

**Wayne Arthur Melbye**, 69, of Crookston, MN, lovingly known as “Wiener,” passed away suddenly and unexpectedly of natural causes at his home on Friday evening, June 9th, 2023.

Wayne was born in Crookston on August 18th, 1953, to Erling “Butch” and Noella (Cardinal) Melbye. When he was two years old, Wayne was given his nickname “Wiener” from his Grandpa Ralph Melbye. He was baptized and confirmed at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and attended St. Joseph’s Academy through the 8th grade. His high school years were spent at Central High School where he graduated with the Class of 1971. Wayne was always willing to learn, and he proudly earned an Associate degree from the University of Minnesota-Crookston in 1990, while following his “two-decade” plan. Wayne started his career after high school by working at Fleet Supply for 10 years before owning and operating Erickson Meat Market for another 10 years. He later became head of the meat department of Super Valu for over a decade before becoming the manager of Ampride/Crookston Fuel until his retirement in 2018. For the past few years Wayne had been driving part-time for Tri-Valley with Paulette going along occasionally as his co-pilot.

On September 14, 1974, Wayne was united in marriage to Paulette Fay Bergeron in the St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church at Argyle, MN. The couple made their home in Crookston and their marriage would be blessed in the coming years by the births of 3 boys: Will, Jacob, and Samuel. Wayne will forever be remembered for being kind, respectful to everyone he met, and how much he cared about his hometown and all its people. Wayne loved Crookston deeply and worked tirelessly to make it the best city it could be. He was an active member of many organizations that helped him give back to his community. For several years he officiated at Crookston men’s and women’s softball games, and for Park Board youth hockey and baseball programs. He also umpired

Crookston High School fastpitch baseball games for many years. An important part of his life was being a member of the Crookston Volunteer Fire Department. Even in retirement from CVFD he fervently believed in the mantra, “once a firefighter, always a firefighter”. Wayne was a lifelong member and Worthy Past President of Eagles Aerie 873, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. He decided to give local politics a try and was elected Alderman for Ward 4, serving in that capacity on the Crookston City Council for 14 years. Wayne eventually made the decision to up his game by running for Mayor and very successfully putting his knowledge of city government to work for the benefit of the community. He had currently been serving on the Council as Alderman-At Large. In 1998 The Blues Brothers burst onto the Crookston scene in the form of Wiener and nephew Chris, son Jake, and friend Todd Johnston. They were fabulous impersonators and created loads of excitement wherever they showed up. For years “Joliet Jake and Elwood” would participate in parades, riding in their famous Blues Brothers car, and made countless appearances at Ox Cart Days, dances, weddings, and the community’s “Night to Unite” annual event. Wayne believed that family was everything; and he loved the Melbye and Bergeron families deeply and cherished every moment he spent with them. Of all the roles he played and the many hats he wore throughout his life, Wayne’s greatest joy was sharing his life with Paulette, as together they watched their 3 boys grow into fine young men, creating their own families and carving their path in life. Wayne’s five grandchildren (Natasha, Isabelle, Madelynn, Jameson, & Brody) added so much joy into his life. He loved their visits, Facetime chats, riddles, and sharing jokes with them.

Wayne is survived by Paulette, his beloved wife, partner, and best friend for over 48 years; their 3 sons: Will of Courtland, VA, Jake and wife, Kendra, of Peoria, AZ, and Sam and wife, Marley, of Crookston, MN; 5 grandchildren: Natasha, Isabelle, Madelynn, Jameson, and Brody; 5 siblings: Allen (Fern) Melbye of Thief River Falls, MN, Vicki Melbye of Willmar, MN, Mary Jo (Rick) Eastes of Visalia, CA, Mike Melbye of Warroad, MN, and Lori Melbye of Crookston; and sister-in-law, Maribeth Melbye of Crookston. He also leaves Paulette’s family: Keith (Berta) Bergeron of Stephen, MN, Dean (Susie) Bergeron of Hallock, MN, Rodney (Diane) Bergeron of Springfield, IL, Paul (Penny) Bergeron of Argyle, MN, David (Linda) Bergeron of Wayzata, MN, Vicky Pastorek of Sun City, AZ, Mary (Jim) Klamm of Park Rapids, MN, Susan (Bill) Johnson of Allegan, MI, Ann Bergeron of Hopkins, MN, Amy Bergeron (Donnie Voytilla) of St. Francis, MN, and Audrey (Dick) Hebert of Mentor, MN; together with many nieces, nephews, extended family, and a host of friends.

Wayne is preceded in death by his parents, Butch and Noella; brother, Carl; grandparents, Ralph and Emma Melbye and Arthur and Alice Cardinal; parents-in-law, Francis and Fern Bergeron; and brothers in law, Mitchell “Mick” and Jeffrey Bergeron.

Beyond everything he has achieved in his life professionally and personally, Wayne lived in a way that left an indelible impact on others’ lives. He touched so many with his generous spirit and his memory will live on forever in the hearts of all those he touched.



*In Loving Memory*



*When I come to the end of the day  
And the sun has set for me  
I want no rites in a gloom-filled room.  
Why cry for a soul set free?  
Miss me a little, but not too long  
And not with your head bowed low.  
Remember the love we once shared  
Miss me, but let me go.*

*For this is a journey we all must take  
And each must go alone.  
It's all a part of the Maker's plan,  
A step on the road to home.  
When you are lonely and sick at heart  
Go to the friends we know  
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds-  
Miss me, but let me go.*

IN LOVING MEMORY

*Wayne Arthur "Wiener" Melbye*

August 18, 1953 ~ June 9, 2023

**MEMORIAL MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL**

Saturday, June 17, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception – Crookston, Minnesota  
Fr. Pat Sullivan, Celebrant – Msgr. David Baumgartner, Concelebrant

**SCRIPTURE**

Lamentations 3:17-26  
2 Timothy 4:6-8  
John 3:15-18

**GIFTS**

Natasha – Isabelle – Madelynn – Jameson - Brody

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

Special Music  
"How Beautiful" "Here I Am, Lord"  
"Shepherd Me, O God" "The Old Rugged Cross"  
"I Am the Bread of Life" "How Great Thou Art"  
Pam Sullivan, cantor  
Matt Proulx, accompanist

**PRAYER SERVICE AND MEMORY SHARING**

Friday, June 16, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.  
Stenshoel-Houske Funeral Home – Crookston, Minnesota  
Led by Msgr. David Baumgartner

**SCRIPTURE**

Matthew 5:3-11

**RECORDED MUSIC**

"Knockin' on Heaven's Door" by Bob Dylan  
"Jealous of the Angels" by Donna Taggert  
"Spirit in the Sky" by Norman Greenbaum

*We would like to thank everyone for your comfort and kindness, and all it has meant to us during this difficult time. It will never be forgotten. Thank you also for being with us, whether in body or spirit, as we Celebrate the Life of our Beloved Husband and Best Friend, Dad, Grandpa, Brother, Uncle, Nephew, and Cousin.*

Love,  
Paulette – Will, Natasha, Isabelle, and Madelynn  
Jacob and Kendra, Jameson and Brody – Sam and Marly – and Family