



## John P. Walkley

March 3, 1937 - May 23, 2023

John P. Walkley, 86, Retired Houghton Lake Community Schools Superintendent, died May 23, 2023, at Green Acres of Cadillac, where he was a resident for the past year.

Born in Frankfort, March 3, 1937, he was the son of Harold and Marion Walkley. He and Suzanne Sharp were married April 19, 1963,

Mr. Walkley graduated from Frankfort High School where he played football, basketball and ran track. He then received his Bachelors of Arts from Central Michigan University and followed with a master's degree at Western Michigan University. He continued his education by working on a doctorate from Michigan State University, only taking doctorate classes that would help him in his work. He also attended Northwestern Michigan College, Traverse City, following high school.

Mr. Walkley was the superintendent at Houghton Lake from 1969 until his retirement in 1990. He then returned as an interim superintendent in 2006, declining a salary for that interim position. He led a successful millage campaign in the mid-1970s to build a new high school.

Prior to accepting the position of superintendent at Houghton Lake, Mr. Walkley held the position of superintendent of Custer School District for three

years. He had accepted that position at the age of 28 and, at the time, was the youngest superintendent of schools in the state of Michigan.

He developed his sense of humor and quick wit while a caddie for Crystal Downs Golf Club, Frankfort, at the age of nine. At 14 he began working full time at Erickson's Gas Station in Frankfort. He worked full-time while carrying a full-time class load during college.

Mr. Walkley served on the board of directors for Mercy Hospital Cadillac. He was the chairman of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee at Houghton Lake United Methodist Church. He served on the executive board of directors for the Michigan High School Athletic Association. He was a member of the Regional Mental Health Board and regional president of the Michigan Association of School Administrators. He was entered into that organization's hall of fame, and as well he was a member of the inaugural class of Houghton Lake Community Schools Hall of Fame. He was also a member of both the Houghton Lake Lions Club and Houghton Lake Rotary Club, serving as president of both organizations.

He enjoyed spending his summers at his cabin on Batchawana Bay, Canada. He enjoyed many years deer and moose hunting. Mr. Walkley was an avid reader and had a wealth of knowledge about the Ann Arbor Railroad car ferry service in Lake Michigan.

Mr. Walkley was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Suzanne, in 2019.

He is survived by five children, a son, Kip, and daughters, Jan (Pete) McMartin, Julie (Jerry) Cooley, Renee Walkley and Cheri (Doug) Sprik; six grandchildren, Trevor (Maggie) McMartin of Traverse City, Ryan McMartin and fiancé Keri Trumble of Weidman, Dr. Megan Barnes and fiancé Brent Emerick of Houghton Lake, Maria Barnes of Houghton Lake, Kayla Sprik of Cadillac,

and Christian Walkley and fiancé Lauren Washburn of Grand Haven; and three great-grandchildren, Briella Sprik and Madelyn and David McMartin. He was one of 10 children and is survived by his sisters, Dorothy Hanna, Lois Rydahl, Sharon (Garth) Stowe and brother, Larry (Denise) Walkley.

A service is planned Saturday, June 24, at 11 a.m. in the Houghton Lake Junior/Senior High School Auditorium. An online guestbook is available at [www.petersonfh.com](http://www.petersonfh.com).

# Previous Events

## Service

JUN **24**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Houghton Lake Junior/Senior High School Auditorium  
4433 W Houghton Lake Dr  
Houghton Lake, MI 48629

# Tribute Wall



“ Sincere condolences to the family on the loss of your loved one. We know how you feel. The family of Rudolph Alfred Roszman.

J. Kelly - June 26, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of John P. Walkley.



June 22, 2023 at 01:21 PM



“ Best of California Wine Gift Basket was purchased for the family of John P. Walkley.



June 12, 2023 at 11:26 AM



“ Best of California Wine Gift Basket was purchased for the family of John P. Walkley.



June 12, 2023 at 11:26 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John P. Walkley.

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June 12, 2023 at 11:26 AM