



1419 Baxter Avenue, Superior, WI 54880

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Gene McGillis Bio

Eugene (Gene) McGillis was born to John and Catherine (Guinane) on August 7, 1934. Gene is the eighth of their nine children and the last surviving sibling. He grew up in Superior and was educated for thirteen years by the FSPA sisters at Cathedral School. He graduated from Cathedral High School in 1952 and later earned a BS in Business Administration from UW-Superior in 1960.

In the years immediately following his graduation from Cathedral School, Gene held a wide variety of different jobs: he worked on the Great Northern Railroad; unloaded steel at the Blatnik Bridge; he served in the US Navy; and made pizzas at Sammy's. In 1961 he began his career at Superior Water, Light and Power, retiring as president in August 1996.

On August 3, 1957 Gene married Jean Foley, his high school sweetheart, and they celebrated over 58 years of marriage until her death on May 20, 2015. Together they raised five children: Katie, Tim, Patti, TJ, and Mark. They were blessed with fifteen grandchildren: Sean, Megan, and Brian Sekelsky, Kaitlyn, Elyse, Molly, and Brynne McGillis, Sara, Matthew, and Nicholas Steely, Kelsie, Kevin, and Torun McGillis, and Laurin and Mara McGillis. For fifty years the family has made many wonderful memories at their cottage on Lake Nebagamon – 15 of which had no phone or indoor plumbing! After his retirement, Gene and Jean enjoyed summers in Lake Negabamon and winters in Florida.

Gene's church service is extensive. As a boy he recalls serving masses for Bishop Albert Meyer and Fr. Joseph Annabring. He was the first president for the newly formed Parish Council during the time of Monsignor Alphonse Kress. Gene served as a lector and was a Trustee of the parish until 2000. He was heavily involved in the parish renovation that took place in the 1980's, working closely with Fr. Chuck Murphy. For many years Gene served on the Cathedral School Board in close partnership with Monsignor Ed Meulemans. Finally, he worked with Monsignor Philip Heslin on the Catholic Charities Board of Directors.

In 1967, the Jaycees named Gene "Outstanding Young Man of Superior and Douglas County." His work with Superior Water Light & Power also gave him the opportunity to serve our community as a Board Member in a number of organizations: Jaycees, United Way, YMCA Foundation, Superior/Douglas County Development Corporation, NBC Bank, St. Joseph Hospital, St. Mary Hospital, Holy Family Hospital, and Memorial Hospital.

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