



Douglas Reuben Savala

December 18, 1937 - July 25, 2016

Douglas Reuben Savala, Charlotte, MI transitioned to his heavenly home on July 25, 2016 after a courageous 3+ year battle with pancreatic cancer. Doug was born on December 18, 1937 in Ishpeming, MI to Reuben and Elaine (Rice) Savala. He attended high school at Livonia Clarenceville, Negaunee, and graduated from Houghton High School in 1955. He considered himself alum of all three and attended class reunions for years. Institutions of higher education include La Salle Extension University, IBM Programming School, and Lansing Community College. He also received an honorary Doctorate from Boston University. He married the love of his life, Yvonne Rivers, on July 13, 1957 in Palmer, MI. They moved to Potterville, MI in 1959 when he was hired by the State of Michigan as a data processor.

Doug had a successful career with the State of Michigan and retired as Director of Bureau and Field Services for the Secretary of State. Serving in various capacities on The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), Doug was instrumental in implementing the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS). In 1982 as Regional President, he and Yvonne hosted the annual convention in Lansing. He was honored to be appointed by then Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole to a national committee on drivers' licensing and title records. Doug was also involved in his community and served on the Potterville School Board of Education, Little League coach, Lions Club and Elks. For 28 years,

he and Yvonne spent summers in the U.P. at their cottage on Bass Lake.

Doug's career after retirement included planning for the next big hunt, whether it was at his farm or various locations that included Saskatchewan, Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming. Newfoundland was his favorite destination with The River of No Return Wilderness in Idaho being the most exotic. Of all the trophies displayed, his favorite is the whitetail deer taken on his farm in 1986 that holds a record in the Boon & Crocket record book. In 2015 he took home a spike horn elk, antelope, and a mule deer. After a long recovery from surgery in February, he was able to participate in his final turkey hunt in April 2016. Even though he was successful, the turkey was the hardest hunt of his career.

Survivors include his wife, Yvonne; children, Teri (Kim) Walters, Rick (Pam), Cindy (George) Marsh and Sandy (Brad) Boyce; 13 grandchildren; 19 great grandchildren; brother-in-law, Jack Luukkonen; three sisters-in-law; six nieces and three nephews. Doug was predeceased by his parents; sister, Nancy and three brothers-in-law.

A celebration of Doug's life will be on Friday, July 29, 2016 at First Lutheran Church, 550 E. Shepherd St., Charlotte, MI with Pastor Timothy Olsen officiating. The family will receive visitors from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the church with service starting at 3:00 p.m.

The family extends sincere gratitude to Dr. Coy, Dr. Hamdan and their staffs for the exemplary care Doug received during his cancer journey, and Sparrow Home Hospice for the care and compassion extended to Doug and his family. Donations can be made to the National Pancreatic Cancer Foundation (NPCF), PO Box 1848, Longmont, CA 80502 or Eaton Community Palliative Care, 2675 S. Cochran, Charlotte, MI 48813. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home. Friends and family are encouraged to share memories of

Doug on his tribute page at www.prayfuneral.com

Cemetery Details

Northland Chapel Gardens

239 Midway Drive
negaunee
NEGAUNEE, MI 49866

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 29. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

First Lutheran Church
550 E. Shepherd St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Funeral Ceremony

JUL 29. 3:00 PM (ET)

First Lutheran Church
550 E. Shepherd St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Tribute Wall



“ *Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Douglas Reuben Savala*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - July 27, 2016 at 08:29 PM

C(

Tributes last forever! Thank you for sharing this memory!

Cheryl (Rice)Guzman - July 27, 2016 at 10:41 PM

PT

So very beautiful! Thank you for sharing. I will treasure forever.

pamela Trewhella - July 28, 2016 at 02:04 PM

MP

Very beautiful tribute. We are sorry for your loss and celebrate his homecoming in Heaven

Mark and Jen Packowski - July 28, 2016 at 06:57 PM

CE

Awesome. I loved and respected Mr. Savala. He will be missed.

Chris Esch - July 30, 2016 at 08:14 AM

AM

On a chance meeting over 30 years ago, I met Doug. I was looking for a place to archery hunt. Doug was out cutting his grass. I stopped and asked permission to hunt. After an hour discussion, Doug agreed to it.....and so our friendship began and has continued to grow. We shared ideas on wildlife management. Doug had a vision of having a U.P. style hunting camp on his farm. With the support of his neighbors(Loren and IvaJean), he was able to do it. I was one of the fortunate hunters. Doug assumed responsibility for getting each of us safely into and out of the woods. When I had health issues, he kept a close eye on me. He was our leader!!

One morning each week there would be a gathering for whoever was able to come. We would visit and try to solve world problems. Doug and Yvonne served 100's of cups of coffee to us. These were special times...I'll never forget.

Rest in peace, dear friend. I 'll miss you.

Al Massey

Al Massey - July 30, 2016 at 06:23 PM

TW

“ Good Afternoon Savala Family

I am so very sorry to hear of Doug's passing. I worked with Doug for many years at the Secretary of State's office (actually he was on my interview panel and so helped hire me). Doug always thought a lot of me and the feeling was definitely mutual.

