



John Joseph Helminiak age 87 of Grant Township, Michigan died Sunday night, October 26, 2014 at West Shore Medical Center. John was born on June 29, 1927 in Manistee, Michigan to the late John Edward and Pricilla “Sadie” (Adamski) Helminiak. He served as a Corporal in the United States Air Force during World War II from January 19, 1946 until July 21, 1947 having served in Japan and Korea. In 1951 until 1964, he served in the Michigan National Guard, attaining the rank of Captain. John married Emily Girven on May 29, 1948 in Manistee, Michigan at Saint Joseph Catholic Church. They have celebrated over sixty six and a half years together.

John was employed most of his life at the Packaging Corporation of America in Filer City and was very active with all union activities, as well as having held union offices of chief steward and union president during his working career. He retired in 1989 after thirty four years with the company. From 1964 until 1974 he was the owner and operator of John’s IGA Store in Freesoil. He served for forty three years as the Grant Township Supervisor having held the position from 1953 until 1998. He will always be remembered for his love of music and being a well-known area musician for playing the concertina since the early age of thirteen. He had formed several bands during his career, the “Music Maker’s” and later the “Polka Pals” and the “Quade Band”. He was an avid sports fan having sponsored many men’s and ladies, baseball (fast and slow pitch), basketball and bowling teams over the years he was in business. John was also an avid Detroit Tiger fan all of his life.

He was a member of the Catholic Community of Manistee (Saint Joseph Parish) where he served as an usher. He was a third and fourth degree member of the Knights of Columbus Monsignor J.M. Steffes Council #853 where he had served as the Faithful Navigator, a member of the American Legion Post #10, the Catholic War Veterans Post #1847 and a life time member of the Civic Club all of Manistee.

John is survived by his wife of over sixty six and half years; Emily L. Helminiak of Manistee, five children; Linda (Gary Loper) Helminiak of Freesoil, Richard (Theresa) Helminiak of Manistee, Jean Anne (Michael) Slimmen of Rockford, Karen (Bruce) Giles of Canton and Kristie (Jay) Funk of Ludington, his grandchildren; Alana (Joe) Zhou of Santa Rosa, CA, Jamie Slimmen of Tustin, CA, Scott Slimmen of Grand Rapids, Jared Funk of Rockford, and Jayson Funk of Ludington, his great grandchildren; Ava Norman of Tustin, CA, and Landon Slimmen of Grand Rapids, his brother and sister in-law; Joseph and Helen Helminiak of Manistee, his brother in-law, Fred Johnson of Manistee, his brother in-law and sister in-law, Rush and Flo Girven of Bear Lake, and his sister in-law, Jenetta Dempsey of Comstock Park. Numerous nieces and nephews also survive him.

John was also preceded in death by four sisters: Leona Ake, Elizabeth (Betty) Purgiel, Evelyn Abramczyk and Annabelle Johnson and by four brothers: Edward (Spades), Frank (Chum), Anthony (Tony), and Louis Helminiak.

Mass from The Order of Christian Funerals will be celebrated Friday afternoon, October 31, 2014 at 2:00 PM at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Manistee with Reverend John McCracken celebrant. Burial will follow at Mount Carmel Cemetery where graveside military honors will be given by the members of the Manistee United Veterans Council Ritual Squad.

Relatives, friends and the members of the Knights of Columbus will pray the Rosary Thursday evening at 8:00 PM at the Herbert Funeral Home in Manistee, where friends may begin calling on Thursday evening, after 6:00 pm. The family will be at the funeral home to receive friends on Thursday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 PM, and Friday from 1:00 PM until the time of leaving for the church at 1:40 PM.

Those wishing to make an expression of sympathy in John's name are asked to consider a charity of their choice. **The Herbert Funeral Home of Manistee is in Charge of Funeral Arrangements.**