



Darwin Eugene Buck

April 2, 1923 - December 10, 2010

LIFE STORY: Darwin Buck was a man of his word. With integrity, he held to high principles and led by example. Although set in his ways and at times, known for a temper, he never compromised his deep love and affection for his family. There was no wavering with Darwin as he considered most things in his world were either black or white. Dedicated and hard working, he placed his family above all and was a devoted, generous and caring man. He possessed a wonderful sense of humor and enjoyed being in the company of others. With his outgoing nature, he naturally drew others to his side. When Darwin walked into a room, everyone smiled. Following World War I, normalcy was slowly returning to the country. The year 1923 was a time marked by many firsts in the fabric of America. The Walt Disney Company was founded, insulin became available for diabetics, and a vaccine for the whooping cough was developed. In the close-knit farming community of Hart, Michigan, Percy and Myrtle (McLaren) Buck were experiencing times of growth in their family as well. On April 2 they welcomed a son, Darwin Eugene into their loving arms. Darwin's early years were marked by some difficult experiences for his family. His father, a Veteran of World War I, had been seriously injured in battle. Suffering greatly from his wounds at the time of Darwin's birth, he died when Darwin was only three years old. With the passing of time, his mother remarried, and Paul "Ferris" Fairchild of Hesperia came to raise young Darwin as his own. Darwin gained three new brothers with this marriage, and counted Paul Jr., Raymond, and Joe his brothers as if by blood. Darwin's stepfather

worked the farm in Hesperia where they made their home, and where Darwin helped with the many chores that went with a life of farming. During these years, farming became second nature to Darwin, a trait he carried throughout his life. During this time Darwin's mother worked at Gerber Baby Foods in nearby Fremont, Michigan. Along with working on the farm, Darwin attended the local schools. He played high school basketball and baseball, and went on to graduate from Hesperia High School. It was through school that Darwin met the young woman who would become his life companion. Lois Thompson was one of Darwin's classmates and over the years they attended many functions together. Quite smitten, they eventually began dating and on January 20, 1945, they exchanged vows of marriage. Before long they were blessed with the birth of their daughter, Kathy in 1948, only to be devastated by her death two days later. In 1951 their son Michael was born and Rebecca completed their family in 1952. With farming in his blood, Darwin bought a farm of his own in the rural Mason County area of Carr Settlement. Equipped with his team of horses, he farmed the land while Lois, a school teacher, taught at various schools throughout county. Darwin also worked as a foreman at Baldwin Packing Material, remaining there until his eventual retirement in 1988. Besides planting and tending to his crops, Darwin also raised Hereford cattle. Dedicated to the task at hand, Darwin was steadfast and committed to his decisions. Guided by his strong principles, wavering was not an option. Always a hard worker, he was a regular and welcome sight to neighbors as he drove his tractor down the road, complete with his familiar smile, sporting his infamous suspenders. As hard working as he was, Darwin always made time for his children. He was fond of most sports, but especially favored baseball, coaching his son Mike's little league teams and a men's fast-pitch team. He rarely missed any of Mike and Rebecca's activities, and would leave work early to catch one of their games, attend a band concert or any one of their other events. A very supportive father, he was sure to be a part of their lives and was attentive in all their endeavors. Although sometimes quick tempered, he balanced his life with generosity of spirit and with a caring and loving

demeanor. As a family, many enjoyable times were shared on camping trips. After baseball season was over and haying was complete, they traveled to Niagara Falls, Mackinac Island, and the Midwest-Wisconsin Dells on some of their camping excursions. In their retirement years, Darwin and Lois traveled all over the U.S. They enjoyed a trip to Alaska and Hawaii, along with many bus tours. Although it usually took much persuasion from Lois for Darwin to agree to go, his grumbling while preparing for the trips was well worth her effort. Once there, Darwin was usually the life of the party. Together they enjoyed square dancing, with Darwin often calling for the dances. At one point they traveled to Cedar Springs to teach square dancing to daughter Rebecca's students. The kids loved it and Darwin loved it, too. The most enjoyable part of life for Darwin and Lois was their shared love of family, especially as grandparents. They attended as many of their events as possible, and showed their love for them with all their hearts. They may not have always understood or agreed with their grandkids, but their unconditional love never wavered. With his strong sense of values, Darwin instilled much character in the lives of his children and grandchildren, and led by example. His integrity was often made evident in deals where his word and handshake was as good as a sealed bond. His wonderful sense of humor and his outgoing demeanor often branded Darwin as the life of the party and everyone enjoyed his company. A personable fellow, his outgoing nature led to many lasting friendships and easy acquaintances. He will be fondly remembered in the hearts of his family, many friends and the nurses who lovingly cared for him. His memory will forever remain a treasure. Darwin Buck passed away peacefully on Friday, December 10, 2010 in Long Grove, Illinois from Alzheimer's disease. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Lois on October 10, 2007, his parents and his stepfather Paul Fairchild, his daughter Kathy in 1948, and his brother Paul Fairchild Jr. Darwin will be greatly missed by his son Michael Buck and wife Leslie of Crystal Lake, IL; his daughter Rebecca Goosen of Houston, Texas; his beloved grandchildren Kristin (Ryan)

Romanoski, Ryan (Jamie) Buck, Lt. Andrea Buck USN, Stacey Pate, Gregory (Susan) Goosen, and Tracy Goosen; his precious great-grandchildren Addison and Quinnlyn Buck; his brothers Raymond (Janice) Fairchild, and Joe (Bonnie) Fairchild all of Hesperia; and his sister-in-law Arlene Fairchild also of Hesperia; and several nieces and nephews. Funeral services will be held for Darwin at 11:00 AM on Saturday, December 18 at the Stephens Funeral Home in Scottville with Rev. Norman Letsinger officiating. Burial will take place at McCumber Cemetery. Friends may meet with his family for a time of visitation on Saturday morning from 9:00 AM until time of services at the funeral home. Those who wish to make memorial contributions are asked to consider the Alzheimer's Association.