



Stanislaw Jozef Kaczmarek

March 14, 1941 - August 19, 2026

Rockford, Illinois

Stanislaw Jozef Kaczmarek died in Rockford on August 19, 2026. He was eighty-five. Born there on March 14, 1941, he grew up in a house where Polish was for the kitchen and English was for the shop, and he kept both. He became a machine-tool setter because the plant was hiring and because he had already learned, at home, that a tolerance is a form of keeping people upright.

He spent thirty-six years setting fixtures that other men only blamed on the print. He arrived early. He did not advertise. Foremen called him because he would scrap a setup even when the order was already promised. He charged a fair hour on the side when a church hall needed a hinge more than a sermon. He kept a notebook of jobs, not clients. The notebook had oil on the edges.

He married Helen Kaczmarek in 1963. They raised three children in a bungalow that needed a new porch every twenty years. Helen kept the garden and the choir. Stan grilled on Sundays and considered a plate of kielbasa a seasonal obligation. After his knees quit the worst pits he still came out for a favorite job, moving slower, doing the same honest work.

Friends remember a man who left a crib cleaner than he found it, who could stand in a noise without making it a personality, and who argued, fondly, with the letters page. He loved the river at evening, a glass of tea he did not finish, and the sound of a spindle that had decided to live. He died in Rockford, in the city whose machines had written his calendar. The floor still runs. Someone else will hear the knock that means trouble.

Services

Visitation in Rockford, then a simple service. A gift to a tool-and-learning fund or a neighborhood pantry is

welcome.

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