



Russell Gene Fairbrother

July 27, 1952 - August 5, 2026

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Friends in Grand Rapids remember Russell Gene Fairbrother, who died on August 5, 2026 at 74. Born in Grand Rapids on July 27, 1952, into a French-American household that treated work as a language. He learned early that a day is something you finish, not something you wait for.

He ran sap that had to become syrup before weather changed its mind. A sap-bucket lid lifter outlasted two camp bosses. Colleagues still mention a sap-bucket lid lifter.

In 1975 he married Margaret. The marriage was not a speech; it was groceries, repairs, and two children walked to school in weather that did not care. When Margaret died in 2019, he kept what still worked: the early walk, the small garden, the call on Sundays.

Neighbors remember someone who knew every child's name on the block. Mornings were his favorite shift at home. He died in Grand Rapids, on streets that already knew his pace. The chair by the window still holds the shape of a habit.

Services

Services in Grand Rapids will be simple: stories, coffee, and the names of people who showed up. Flowers optional; support for a local clinic or trade scholarship preferred.

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