



Walter “Walt” Salisbury Jr., age 87, passed away peacefully on May 21, 2026, surrounded by the love of his family. Born on May 30, 1938, in Muskegon, Michigan, Walt built a life defined by devotion to his family, his work, his community, and the many people fortunate enough to cross his path. Walt married the love of his life, the former Bernice Marvel Bont, on August 13, 1960, in Muskegon. Together they shared 65 years of partnership, adventure, and unwavering commitment. Their life took them from Muskegon to Jenison, where they raised their family for 38 years, and later to the home they built along the White River in Hesperia. That riverbank became the heart of countless family memories, float trips, pig roasts, laughter, and the kind of simple joy Walt cherished. After 18 years in Hesperia, Walt and Bernice returned to Muskegon, where they spent the last nine years close to family and community.

Walt proudly served his country in the Army Reserves for two years and the National Guard for six. He worked as both a mechanic and a truck driver, holding positions at Muskegon Wholesale, Weller Auto, and United Van Lines, and even owning his own truck for a time. He retired in 2000, though “retirement” for Walt simply meant shifting his energy into new passions. After retiring, Walt discovered a love for woodworking. He poured his creativity and care into building furniture, gifting pieces that will be treasured for generations. He also gave generously of his time, volunteering in the communities he called home, Muskegon, Gulf Shores, and Hesperia. When he returned to Muskegon, he became deeply involved with the Muskegon Lighthouse, offering tours, helping with restoration, and sharing his enthusiasm for local history.

Walt had a gift for making people feel cared for. He was the first to lend a hand, the first to show up, and the first to offer a good natured tease. He was faithful, loving, and endlessly generous with his time. His community involvement included the Michigan Club, serving as President of his HOA, and serving on the board of Brook Cherith Camp. He also had a passion for puzzles, the harder the better.

Some of Walt's happiest moments were spent with his grandchildren. He delighted in tractor and three wheeler rides, seeing how many kids he could squeeze into his big chair, and orchestrating legendary water fights. He loved camping with his family, traveling with their camping group, and later discovering the joy of cruising. A cherished memory for all was the family cruise to Canada in the fall of 2023.

Walt had simple pleasures that brought him joy - a bowl of ice cream, and his signature habit of saving his Jello for last. These small rituals, like so many parts of his life, became beloved family stories.

Walt lived a life rich with love, laughter, and purpose. His legacy lives on in the family he adored, the community he served, and the countless lives he touched.

Walter will be lovingly remembered by his wife, Bernice Salisbury; four children: Doug (Sally) Salisbury, Denny Salisbury, Daniel (Katy) Salisbury, and Debbie Salisbury; 11 grandchildren: Justin (Amanda White) Salisbury, Jamie (Levi Grise) Salisbury, Andrew (Hanna) Salisbury, Blake (Brittany) Salisbury, Kyle (Nicole) Salisbury, Brittney (Todd) Olsen, Jillian Salisbury, Madelyn Wilson, Amelia Wilson, Lauren Wilson, and Tyler Wilson; eight great-grandchildren; three siblings: David (Janice) Salisbury, Jill Carron, and Dale (Bethann) Salisbury; brothers in-law, Allen Bont and Richard (Joyce) Bont; and many nieces, nephews, and other extended relatives. He was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Marie Salisbury, as well as his parents in-law, Henry and Ruth Bont, and his stepmother, Betty Salisbury.

A Memorial Service will be held for Walter at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at The Lee Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services, 6291 Harvey St, Norton Shores, MI, 49444, with Visitation taking place an hour prior.