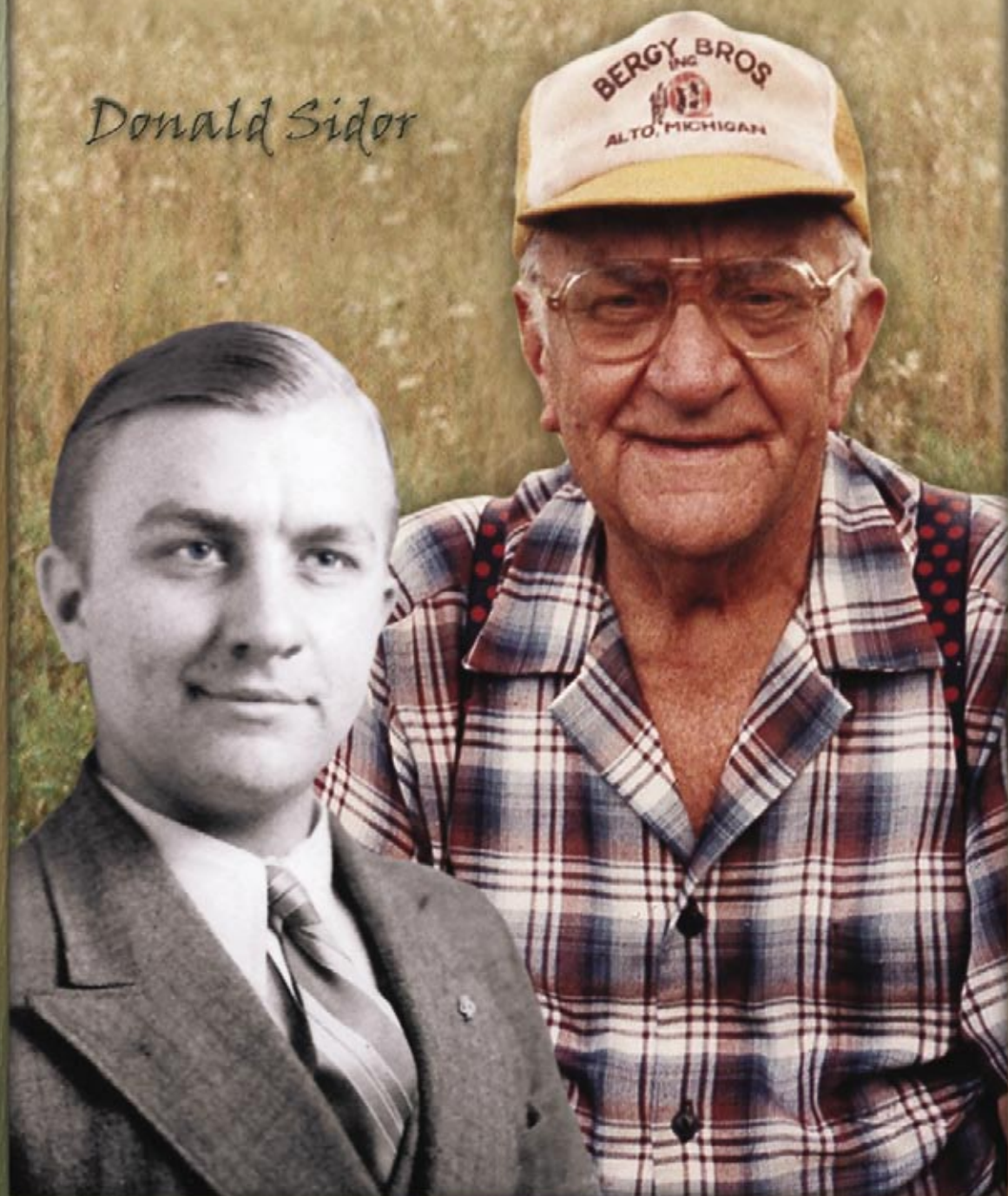
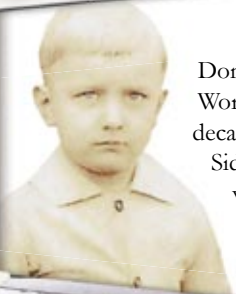


*Donald Sidor*





## Don's Life Story

Donald Peter Sidor was an accomplished man at work and home. He was serious, hard-working, and punctual; loving, caring and fun. From his own upbringing, Don passed on the values of faith and family to the generations that called him Dad, Grandpa, and Great Grandpa.



