



Istvan Joseph Szabo

September 28, 1942 - August 4, 2026

Rockford, Illinois

Istvan Joseph Szabo died in Rockford on August 4, 2026. He was 83. Born on September 28, 1942, with Hungarian-American roots that shaped the table more than the flag. He learned early that a day is something you finish, not something you wait for.

He built a shop from a rented bay and a secondhand lathe. Customers came for parts and stayed for advice; the coffee mug from year one never got replaced. Colleagues still mention a coffee mug from the shop's first year.

He married Eva in 1969. They kept a house that stayed modest when the neighborhood did not. They raised two daughters through public schools and ordinary weather. After Eva died in 2019, he kept the routines that still made sense: the walk, the garden, the Sunday call.

Neighbors remember a porch light left on for anyone walking home late. He liked early mornings before the heat or the noise. He died in Rockford, among streets he never needed to explain. The recipe card is still stained in the useful places.

Services

A memorial gathering in Rockford with coffee afterward. In lieu of flowers, a gift to a local workers' fund, clinic, or neighborhood library is welcome.

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