is the cemetery which is larger than the village. One tombstone after another has the name Vanko engraved on it, our grandparents , cousins, aunts and uncles. The other names include Knis (our mothers maiden name), Zapotacky (our grandmothers Susan's maiden maiden name), and a host of other similar sounding names. Many of the family members of those resting here emigrated to America and settled in Binghamton NY. Both of our parents came from large families 11 siblings in each. With the end of World War 1, our father decided to come to America sponsored by our Uncle Michal Zapotacky. A year later our mother followed him carrying our sister Anne . I am still impressed by their courage in leaving their families(never to see them again), coming to a strange country with a strange language. They settled in Binghamton with other emigrants to work in the shoe factories along with other emigrants from Czechoslovakia and other European countries. They scrimped and saved trying to live the American dream only to lose it all with the collapse of banks in 1929. Our father never saved another dollar after that. We grew up in the depression life was hard. You were lucky to find a job and a weekly earning of \$6 was considered good. You lived from week to week. Life in those times is a story by itself. We went to a school called Woodrow Wilson. Which was filled with children of other emigrants, with an occasional student that was it not a first generation of an emigrant, and then to a high school where first generation emigrants were a minority. History repeats itself. Growing up you did without, you are lucky to have food on the table. We learned to hustle and earn what ever we could to pitch in. You got new clothes at Easter time. The reason for that was that life was centered around the Russian Greek Orthodox Church. Part of daily living was to attend religious classes. Life centered on the church in our early lives and

as a intimate part of daily living.

Then Pearl Harbor and World War 2 and John enlisted in the navy. We rarely heard from him. The country was mobilized for the war effort. Our father made army boots, Anne made propeller blades, and our mother painted radiant dials on instrument panels, and I peddled papers and made doughnuts. The war ended and life resumed. John elected to go to Minneapolis. I went to college got married. At some point which is fuzzy we got together and I had a brother again . I wish we had more time together. The times we were together were precious. If there are tears on this note they are real. I will miss him, we will all miss him. Mike and family

Nadine Duhaime - November 13, 2016 at 05:54 PM



“ *Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of John Vanko.*



November 13, 2016 at 05:21 PM