Donald was born at the beginning of a decade when America was emerging from the first World War and regaining industrial strength. Yet the economic depression that closed out the decade also shaped the character of its citizens. Couples, such as John and Rose Cizauskas Sidor, whose family had immigrated from Lithuania, wanted the best for their family and worked hard to provide for their needs. John was both a factory worker and a farmer, and Rose ran the farm and kept house. Into this home, they welcomed their first child, Donald Peter, born April 29, 1921 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. A second child, Irene, completed their family and enjoyed the close community of friends and neighbors on Hamilton Street NW. The nearby church and school became the family's spiritual home. They were members of SS Peter & Paul Catholic Church, and Don and Irene attended SS Peter & Paul School until 1933, when their parents bought a farm on Johnson Street in Marne, Michigan. Though the family moved to a new community, they retained practices that shaped their values: their catholic faith, the Lithuanian language, hard work, and close family ties.



Life on the farm was a combination of work and play. Don had regular chores to complete, but he also played baseball with neighbor boys on a makeshift field. He attended a one-room school, Diamond Elementary, but he also found lots of time to go fishing. Money was tight, but the family always had plenty to eat and enough activities to keep busy. By the time Don graduated from Berlin High School in 1938, he had gained a wealth of wisdom that made him the honest, dependable, and determined man he became.

Don's life became even richer when he met a young woman named Norma Thorpe in 1951. They were both attending a square dance in Franklin Park in Grand Rapids and struck up an acquaintance. The two started dating and, over the course of a year, they fell in love and decided to get married. They made their vows on February 23, 1952 in St. James Catholic Church in Grand Rapids. With a reception at SS Peter & Paul parish hall, well-wishers sent them off to a honeymoon in Detroit and a life full of the joys of new beginnings.

Don and Norma began married life on 16th Avenue in Marne and set down roots in St. Mary's Catholic Church. Don was employed with Jerecki Corporation as a die repairman. Two years later, they moved to 42nd Street, and in 1957, they built a home next to his parents on Johnson Street and never moved. It was the place their children called home and the family found comfort. Six children were born to them: Tom in September of 1952; Richard died shortly after birth; Kathy was born in November of 1954, Juliann in September of 1956, Mary in January 1958, and James also died shortly after birth. Graciously, their faith sustained Don and





Norma in their losses and established a firm foundation for their children as they grew up.

As Don had been raised, so he nurtured his family with responsibilities and recreation. The children attended Coopersville Elementary and graduated from Coopersville High School. They all learned to play instruments and were members of the band in high school. The girls learned to polka dance from their father, and all the kids enjoyed vacation time. Don often took at least one of them with him when he went fishing--mostly pan fishing at Sterns Bayou in Spring Lake, Crockery Lake and Lake Mitchell in Cadillac. Don made his own sinkers out of lead and couldn't wait to be out in his little 14' fishing boat he called "June Bug." Each summer, the family went on camping trips, and over the years, they visited nearly every state park in Michigan. These sights and many more family events were captured on film by Don, who was an avid photographer. He took hundreds of pictures over many years, including one major family vacation. In 1966, they packed up a travel trailer and headed out west to California for a 6-week trip. It was quite an undertaking, but Don was in his element when he was with his family. He worked diligently for them. Because he worked night shifts to bring home a bigger paycheck for the family, he made sure he was available to them on weekends. As he watched them grow, Don was very proud of all the accomplishments of his children.