I am glad to hear that he was able to be very active in retirement almost to the end of this life before passing on to the eternal life.

Two quick stories if I may --

1. When I was a young District Manager and having a little bit of trouble adjusting to administration as opposed to being a branch manager, Doug allowed me to work in Lansing in the Department's Intern Program, where I learned a lot from him and other Bureau Directors in the Department. Those lessons are still with me to this day.

2. About 20 years ago, Doug, Jerry, Ed and I attended a Tiger ballgame where the field was buzzed by a jet airplane and there were many rowdy fans in the Bleacher Section of old Tiger Stadium. While different, it was a fun night being out and Doug being "one of the guys".

I certainly hope that the many memories and wonderful times that you shared in your lives with Doug continue to fill your heart with love and good memories, making Doug's passing slightly easier to bear.

Terry Wilks (tkw29@hotmail.com)

Terry Wilks - August 22, 2016 at 03:55 PM

SS

“ Sorry to hear of the passing Doug, we all prayed for him and for his family. We have wonderful memories of traveling to your home and visiting when we were younger. Doug was a very accomplished person and had a wonderful life with a loving family (including his 4 legged buddies), friends and experiences. Life at times provides challenges that we question and struggle with but we know God is still with us. The tribute video was beautiful and Dad enjoyed all the pictures which brought back many good memories.

With sincere love,

Erwin J. Savala and family

sue sutherland - July 29, 2016 at 11:41 AM

IB

“ Dear Teri,
May you and your family be comforted by good memories as you celebrate your father's life. Thoughts and prayers to you and your family during this difficult time.

Iris Shen-Van Buren

Iris Shen-Van Buren - July 29, 2016 at 10:21 AM

AD

“ Teri, so sorry to hear about the loss of your father. Thinking of you and your family during this time.

Alena Dollarhite

Alena Dollarhite - July 28, 2016 at 01:52 PM



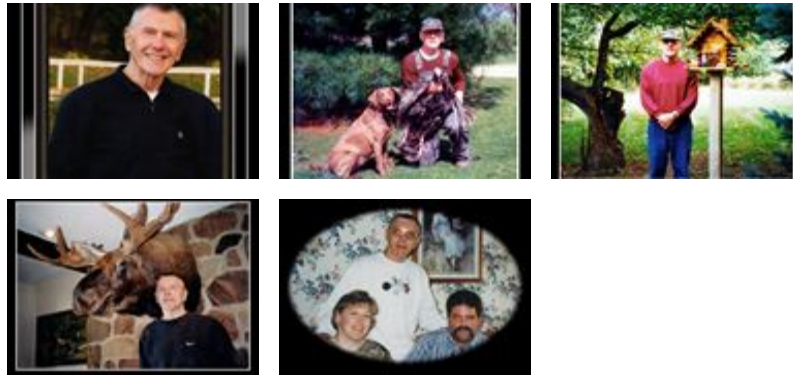
“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Douglas Reuben Savala .*



July 28, 2016 at 11:52 AM



“ *44 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - July 27, 2016 at 08:20 PM



“ *I have had and always will have wonderful memories of how good a friend Doug was to us. Bill and I had him to thank for a lot of our good fortune and good times over the years. To his family, my thoughts and prayers are with you. Doug, even though I haven't seen you in many years, I will miss you. Rest in peace.*

*Love, Your friend
Sue Hines-Caton*

Sue Caton - July 27, 2016 at 06:34 PM

JM

“*Doug and my husband, Mac, were the best of friends. They accepted each other completely. When they were both retired from the State, they would meet weekly in our dining room, as an alternate to meeting at Doug's. Boots on, coveralls on, they would sit and drink coffee, cup after cup, year after year. The weather, crops, hunting prospects would all be explored. Sometimes I would walk bye and they would both be silent, just looking out the window. Nothing needed to be said at that time. They were friends! God rest their souls!*

Jan McNamara

Janice C McNamara - July 27, 2016 at 03:33 PM



“*Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Douglas Reuben Savala .*



July 27, 2016 at 03:32 PM



“*Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Douglas Reuben Savala .*



July 27, 2016 at 03:31 PM

PT

“*Dougie was my cousin, my friend and my mentor. Such a wonderful caring, loving and selfless man who was an advocate to hundreds of families who were dealing with pancreatic cancer. His zest for life, love of his family, and his loyal furbabies was amazing. I shall miss him dearly and will never, ever forget the wonderful conversations and love we have shared.*

My deepest heartfelt sympathies go to Yvonne, the love of his life for 59 years. She cared for him tirelessly with so much love and compassion and to his children and grandchildren whom he loved and cherished.

Gods speed my loving cousin. I pray your transition is a trip! Now you can join Lucy your furry friend who also lost her battle with cancer and your sister Nancy who suffered an inoperable aneurysm with the past few months, your Mom and Dad, my sissy Marcia and so many others you loved and cherished.

Until we meet again a part of my heart will always be with you.

*Love to all,
Pamela Trewhella*

pamela Trewhella - July 26, 2016 at 05:18 PM