



William Harvey Dracht

October 13, 1937 - October 22, 2012

William Harvey Dracht, of Marion, Mich., went to be with his Heavenly Father on Monday, October 22, 2012, after a short but courageous fight against cancer. He was 75.

Embodying Christ's love to his family and to those he encountered, Bill taught his children what was important in life by living it. He was a kind and gentle man who made time for his seven children's countless sporting and other events. As his kids grew, Bill spent many hours working on home improvement projects in their various homes. He wasn't one to sit still but always wanted to be serving in some way. He didn't preach his faith, but everyone who knew him saw Jesus.

Bill owned and ran Dracht Construction Company for over 25 years. Generous with his time and skills, Bill devoted his retirement years to working with CRWRC World Relief (now known as World Renew) in North America, helping to rebuild disaster-stricken areas. Calling these assignments his "all-inclusive" vacations because food, lodging and daily activities were provided, he was known on the job sites for his good cheer, positive outlook and prolific whistling (punctuated only by his singing and/or conversations with himself!) He also traveled multiple times to the Dominican Republic and Ecuador, serving the needy with his skills. An avid cyclist, he biked with his wife, Mary, across the United States at age 70 with Sea to Sea to raise money

for and to bring attention to the needs of the poor. They were often seen riding their bikes or walking around the community, even within weeks before Bill's passing. Bill lived life to the fullest, right to the end.

Beloved by all who knew him, he is survived by his wife and best friend of 50 years, Mary (Westmaas); his seven children and spouses, Ed and Brenda Dracht, Erin and Doug Heuker, Alyssa and Steve Raterink, Krista and Mike DeMaster, Steven and Betsy Dracht, Philip and Heather Dracht, Laura and Tim Pegman; 19 greatly loved grandchildren, Devon and Hillary Dracht, Kelsey Dracht, Melanie, Benjamin and Nickolas Heuker, Hope, Isabelle, Marielle and Alexis Raterink, Maxwell, Katherine and Lily DeMaster, Noel and Elliott Dracht, Elijah and Amelia Dracht and Ezra and August Pegman; four siblings, Eleanor Heeringa, Marie Brinks, Wilma Draisma and Tom and Nonie Dracht; in-laws, Gene Berens, Gayle and Dick Dracht-Glass, Char and Tom Glass, Jan and Tom Jasperse, Lin and Jay Rillema, and Kent and Deb Westmaas.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Edd and Winnie; siblings, Kay Meekhof, Nelle Berens and John Dracht, and in-laws, Gerrit Meekhof, Jess Heeringa, Jay Brinks and Fred Draisma.

Those who knew Bill best have no doubt that he is looking around heaven for projects to do, riding his bike, whistling and singing praise to the Lord and waiting for his family to join him.

Memorial contributions can be made to causes dear to Bill's heart, World Renew, Northern Michigan Christian School or the Highland CRC New Building Fund.

Visitation will be at Highland Christian Reformed Church, 9034 23 Mile Road, Marion, Mich., on Thursday, October 25, 2012, from 6 to 8 p.m. and Friday,

October 26, 2012, from 1 to 3 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. The funeral will be held at Highland CRC on Saturday at 11 a.m.

Burkholder Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements. A guestbook is available at www.petersonfh.com.

Tribute Wall

DW

“*Mary, my condolences and I wish you well in the difficult times ahead. Many fond memories of Bill and yourself on the Sea to Sea bike tour. I'm sure Bill will be sorely missed by all who knew him.*”

Dirk van Wyngaarden - November 01, 2012 at 10:12 PM

BH

“*The Calvin College community extends to you our heartfelt sympathy. May God grant you special grace, strength, peace, and hope at this difficult time.*”

Bill Haverkamp - October 29, 2012 at 01:17 PM

JP

“*My sincere condolence. I was blessed meeting you on the Sea to Sea bike tour. Wondered where you were 3 weeks ago on the Ride for Refuge*”

Jake Prins - October 26, 2012 at 07:30 PM

LD

“*Keeping your family in my prayers. Bill will truly be missed by all who knew him.*”

Lori (Zuiderveen) Duddles - October 25, 2012 at 10:05 PM

KA

“*Phil, it sounds like your Dad was a wonderful person. I wish you all the best.*”

Kevin Anderson - October 25, 2012 at 09:42 AM

NJ

“ *Mary - praying for you and your family during this time.*

Nicole (VanderTuuk) Johnson - October 24, 2012 at 12:45 PM