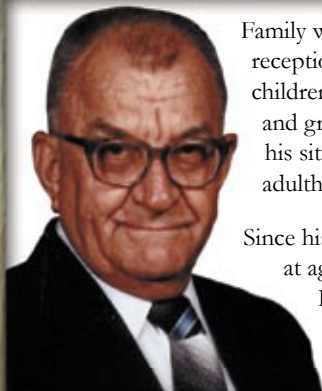
Throughout his life, Don worked hard and relaxed well. He was with the Jerecki Corporation for 25 years before moving on to General Motors, from which he retired in 1986 at the age of 65. As in his youth,

Don fished all his life. And true to his farm upbringing, he always kept a garden and drove a John Deer tractor. (Once a John Deer man, always a John Deer man.) He harvested corn, squash, pickles, tomatoes, pumpkins, zucchini and more, and Norma canned and froze the vegetables each fall. All those veggies complemented the meals he loved to eat. Besides being a real meat-and-potatoes man, Don was partial to potato pancakes like his mother made, molasses cookies, spice cake and butter pecan ice cream. If he sat down to watch TV, it was seldom the contemporary programs.

Don stuck to the old time classics such as Jackie Gleason, Ed Sullivan and Red Skeleton. Otherwise, he relaxed with a game of cards, Setback and Skip-Bo to name a few. On occasion, Don golfed, and amazingly, especially for a novice player, he shot a hole-in-one at Western Greens. Understandably, he was proud of this distinction, but not more than what he accomplished in retirement. He had wanted to build a pole barn, but had to convince the township board to do so.

He did both. Don had reason to be proud of his presentation to the board as well as his pole barn. With his handyman skills, he kept his home well maintained and up-to-date. In fact, he dated everything he bought and logged his activities. He was methodical about the details of life and intentional about what mattered most in life.





Family was always a high priority for Don. Weddings were a great joy to him and, at receptions, he reveled in the polka dance that maintained the family tradition. When his children had families of their own, Don couldn't be happier. He loved his grandchildren and great grandchildren and always looked forward to seeing them. Even though his sister Irene had moved to Florida in the 1980s, she and Don remained close in adulthood as in childhood.

Since his childhood, Don had suffered respiratory problems. He had double pneumonia at age 4 and was plagued by asthma later in life. As his general health declined, Don went to live at St. Ann's Home in 2001. Two weeks prior to his death, Don developed breathing difficulties and was taken to St. Mary's Hospital ER. He was placed in intensive care with pneumonia, and as his condition worsened, he was put on life support. Each day, Don's family kept a vigil at his side. He entered hospice care just days before he died at St. Mary's Hospital on Sunday morning at 5 o'clock. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him dearly.



Mr. Donald P. Sidor, aged 86 of Marne, passed away on June 24, 2007. He was preceded in death by his two infant sons, Richard and James; his father in 1975, and his mother in 1989. He is survived by his wife Norma of 55 years; his children, Thomas (Coralee) Sidor, Kathy Bitely, Juliann Sidor, Mary (Randy) Ryon; 11 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren; his sister Irene

(Andy Halasz) Hruska; several nieces, nephews and many friends. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at St. Mary's Church in Marne on Wednesday at 11:30 AM, (meet at church) with Fr. Bill Zink presiding. Burial in Rosedale Cemetery. Relatives and friends may meet his family on Tuesday from 2-4 and 7-9 PM at Heritage Life Story Funeral Home – Alt & Shawmut Hills Chapel, 2120 Lake Michigan Dr. NE, with the rosary prayed at 6:30 PM. Donald was a member of St. Mary's Parish Knights of Columbus. The family of Don would like to express their deep appreciation and gratitude for the loving care he received from the nurses and staff of St. Mary's

Hospital 5th (ICU) & 6th floors, St. Ann's

Home where he resided the past 6 years and Faith Hospice who cared for Don during his final days. Contributions in his memory may be made to St. Ann's Home. To read more about Don's life, to leave your own memory of him and to sign his guest book, please visit his website at [www.lifestorynet.com](http://www.lifestorynet.com)



Visit [www.lifestorynet.com](http://www.lifestorynet.com) to connect with your friends and family, share stories, and sign the guestbook. Life Story Funeral Homes® are the exclusive providers of the Life Story Experience™.

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