



## Louis John "Louie" Demers

Louis John "Louie" Demers passed away Monday, July 22, 2024, at the age of 100 in Blessing Hospital. Louie was born in Quincy on September 3, 1923, the son of John L. and Irene T. (Rupp) Demers. He married his soulmate, Alice M. Belker on October 22, 1946, in St. Francis Catholic Church. Alice preceded him in death on April 17, 2013. This union was blessed with one daughter, Mary Alice, of Quincy.

Louie is a combat veteran of WWII. He enlisted in the Navy at the age of 17 prior to the United States' entry into WW II and was based at Pearl Harbor. For the duration of WWII, he served in the Pacific Theater as a radio operator aboard the USS McCall, **USS Boston**, and USS Vicksburg, earning the rank of Radioman 1st class. During this time, Louie earned 22 major battle stars including Battles of Wake Island, Coral Sea, Midway, Guadalcanal, Aleutian Islands, Tarawa, Philippine Sea, Leyte Gulf, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Louie witnessed the first flag raising at Iwo Jima and the signing of the peace treaty with Japan on September 2, 1945. Louie also served as a communications instructor during the Korean War.

Louie retired from the FAA as an air traffic control specialist at Quincy Regional Airport/Baldwin Field after 31 years of service. He then was the manager at Heetco Jet Center at Baldwin Field for 10 years. Louie was an accomplished pilot with commercial, instrument, multi-engine, and flight instructor ratings. Louie was recognized with the Master Pilot Award from the FAA in 2005. Louie was also named to the IL Aviation Hall of Fame in 2012.

Following his retirement from full-time employment, Louie worked 25 years as a lifeguard, CPR, First Aid, and Lifeguard Instructor, swim instructor, and Safety Coordinator at the YMCA and other area pools until pandemic-related shutdowns. Louie was recognized as the Guinness World Record holder as the oldest active lifeguard in the world.

In 2007, Louie began working as a funeral associate at Duker and Haugh Funeral Home.

Louie was raised in St. John Catholic Parish and attended school there. He was the original bugler for St. John's Boy Scout Troop #1. He subsequently played cornet/trumpet for the Pete Veile Orchestra in the 1930's and 1940's.

Louie has been an active member of St. Francis Catholic Church since his marriage in 1946. He also has been an active community volunteer. He was honored with the KHQA Hometown Hero Award in 2023. He was a proud life member of the Quincy Breakfast Optimist Club and continued to attend meetings up until the time of his death. Louie was a member of the Quincy Park Band Board of Directors, Knights of Columbus, was recognized for 25 years of volunteer service to the Red Cross and was a member of the American Legion and several aviation organizations. Louie was an amateur radio operator and was involved in various emergency response efforts over the years.

Louie was a self-avowed "river rat" spending many years boating on the Mississippi River with his family. He also enjoyed traveling in their motorhome throughout the U.S.A. with his wife and daughter.

Louie made a Great River Honor Flight, participated in multiple Fishing For Freedom weekends (including this past June), and was honored to have served as grand marshal of 2023 Veteran's Parade.

In addition to his wife, Louie was preceded in death by his parents, a sister, Georgia, in childhood, and a brother, Lee, and his wife, Dorothy. In addition to his daughter, Louie is survived by sisters-in-law, Mary Agnes Czervinske of San Antonio, TX, Barbara (Jim) McCaughey of Davenport, IA, and numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Thursday, August 1, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. in Duker & Haugh Funeral Home and a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 a.m. in St. Francis Catholic Church. Interment will be in Calvary Cemetery with military honors conducted by the American Legion Post #37 and the United States Navy Honor Detail. Visitation will be held on Wednesday evening from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. in Duker & Haugh Funeral Home. Memorials may be made to the K of C T.V. Mass for Shut Ins, Great River Honor Flight, Fishing for Freedom, or Quincy Area Veteran's Parade. Messages may be shared online at [www.dukerandhaugh.com](http://www.dukerandhaugh.com)