



## John Hanell

December 13, 2010

TRAVERSE CITY — John Clarence Hanell, 82, a Traverse City native, died Monday evening, Dec. 13, 2010, at Munson Medical Center, following complications arising from a C1 vertebral fracture. He had suffered from Louie body dementia the last two years. Born May 3, 1928, in Traverse City, he was the son of the late Otto Anderson and Lydia Anna (Sanbacka) Hanell. On March 21, 1952, at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Traverse City, he married the former Avis Joan Schaub while on medical leave from the army. John and Avis met, she was 14 and he was 20, at the roller skating rink, where he and his brothers were "hot-dogging" skaters. John was a proud veteran who served his country during the Korean War with the United States Army-Seventh Cavalry Regiment. He was honored to be a Purple Heart Recipient. John earned the Combat Infantry Badge, Korean Service Medal with two bronze stars, Army Occupational Medal (Japan), Distinguished Unit Citation and Meritorious Unit Commendation. He was nominated for the Silver Star but records were burned before it was processed. He served as a sergeant first class. He was a member of the Northwestern Michigan Korean War Veterans - Traverse City Chapter, life member of the Disabled American Veterans Chapter #38, V.F.W. Cherryland Post #2780, United States Seventh Cavalry Association and a life member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart. As a devoted Roman Catholic, John attended St. Joseph Catholic Church, All Faiths Chapel, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and most recently St. Francis Catholic Church. John was very involved with church activities, including his service as an Eucharistic Minister and usher. John will be fondly remembered as a gifted automotive body repairman who worked for over 45 years for the local Chevrolet dealership under many owners. He was a certified master mechanic and was often sought after for his custom automotive detailing, in which he took great pride. John was a very giving man who provided toys and games for Munson's pediatric patients. Hundreds of children benefited from these gifts. This was a year-round program sponsored by the Korean War Veterans. John and Avis traveled the area in search of their special toys. They retired after 16 years of service. He believed in giving back to others, sharing with school students his experiences and knowledge in serving in the Korean War. John was an extremely honest man, living by the Golden Rule. John excelled at euchre and enjoyed playing many card games with family and friends. He was also a

talented wood craftsman and gardener. Wildlife was one of his passions. He enjoyed hunting in his earlier years and later photographing wildlife. At their Silver Lake Road home, John trained the chickadees to come when he whistled, then light on his fingertips to eat from his hand. He relished the idea of spending time with his grandchildren and their annual family camping trip on Labor Day weekend at Burt Lake, where John and Avis executed games and competitions. Amazingly, the children always won the games. Other campers would line the street where the annual events occurred, some coming year after year to watch the elaborate fun. He is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Avis Hanell, of Interlochen; children, John Anthony (Patricia E.) Hanell, of Traverse City, Ralph Ambrose (Peggy) Hanell, of Buckley, and Patricia (Trink) Ann (James) Hanes, of Traverse City; grandchildren, Paul Anthony Hanell, MaryAnn Elizabeth (Todd) Wilcox, Jacqueline Marie Hanell, Courtney Marie (Jason) Nied, Michael Piechocki, Benjamin James (Sharon) Hanes, Christopher John (Alicia) Hanes, Nicole Ann (Kevin) Senko, Lee Shaffer, Cheryl (Frank) Gray and Sandy (Ron) Douglas; 32 great-grandchildren; siblings, Otto (Dorothy) Hanell and Saga Lassa, both of Traverse City; sisters-in-law, Ida Hanell, of Traverse City, and Mary Hanell, of Flint; brother-in-law, Andy Farney, of Flint; many nieces and nephews who called him "Uncle Zeke"; and lifelong dear friends, Bud and Mickey Bark, and Don and Dorothy Lint, all of Traverse City. In addition to his parents, John was also preceded in death by brothers, Vike Hanell, Everet Hanell, Rex Hanell, Carl Hanell and his wife, Ruth; sisters, Ruth Farney and Judy Haiss and her husband, Don; and his in-laws, Ambrose A. and Anna L. Schaub. Friends may call at the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home on Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010, from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m., with a Scripture Service to be held at 7 p.m. A funeral Mass will be offered at St. Francis Catholic Church on Monday, Dec. 20, 2010, at 11 a.m., with visitation one hour prior to the service. Graveside services with full Military Honors, under the auspices of the V.F.W. Cherryland Post #2780, will be held at 2 p.m. Monday at Oakwood Catholic Diocesan Cemetery. In remembrance of John, memorials may be directed toward the Food Pantry at St. Francis Catholic Church or to the Father Fred Foundation. Envelopes may be obtained either at the funeral home or church. Kindly share your memories with the family on their online guestbook at [www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com](http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com). Arrangements were made with the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.