



## Howard "'Bud"' William Dodson

August 22, 1934 - April 23, 2010

LIFE STORY: Howard William "Bud" Dodson Jr. was a man of boundless energy and high achievement—all directed toward others. Unassuming about his own abilities and accomplishments, he turned the spotlight on his family, friends and coworkers. He was his children's biggest fan and most enthusiastic cheerleader. He eagerly greeted new acquaintances and made a warm impression when he remembered their names the next time they met. Bud lived life large, yet managed to downplay his own importance as he promoted those around him. Howard, Jr. was born on August 22, 1934 to Howard and Ethel (Sayers) Dodson in Pentwater, Michigan and the family later moved to Scottville. The American "can do" spirit recognized one of its own in young Bud. He demonstrated a mischievous spirit in childhood that was energy converted into numerous achievements throughout his lifetime. As Bud was growing up, the hardships of the stock market crash of 1929 were still present, yet the Dodson family was well cared for by their stay-at-home mother and industrious father. While his dad worked as an electrical lineman, Bud must have considered it his job to be a rambunctious kid. On one occasion, he managed to put an outhouse atop a Scottville school building, and on another, he placed hay bales in the center intersection of downtown. It was no wonder to those who knew him that he managed to be in the path once of an oncoming car and another time that of a greyhound bus. He declined to share the news of the accident with anyone at home, so his mother only found out the next day by reading the newspaper. Each summer, Bud expended his energy at his Dodson grandparents' home in Ladysmith, Wisconsin. He had a great time, especially because he could do no wrong in the eyes of his grandparents. When something happened that typically bore the mark of mischief, the fault somehow fell on Bud's brother or sister, Bob and Beth. Bud truly was considered the favored grandchild. In high school, Bud channeled his vigor into many extracurricular activities. He played drums in band, participated in track, and helped build sets for school plays. He found employment at a movie theater and was pinsetter for the bowling alley in downtown Scottville. In Boy Scouts, Bud achieved the rank of Eagle Scout and often volunteered to gather supplies to send to soldiers during WW II. His desire to help others was instilled by his parents, who often took in traveling strangers and gave them food and a place to sleep. Bud graduated from Scottville High School in 1953, but already in middle school he

had made a pronouncement that affected his future. When the local one-room school house students arrived in eighth grade, Bud spotted Loreen Odean walking through the gym and stated, right then and there, that he was going to marry that girl. It took him a while, for at first Loreen would have nothing to do with Bud, but eventually, he won her over and on December 11, 1953, just six months after high school graduation, the two were married at Sugar Ridge Church of the Brethren in Custer, Michigan. It was the beginning of a wonderful life together that grew to include their family of four children: Dennis, Debbie, Kathy and Cary. Both parents were totally invested and visibly active in the lives of their children. Bud was a Boy Scout leader while son Dennis was growing up. He led various trips and excursions, such as campouts at Sippy Ranch and at Camp Gerber in Fremont, week long canoe trips down many of Michigan's rivers, the Klondike Derby and planting trees at Riverside Park. Every year, he helped put up tents for the Chicken BBQ, handled the canoe rentals as a fundraiser for the Scouts and worked alongside Loreen to construct elaborate floats for the Harvest Festival. He even helped lead the Girl Scouts with Loreen when Debbie and Kathy were in scouting. Bud didn't stop there. Because his son Cary was a special needs child, Bud created a new scouting program for boys and led it for six years. He became involved in Special Olympics when Cary was old enough to participate and stayed with the program throughout the many years to come. Cary became a Special Olympic Gold Medalist and as such named himself the #1 son of the family - a point that is often contested with good-natured teasing. Bud thoroughly enjoyed being with his family, whether camping at Ludington State Park, attending annual Dodson family campouts, or getting together for the holidays. Every year, he looked forward to deer hunting and especially going fishing with Loreen. He made sure every family member's birthday was celebrated, and he kept a detailed calendar to help him remember. Bud never missed sending a card to his kids, grandkids, brothers and sisters. They certainly meant the world to him. Family life was exhilarating for Bud. He was a big tease and always ready for fun. He loved ice cream and popcorn from Wesco, and he kept a stash of candy that he handed out, remembering to give special candy to certain kids. Whatever activity his children were involved in, Bud was there, traveling any distance, through every kind of weather to support them. His support also extended to all of the area sports teams in Mason, Oceana, Manistee and Lake counties. In his working career, Bud was employed with the A & P store in Scottville and Kroger in Hart, before going to Dupont Chemical in Montague. He retired from his job as foreman at Dupont in 1991, the same year he lost his beloved Loreen on November 24th. Loreen's death was a blow to the family, yet Bud continued with his commitments to the community. He became Area 24 Special Olympics Director in 1993, a post he expanded in scope and still maintained. Under Bud's leadership, the annual budget increased from \$5,000 to \$25,000, and he coached up to eight sports at a time. In helping to reorganize the entire program, Bud was highly respected and greatly appreciated across the state of Michigan. Over the

years, Bud was also very active with Habitat for Humanity, helping build over 20 homes in the Mason County area. He did not start with the program as a manager, but soon gained recognition and respect as a leader for his detailed, organizational skills. He became the foreman on almost every build, and all the volunteers came to know "Bud's way" of building: make it safe, build it sturdy. His two rules were: 1) safety first and 2) no shortcuts. He always strove for perfection, because he wanted the best for the new homeowners. In 2000, Bud's church became the beneficiary of his talent as he offered countless volunteer hours as they built a new facility. In 1994, Bud was blessed by his marriage to Glenna Wallace Anderson on October 15th, but once again was plunged into sadness by her death on November 19, 1996. Through all his trials, Bud was sustained by his faith and the care of his fellow church members at Sugar Ridge Church of the Brethren. He had given so much to them and to his community, and he never sought the recognition that came his way. Bud was recognized as the 2009 Citizen of the Year by the Ludington & Scottville Chamber of Commerce, but even on learning of his nomination, felt others were more deserving. Bud's legacy of humility and tireless service will endure among his family and friends. Howard "Bud" Dodson died on Friday morning, April 23, 2010 at the Lack's Cancer Center of St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan, following a short battle with bone cancer. He will be greatly missed by his children Dennis (Darlene) Dodson of Ludington, Debbie (Karl) Drake of Horton, Kathy (Scott) Dumas, and Cary Dodson all of Scottville; his stepdaughter Jill (Jerry) Parsons of Wellston; his grandchildren Callie (Ryan) Allen, Caleb (Mary) Dodson, Deena (Tom) Maher, Kyle Drake, Joshua (Fiancée' Allison) Dumas, Melissa Dumas, Jessie (Randy ) Myers, and Jay Parsons; his great-grandchildren Hannah, Gracie, and Leah Allen, Samuel and Amelia Dodson, and Natalie Myers; his stepmother Virginia Dodson of Ludington; his sister Beth (Willard) Chadwick of De Pere, WI; his brother Bob (Barb) Dodson of Scottville; his special friend Alie VanderHaag of Scottville; and many sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, and cousins. A Celebration of Life service will be held for Bud at 7:00 PM on Saturday, May 1 at the Mason County Reformed Church, with his pastor Dave Wood, and former pastor, the Rev. Merritt Bongard officiating. Burial will take place at Brookside Cemetery in Scottville at 11:45 AM on Monday, May 3.