



Frank Dombrowski

May 11, 1920 - April 1, 2009

Frank Dombrowski was a man of great strength with a loving and humble heart. Frank was a fisherman through and through and it was no secret that he viewed his beloved June as his “best catch.” He treasured each day as a precious gift, and he brought smiles and laughter, and sometimes groans to all to all those around him with his quick wit and his dry sense of humor. Lithuanian immigrants, Stanley and Adele (Wigamiski) Dombrowski of Irons were hard working farmers growing a family when they were blessed on May 11, 1920 with the arrival of a son, Frank, born on the family farm. During his childhood, Frank, the third of ten children, established a strong work ethic. When he had finished the tenth grade, Frank left school in order to help on the farm. Unknown to him at the time, if he had not delayed his schooling, he never would have met a shy young girl, four years his younger, named June Cecil. On Easter Sunday, 70 years ago, they had what he always called their first date when he took June home from a local dance. Frank established a passion for fishing at a young age which followed him throughout his entire lifetime. At times Frank found himself in a bit of mischief and on one afternoon was thankful that he was a fast runner. He needed to flee from the game warden who had made a surprise visit to his fishing home and discovered that Frank wasn't exactly fishing by the rules! Frank graduated from Luther High in 1939 and found employment at Norge Manufacturing in Muskegon. Life took an abrupt turn for Frank when our nation was viciously attacked with the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He, along with many others

rushed to serve their country by enlisting. Frank was sent to flight school and was moved to different stations with his group of cadets every ten weeks, eventually becoming a flight engineer on a B29 bomber. Frank graduated as a second Lieutenant and expressed disappointment that he did not have the opportunity to fight for his country overseas. Of great significance during this time was Frank's continued relationship with June. He wrote to her almost every day during their time apart. They began a new chapter in their lives on February 12, 1944 when June left home to marry Frank while he was stationed in Cedar City, Utah. Upon his discharge, Frank resumed his work at Norge Manufacturing as well as on a farm he and June purchased near Ravenna. Frank worked hard to provide a comfortable life for his family which grew to include six children. When Norge moved operations to Arkansas, Frank moved his family to Belding and went to work for Gibson Refrigeration in Greenville, which later became Frigidaire Manufacturing. He worked as the shipping foreman until his retirement in 1983. Together Frank and June created precious memories with their children. Underneath his firmness and sometimes gruff demeanor, his children always knew he loved them deeply and could depend on him being there for them. After he retired, Frank and June moved back to Irons where they lived on Big Bass Lake and he was able to actively pursue his passions for fishing and hunting. Frank and June also took several trips out west and down south visiting family and enjoying the country. Their most memorable trip was when they traveled back to Cedar City, Utah to attend a Sunday service in the church in which they were married, celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary. In retirement Frank was able to spend time with his family and friends taking them boating, fishing and swimming on his lake. He loved to play cards and always "came to win." He and June enjoyed socializing with family and friends playing bingo and cards, enjoying chicken and fish dinners at NaTahKa and hosting many large family gatherings at home. When home alone he and June often went swimming to cool off after a hot summer day. Frank celebrated all holidays with his family but he especially treasured Easter as this marked the anniversary of his first

date with his beloved June. Faith was an important cornerstone in Frank's life. He was a man of deep but quiet faith which he showed by example. Frank was baptized at St. Bernard Catholic Church, and became an active member after he and June moved back to Irons, serving as the custodian for many years, and as a Eucharistic Minister. He was a member of the St. Bernard's Men's Club, and the Knights of Columbus. Frank Dombrowski was an admirable man who in his own quiet way left a lasting impression on those who knew him. Frank cherished his wife, renewing their wedding vows on their 50th wedding anniversary, and still wanted to cuddle and hold hands even after 65 years of marriage. He had a deep felt love for his family and anticipated the birth of each grandchild with joy. With his spirit of independence he rarely asked for assistance on his own behalf. Frank delighted in surprising others with off-the-cuff remarks and his dry sense of humor up until his last days.

FISHERMAN'S PRAYER
God grant that I may live to fish until my dying day, and when it comes to my last cast, I'll then most humbly pray, When in the Lord's great landing net I'm peacefully asleep, that in His mercy I'll be judged BIG ENOUGH TO KEEP!

Frank Dombrowski died on April 1, 2009 at his home on Big Bass Lake with his wife June at his side. He was preceded in death by his parents, his daughter Anne in 1958, his granddaughter Jessica in 1997, his brother Joseph, and his sisters Mary, and Anne. Frank's will be deeply missed by his wife June; his sons, Frank Jr. and his wife Colleen of Belding, Mark and his wife Sally of Hudsonville; his daughters, Charon Phipps of Muskegon, Janet Dombrowski of Irons, and Diane Whitney and her husband Ron of Waxhaw, North Carolina; 10 grandchildren; 8 great-grandchildren; his brothers Stanley and Richard both of Irons, and Robert of Free Soil; his sisters Theresa Misze and her husband Bill of Midland, Marcella Klukowski and her husband Paul of Grand Rapids, and Rose Marie Lardner and her husband Walt of Columbia, South Carolina; many nieces and nephews. Those who wish may make memorial contributions to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Tribute #23652953 in Frank's memory.