



Dorothy Marie Schwass

March 22, 1919 - September 29, 2011

DOROTHY'S LIFE STORY: Many characteristics make up the lives of great people, but those derived from the heart are the qualities that leave a forever imprint on the hearts of others, and Dorothy Schwass was such a woman. Resourceful and creative, she was an ambitious, hard worker who put the needs of family before her own. Equally as loving, she was a special woman in the hearts of those she leaves behind and will be deeply missed. In 1919, the introduction of the dial telephone was an astounding new way of communication, and the end of World War I found American cities everywhere looking for ways to prosper and grow their economies. In the shoreline community of Ludington, Michigan, along the beaches of Lake Michigan, John George and Pearl Estelle (Hollick) Petre found a little prosperity of their own on March 22, 1919 when they welcomed the birth of their daughter, Dorothy Marie into their hearts. Welcomed as well by her older sister, Barbara, Dorothy enjoyed a childhood typical for the times. However, difficult days beset her family during Dorothy's seventh year when her father sadly died from pneumonia. Left to raise two young daughters alone, her mother found work at a local laundry service to support their family. The onset of the Great Depression several years later certainly didn't help matters, but together they found ways to cut corners and make ends meet. Even amongst trying times in earlier years, Dorothy enjoyed the friendships of many as she took in all the lakeshore had to offer a young girl. Having attended the area schools, she went on to graduate from Ludington High School in 1937, before finding work

at Star Watch Case in Ludington. She thoroughly enjoyed riding her bike out to Ludington State Park, and spent a great deal of time at the beach. She also modeled for a time, often at the beautiful Schoenberger home. As a young woman, Dorothy met Russell Schwass from Scottville, a gentleman a couple years younger than she, who stole her heart. He often left school and drove to Ludington to share lunch with Dorothy during her breaks from work, and after falling deeply in love, the two were happily married on November 29, 1947. They began their life together as husband and wife, making their home in Riverton Township on Russ' family farm. Dorothy continued working at Star Watchcase until their first child, Paula was born in 1950, followed by two more daughters, Russelle and Naja. Although very strict in raising her girls, Dorothy was just as caring and very active in their lives. She sewed most of their clothes, and made them the best costumes for the Scottville Harvest Festival parade each year. She took an active role at their school as a room mother, and made delicious treats for their school parties. Dorothy was the one who was chosen to ride shotgun or copilot when the girls were learning to drive. She rarely wavered when it came to discipline, and instilled a strict curfew for the girls, even to the day they were married. When her youngest daughter, Naja, wanted to stay out late the night before her wedding, Dorothy adamantly told her there wouldn't be a wedding if she did, and she wholeheartedly meant it! A longtime member of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Riverton, Dorothy was devout in serving the needs of her church where her family attended faithfully. They all looked forward to Friday nights shopping in Ludington, and Saturday night trips into Scottville. Dorothy always made sure her daughters were bathed and nicely dressed for these excursions. They were given money for ice cream at Pinkerton's, and for popcorn from the theatre. Russ loved racing, and was a true legend when he raced the local dirt tracks. They always attended the races at the Berlin Speedway in Marne on Saturday nights and made a day of the excursion, with Dorothy packing lunches for all, including her famous pickled bologna sandwiches. Never afraid of getting her hands dirty, Dorothy knew the value of hard work and did what

needed to be done. She often helped on the farm by driving the tractor during haying, helping to pick fruit, and lending a helping hand wherever needed. She was a great cook, and always had a huge meal waiting to feed the extra help during harvest time. They lived across from the Riverton Fire Department and Township Hall where her husband Russ served as the fire chief, and Dorothy enjoyed providing delicious desserts and snacks for all the fireman's meetings and working at the annual Fireman's Ball. Together they oversaw the hall, and did what was necessary when needs arose. Dorothy absolutely loved becoming a grandmother. She loved her grandchildren dearly, and was very supportive of them. Whenever they had a school or sporting event, Dorothy was sure to be there for them. She never hesitated taking care of them, and did so whenever possible. After her beloved husband died from cancer on June 2, 1990, she remained on the farm until it was too hard to take care of. When she eventually moved to Ludington, the grandkids she held so dear conveniently walked to her home each day after school. When it came to driving, Dorothy was always considered a good driver until the last few years when it became a struggle for her. She'd limit herself to right-hand turns, which was interesting in the scheme of getting around. Strong of heart, Dorothy was a hard worker throughout her long life. She was frugal when needed, and strict when necessary. Her wonderful cooking abilities provided delicious meals over the years, but her caring and loving ways will be long remembered in the hearts of those entrusted to her care. At the age of 92, Dorothy passed away peacefully on Thursday, September 29, 2011 at the Oceana County Medical Care Facility in Hart. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Russell, son-in-law, Doug Budreau, and her sister, Barbara Hemmer. Dorothy will be greatly missed by her daughters, Paula (William) Newkirk of Sanford, Russelle (Cliff) Albrecht of Scottville, and Naja Budreau of Free Soil; her beloved grandchildren, Steve (Jami) Newkirk of Clare, Laurie (Tim) Bedford of Midland, Noah Albrecht of Denver, Colorado, Nicholas Albrecht of Grand Haven, Hilary Albrecht (fiancé Tyler Towns) of

Ludington, Travis Budreau, and Mya Budreau, both of Free Soil; her precious great-grandchildren, Cameron Newkirk, Tyler, Ryan, and Kaitlyn Newkirk, and Charlee Budreau; and her sister-in-law, Ruth (Walter) Johnson of Ludington. Funeral services will be held for Dorothy at noon on Monday, October 3, at the Stephens Funeral Home in Scottville, with Rev. Merritt Bongard officiating. Burial will follow at Center Riverton Cemetery. Friends may meet with her family for a time of visitation on Monday morning from 10:00 AM until the service at the funeral home. Those who wish to make memorial contributions are asked to consider Harbor Hospice, or the Riverton Fire Department.