


Paul W. Zurcher

(July 9, 1924 - May 7, 2015)

 We celebrate the life of Paul W. Zurcher, 90, a successful businessman, community leader, philanthropist, devoted husband and father, mentor, and enthusiastic steward of God. He was a gift, wrapped in passion, commitment, and self-discipline, who touched the lives of so many. Born in 1924 near Monroe, Indiana, to a farming family of the late William Zurcher and the late Eva (Stauffer) Zurcher, he would often tell the story of a Christmas when his parents had no money for gifts. He and his brothers went to the cornfield and gleaned leftover corn worth \$1.20. With that money, they ordered 33 toys for 99 cents from the Sears Catalog, and divided the toys among the siblings. As Paul said, "We had a vision."



After serving in the infantry in Italy during WWII and receiving a purple heart, Paul began working toward his dream of owning a one-bay auto garage. He borrowed \$300 from First Bank of Berne, and set about making his vision happen. Paul's excitement for life and inexhaustible generosity of his time and resources engaged others. He formed partnerships and helped others with their visions, so that now, the visions of Paul and his partners have changed the lives of people and their families in over 250 tire stores throughout the Midwest.

Paul's list of accomplishments spoke of the person: He was named to the Tire Industry Association (TIA) Hall of Fame in 2002 and received the prestigious Modern Tire Dealer of the Year award in 2005, and two years later, he was inducted into the National Tire Dealers and Retreaders Hall of Fame. He served on the boards of Taylor University, Swiss Village Retirement Community, Habitat for Humanity and numerous other organizations. He served on the auxiliary board of Adams Memorial Hospital to determine the future of the hospital, now a new and thriving hospital serving the needs of many. Taylor University awarded him the Doctor of Business Administration degree, in recognition for his dedication to community, achievements in business and support of many. In 2010 he received the Junior Achievement of Northern Indiana BEL Award. He served as a Sunday school teacher for almost 60 years at his church, Evangelical United Brethren, which later became Trinity United Methodist in Berne. In July of 2014 Paul received Sagamore of the Wabash Award. Paul was a voracious reader of business and motivational books. He began his morning with reading the Bible and exercising for 1 ½ hours before starting his day. He was fond of saying that the most important 8 minutes of the day are the first 4 minutes of the day and the last 4 minutes of the day. The first 4 minutes determined your attitude for the day, and the last 4 minutes were when you put your head on your pillow and reflected on what you did for the Lord. He always started the day with this prayer:

"This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it--or use it for good, but what I do today is important, because I am exchanging a day of my life for it! When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something that I have traded for

it. I want it to be gain, and not loss; good, and not evil; success, and not failure; in order that I shall not regret the price that I have paid for it." (Heartsill Wilson)

Paul took joy in helping people. He was known for dropping everything during a busy day to meet with an employee, a friend, or just someone who knew about him and needed guidance. People knew that he would always have time for them. Although we mourn the passing of Paul, he once said, disappointment is inevitable, discouragement is a choice. We take courage that he is with the Lord, and we praise God for the time we had with him! Paul leaves behind his wife of 65years, Betty Lou (Schug) Zurcher, his three children, Larry (Susan), Mark (Vickie) and Colleen Zurcher-McGauran, brother, Joshua (Betty) and sister, Gladys Nussbaum, as well as grandchildren, Lindsey (Keith) Beer, Kristina (Michal) Podszywalow, Jonathan (Melinda) Zurcher, Brittney (Jonathan) Meier, Jaclyn (Thomas) Ausborn, Maureen McGauran, as well as 7 great-grandchildren, Kale Beer, Hailey Zurcher, Daniel Podszywalow, Kley Beer, Larissa Podszywalow, Bria Zurcher, and Baby Meier due in September and hundreds of business partners and many close friends.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Naomi Macy and three brothers, Arthur Zurcher, Dale Zurcher, & Vernon Zurcher.

A funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 16, 2015 in the First Mennonite Church in Berne with Pastor Mark Harris and Pastor Jay Kessler officiating. There will be no visitation prior to the service. Interment will follow at the MRE Cemetery in Berne with Military Graveside Honors to be conducted by the American Legion Post #468 in Berne.

Family & friends will be received from 12 noon to 9 p.m. Thursday and 6 to 9 p.m. Friday in the Family Life Center at the First Mennonite Church in Berne.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials to be given to Swiss Village Samaritan Fund; Trinity United Methodist Church; or Taylor University.

Arrangements are being handled by Zwick & Jahn Funeral Home of Decatur, Indiana.

Yager-Kirchhofer Funeral Home online obit (accessed 5/11/2015)