



## Donald E. Thurston

March 24, 1928 - January 11, 2021

Donald E (Thirsty) Thurston, age 92, passed away peacefully on January 11, 2021 at his residence.

He was born on March 24, 1928 in Oak Park, Illinois, a son of Walter and Alberta (Jennison) Thurston and they preceded him in death.

He lived his boyhood time in the Chicago area and lived his adult life in Cadillac, Michigan. Don was employed by Michigan Bell Telephone for thirty five years as a repairman working on telephone poles and in ditches splicing around trouble in the lines. After early retirement from Ma Bell he worked another eight years working indoors putting in telephone switches. During his non-working hours he was transporting his boys to and from sports events as well as serving in the community as a Mason, achieving the 32nd degree, Worshipful Master, and receiving a sixty year award pin.

After the boys left for college, Don and Mary Ann served in the community showing educational movies at Kirtland Terrace, or helping with Relay for Life, or painting maps of the USA at elementary schools through the Bell Pioneers, or cleaning at the Bay Cliff Health Camp in the U.P., or attending Cadillac Vikings ski meets, baseball or football games and encouraging the players or helping the Patriot Choir with their performances.

During retirement, you could usually find Don on Pleasant Lake in the early morning fishing. Then after breakfast with Mary Ann, he would be at the picnic table fixing or making something. There weren't many things he couldn't repair. You probably saw him or the license tag "Thirsty" around Northern

Michigan as he logged over two million miles, accident free, in the Bell repair trucks or in at least fifteen different personal vehicles from a 1957 rising wing Plymouth, Sport Fury, New Yorker, Fury III, Duster, dune buggy, panel van, Ranger, Journey, and recently a Dodge Dart and was still driving at the age of 92.

Don is survived by his wife of 70 years, Mary Ann (Carlson) Thurston; his sons Gary (Judy) Thurston of Grand Rapids, MI and Rick Thurston of Cadillac; four grandchildren Adele, Connor, Devin and Jennise (Strifler). He was preceded in death by his parents, his step dad Ed Ingram, his brother Charles and sister Betty Beauprie.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the Patriot Choir, c/o Barb Corpe, 6400 W. Kelly Rd., Lake City, MI 49651. An online guestbook is available at [www.petersonfh.com](http://www.petersonfh.com).

# Tribute Wall

KS

“ Don was such a great guy. Loved seeing him and Mary Ann out and about in Cadillac. Always so friendly, always called me by name no matter how long in between encounters. We will miss him.

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**Kathy Ziska Swiger** - January 19, 2021 at 05:58 AM

RT

“ Rick Thurston- Mom, Gary and I are so grateful for your thoughts and remembrances of dad. He was a good man, a good father and a wonderful husband to Mom of 70 years. We all remember so much. Please continue to send your thoughts , Remembrances and special notes of how he touched your life. I remember I bought him a T-shirt that said , Old Guys Rule.- On the back, it said if you don't know me you're not from around here.-  
He knew so many people and so many more people knew him.  
Thank you again keep sending us your thoughts and prayers they strengthen all of us .

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**Rick Thurston** - January 18, 2021 at 01:18 PM

AG

“ Mary Ann, I will never forget all the great times we shared, and the many dinners out at Sunrise Lake. Don and you were true friends and made me feel like a member of the family. Don, you will truly be missed.

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**Alan Gingrich** - January 14, 2021 at 01:47 PM

BB

“ Rick- thinking of you and your family. Praying for God's peace and comfort.

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**Bonnie Bouza** - January 14, 2021 at 01:28 PM

VO

“ Mary Ann, Gary and Rick, so sorry for your loss. I always enjoyed seeing Don. Always had a smile on his face. Enjoyed many conversations with him on numerous occasions. Prayers for you during this difficult time.

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**Vickie (Brinks) Oglesby** - January 14, 2021 at 11:41 AM

MA

“ Mary Ann I will always remember Don. When I walked around Pleasant Lake I would stop and visit you both. My mom Pat Zeeryp and I will keep you in our thoughts and prayers

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**Michele Anderson** - January 13, 2021 at 06:33 PM

DD

“ He was a good man and will be missed by all who knew him. May the love and support of family and friends envelop you in this time of sorrow.

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**Donald & Samantha Dassance** - January 13, 2021 at 10:38 AM

JL

“ Don was a true Cadillac legend. He always engaged others into conversations and was very caring and knowledgeable. Cadillac appreciated such a spirited character. Pleasant memories left to family and friends. Our prayers of comfort and fond thoughts to the family.

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**Jerry & Diane Leavell** - January 13, 2021 at 06:31 AM

CJ

“ Rick and Gary, our thought and prayers are with you and your mom and families. Many good memories of your parents and my parents visiting you at the lake. Will miss seeing him at tax time.

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**Cathy (Johnson) and Dan Janik** - January 13, 2021 at 04:46 AM