

**John Joseph Dreves**, 78, of Paradise and formerly of Traverse City, passed away March 13, 2011, at Munson Medical Center, surrounded by his loving family, after a short battle with cancer.

John was born on June 14, 1932, in Traverse City, the son of Joseph F. and Lottie (Curtis) Dreves. On Sept. 25, 1954, he married Zelna Puishis at St. Francis Catholic Church in Traverse City.

He graduated from Traverse City Central High School in 1950.

John was a proud veteran, having served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War, doing overseas duty in England and Japan from 1950 to 1954.

He started working for the U.S. Post Office in 1955, retiring in 1987 with over 32 years of service.

In 1997 he and his wife, Zelna retired to Paradise.

John was an active member of St. Francis Parish, the PTA and Athletic Association, and was president of the association when St. Francis got their first, brand new school bus. He was a supporter of the Father Fred Foundation and member of the American Legion. He was also an active member of Our Lady of Victory Parish in Paradise and was treasurer of the Paradise Area Senior Citizen Club for 11 years.

John loved to play basketball and coached the St. Francis eighth grade for eight years and the freshman team for a year. He played and coached for Rennie Oil Independent team. When he retired to Paradise, he coached and refereed at Whitefish Township School. He played and coached fast pitch softball, playing while in the Air Force and also for the Coast Guard and Rennie Oil. He played slow pitch soft ball and bowled on leagues in Traverse City.

John loved to hunt, fish and spend time on Drummond Island.

In October of 2002, he underwent open heart surgery and nearly died after developing an infection. He spent 58 days in Munson Medical Center. After his recovery in 2004, John was involved in a Can Drive to benefit the Whitefish Township School Athletic Booster Club. He continued collecting and returning cans and bottles and became known as the "Can Man" of Paradise. His Motto is "CANS FOR KIDS, TABS FOR TOTS, ONE DIME AT A TIME." As of November 2010 he had collected over 267,000 cans and bottles. In November 2007 ESPN and ESPN2 went to Paradise and did a segment on the Can Man. The segment aired on ESPN2 on Thanksgiving Day 2007, ESPN in January 2008, and a "Can Man of Paradise" website was established.

John is survived by his wife, Zelna, of Paradise; his two sons, James Dreves, of Carp Lake, and Michael Dreves, of Bellaire; his three daughters, Kandee (Donald) Wyatt, of Munising, Kathryn (Tom) Lang, of Kingsley, and Susan Noble, of Interlochen; nine grandchildren, Kimberly (Jeff) Risdon, Kristin Dreves, Jennifer (Josh) Daniels, Jonathan and Matt Dreves, Tanya and Jessica

Lang, and Kayle and Nicole Noble; great-granddaughter, Breeanna Lang; sisters, Theresia Artis, of Kissimmee, Fla., Mary Pester, of Gainesville, Fla., Betty (Larry) Bell, of Seattle, Wash., and Pat (John) McKay, of Morro Bay, Calif.; along with Farrell and Elmer Jamieson and Gerald and Dorothy Puishis; many cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister and brother-in-law, Annabelle (Charles) Faivor; and brother-in-law, Robert Pester.

Cremation has taken place. Visitation for friends and family will be held Friday, March 18, from 6 to 8 p.m., with a vigil service held at 7 p.m., at the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home. The Rev. Gerald Micketti and Deacon Rene Hoenscheid will preside. A Mass from the Order of Christian Funerals will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, March 21, at Our Lady of Victory in Paradise, with the Rev. Frank Ricca presiding. Burial will take place in Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given to Whitefish Township School Athletic Boosters, Grand Traverse Area Catholic School Athletic Association or the Father Fred Foundation.

The family would like to extend a thank you to all the staff at Munson Medical Center, Munson Home Health Care, Munson Hospice, Dr. Paul Turner and Dr. Jay Starr for their exceptional care given to John.

Please share thoughts with the family at John's online guestbook at [www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com](http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com).

The family is being served by Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.