



Dale Ronald Rinkevicz

February 4, 1963 - January 28, 2012

DALE'S LIFE STORY: Dale Ronald Rinkevicz was a friend to everyone who knew him. He was a son, a brother, a father and a husband. He loved life and was a cheerful and smiling man who knew no enemies. His work was his passion and he was always striving to make each carpentry job the very best. He was always proud to show others what he had done. Many of his skills were self-taught and he had a vast knowledge of wood, building, roofing, electricity and plumbing, as well as concrete. He was capable and hard-working, keeping his values of simplicity and humility, his reputation providing new work by way of word of mouth, with a long list of former customers and a list of those still waiting in line. Born on February 4, 1963 to Ronald Justin and Donna (Petersen) Rinkevicz, his daddy called him "my little tractor driver". He joined his older sister Ruth and was followed by siblings Janet, Wayne and Mark. Dale was the "Big Brother". There was fun on the farm with the kids riding the Holstein cows in lieu of a horse, making their own fun on the dairy farm, playing with their many pets. Dale's father was always busy with the farm and Dale tried to help. One time when he was about 8 years old, he was driving the tractor down the road, looking back to see if anyone was watching and drove right into the pond. The tractor kept going and his Dad went chasing it after Dale jumped off. Luckily, no harm was done. Dale told a story of his Grandma Rinkevicz taking him fishing at Oxbow Lake. They had only one fishing pole so they had to share. He remembered this time as very special. Dale excelled in school, always getting good grades, and from grade

school went on to get many honors in sports at Mason County Central High School, playing football and basketball. After graduating in 1981, he joined the Navy and sailed to many places – the Philippines, Japan, Thailand and Mexico. He met his first wife, Monica, while stationed in San Diego and they added a sweet little darling, Kaitlyn Marie to their family. Dale was so proud to be a father; he just beamed and Kate was the light of his life. On September 18, 1987, Dale's father, Ron, was killed in a construction accident, a sad and tragic moment for Dale and all of his family. Family was important to Dale. Celebrating Christmas at Grandma and Grandpa Petersen's was a loved and anticipated annual tradition. He loved his grandparents and did many helpful things, looking for ways to show compassion to all his elders. Later, Dale moved back to Michigan and began his serious work of carpentry, which was truly a gift from God. He still made frequent visits to California to keep in touch with his little girl, Kate, and watch her as she played sports and showed her animals in 4-H. He was always so excited to spend time with her. In about 2005, Dale met the love of his life, Colleen Quinlan. They had barely known each other in school, but now he saw her in a different light. She was cute and spunky and they hit it off from the start. He always said he would never get married again, but with Colleen's patience and love, they creatively announced their engagement on February 14, 2011, sending it in a Valentine's card to family and friends. On September 24, 2011, family and friends attended a very unique wedding in Swygart's apple orchard in Riverton. Dale had designed and created a rustic wooden cross, using wood from each of their prior homes, hand-crafted to symbolize their union in the Lord. God had become a very important part of his and Colleen's life at Trinity Evangelical Free Church and in the Bible study led each week by Enoch and Joan Olsen. Enoch had the privilege of performing the marriage ceremony and it was beautiful and personal with everyone seated in the midst of the fall apple colors, enjoying wine, cheese and music before the ceremony. Dale had arrived early to greet friends and family. Colleen surprised everyone by arriving in a classic pickup from the 50's, accompanied by her daughter

Deirdre and Dale's daughter Kaitlyn, all seated on chairs in the truckbed, while her son Dominic rode in the cab. The casual, classy wedding ended with a celebration at the wedding "barn" north of Scottville with 180 guests. The pair later took a short honeymoon trip to Mackinac Island. The happy couple had at last found the life they wanted with each other and settled into their leased home near Scottville. The many gifts from the wedding shower and the wedding, plus their accumulated treasures, made it truly a home of which they were both very proud. Dale had a small room in the walkout basement he designated his "man cave", with a grin from ear to ear. When he referred to past memories and joys in his life, he would often remark "Babe... it's BC – Before Colleen!" He truly loved his family and kept them involved in his activities... He was effusive about the efforts of Dom and Dee as they gathered apples in the snow for a batch of his home-brewed cider. It was cold and miserable, but Dale just kept telling them the baskets weren't full enough! He loved to tease as evidenced by repeatedly telling Dom and Trevor as they waxed his rusty truck, "You missed a spot! Go back and do it again!" And only Peter knows why Dale got the last of the ribs instead of him... They knew better than to ask him for an opinion unless they wanted the truth, not necessarily what they wanted to hear. Dale was not a man who loved "things", he loved life and people and his Lord. He was happy to drive around in a beat up old truck and he knew how to be economical. He was not a big spender, but was an avid poker player with his buddies, usually meeting at Joe Johnson's home. He liked competition, including playing in a men's basketball group who met occasionally to hit the hoops. He liked things simple and honest. His pop culture favorites reflected his taste – John Wayne, Mary Tyler Moore and Karen Carpenter. Dale spent his first Christmas as husband to Colleen with both her family and with his mother and siblings for the annual Christmas family gathering. He was looking forward to his 49th birthday on February 4th, but it was not to be. Dale was playing poker with friends as usual, but suffered cardiac arrest, and in spite of the valiant efforts of his

brother Mark and friend Joe, they were not able to resuscitate him. Dale's death on January 28, 2012 was a sad and tragic loss for both families and the many friends who knew and loved Dale. Dale left a memorable impression on people, who took notice especially of his big, strong hands, his determined sense of responsibility and that great big smile. Dale took note of people in a special way. Relationships were intentional and crafted, he never disregarded the scraps in people's lives and his friendship shaped many along the way. When thinking of Dale, the vision in mind for many will be: Dale in his red Coopman Fishery t-shirt, Goodwill shorts (or better yet – a second hand pair from brother Mark), scarred up legs and tile-laying knees, the dirt of the earth under his nails with saw dust and chocolate from a Ho-Ho, and some cheap dollar store reading glasses that tilted to the side of his face as he seriously browsed the newspaper for sale flyers. He will live on in the hearts, minds and memories of so many who shared life with him. In addition to his father, Ronald, Dale was preceded in death by his grandparents Vance & Florence Petersen and Justin & Elenor Rinkevicz. Dale will be missed dearly and remembered lovingly by his wife, Colleen, his children Kaitlyn Marie of Crescent City, CA and her mother Monica, Deirdre Fortino of Ypsilanti, Dominic Fortino of East Lansing, Michael (Corinne) Coopman and Mark Coopman, all of Crescent City, CA; his mother Donna (Hank) Heynen of Delton; his brothers and sisters Ruth Rinkevicz of Grand Rapids, Janet (James) Shinsky of Ludington, Wayne (Terri) Rinkevicz of Carr Settlement and Mark (Christy) Rinkevicz of Grand Haven; his mother-in-law Paula (Ron) Kovar of Scottville and father-in-law James (Jan)Quinlan of Caledonia. A memorial service for Dale will be held at 11:00 am on Thursday, February 2, 2012 at Trinity Evangelical Free Church in Ludington with Pastor Gary Ridley officiating. Family and friends will meet for a time of visitation on Wednesday evening from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Stephens Funeral Home in Scottville. Those who wish to honor Dale's memory with a charitable donation are asked to consider Hospitality In the Name of Christ, or the Mason County Central Middle School's Veterans Program (westcoastveterans.weebly.com).