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## Facts

**Born:** April 20, 1919

**Place of Birth:** Southbridge, MA

**Death:** August 27, 2007

**Place of Death:** Worcester, MA

**Hobbies:** Polka Music and Polka Dancing

## Survived By

Stasia M. Libera, Wife

John J. , Son

Janice M. Bajgier, Daughter

Jenna Libera, Granddaughter

Bethany Bajgier, Granddaughter

Krista Bajgier, Granddaughter

## John J. Libera

April 20, 1919 - August 27, 2007

Southbridge: John J. Libera, 88, of 28 Brook Rd., died Monday, Aug. 27th, in St. Vincent Hospital, Worcester, after a brief illness.

He leaves his wife of 60 years, Stasia M. (Piechota) Libera; a son, John J. "Jack" Libera, Jr. and his wife Linda of Charlton; a daughter, Janice M. Bajgier and her husband, Edward of South Deerfield; three grandchildren, Jenna Libera of Charlton, Bethany Bajgier of South Deerfield and Krista Bajgier of Charlottesville, VA. He was born in Southbridge the son of Joseph and Mary (Slupek) Libera. He was a U.S. Navy Veteran of World War II serving in the Pacific theatre.

John worked in research at the American Optical Co. in Southbridge for many years before retiring and was a member and past president of its Quarter Century Club and also a member and past president of its Wellsworth Athletic Association.

Through his great love of polka music and polka dancing he became a well known radio personality. He was known as "Mr. Polka Man", hosting the Polish Show on Sundays on WESO radio in Southbridge and also WNEB radio in Worcester for many years. WESO and John Libera grew together. Not only was there a Sunday Polish Show, but also one on Saturday; the "Polka Jamboree", then the "Sunset Polkatime Show" made its daily appearance during the summer months. As WESO wattage increased, so did John's listening audience. With the addition of WQVR-FM station management encouraged John to be on FM as well as AM. The Stereo Polka Showcase was added to the programming.

He was a member of the International Polka Association. He was a trustee of the Polka Music Hall of Fame in which he was inducted into in 1982. He was a member of United States Polka Association. He appeared on the cover of Polka Guide magazine in Sept. of 1963

John also endeavored to do other things. To teach polka

dancing was one, and he has instructed polka dance steps to hundreds throughout the area. He has recorded with various bands; "World's Fair Polkas with Eddie Siwicki" and two albums with Peter Anop and his orchestra. In 1998, John recorded with the Maestro's Men from CT on "Once More From the Top". John also proved a successful composer, having many of his tunes recorded. His oberek, "Tu i Tak i Tam" (Here, There and Everywhere), recorded by Eddie Blazonczyk and the Versatones of Chicago gained John national recognition as the song was voted No. 1 in 1978 by the International Polka Association. Additionally, for several years, John promoted polka weekends at Jug End in the Berkshires, and the Sturbridge Sheraton hotel. One of his greatest honors and achievements occurred in 1988, when John along with his family were invited to participate in the annual American Folklife Festival held in Washington, DC and sponsored by the Smithsonian Institute. There, the Liberas demonstrated polka music along with Massachusetts band, Bay State IV presenting the dance and music to over a half a million people.

John's funeral will be held on Friday, Aug. 31st., from the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a Mass at 10:00am in St. Hedwig's Church, Everett St., Southbridge. Burial will be in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge. Calling hours in the funeral home will be held on Thursday, Aug. 30th, from 4:00 to 7:00pm  
In lieu of flowers donations may be made to St. Hedwig's Church, 29 Summer St., Southbridge, MA 01550.

## Services

### Mass

Fri. August 31, 2007 , 10:00AM at St. Hedwig's Church

[Click for Map and Directions](#)

### Calling Hours

Thu. August 30, 2007 , 4:00 - 7:00pm at Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home

[Click for Map and Directions](#)

### Burial

Fri. August 31, 2007 at Oak Ridge Cemetery

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### Sign the Guestbook

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