



## Frank F. Schwantes

November 24, 1925 - April 28, 2011

Frank Schwantes was born November 24, 1925 on a farm in Spencer, Wisconsin to father George Schwantes and mother Louise Schwantes. He was the eighth out of ten children. He attended school in a rural, one room school house. As a boy, he would go to school early in the winter and start the fire in the woodstove to earn extra money. Growing up, his brothers and sisters nicknamed him Chris after Christopher Columbus because he always said that when he was old enough, he would leave the farm and go see the world. It seemed ridiculous at the time, but at the age of 19, go he did. He started his journey in the U.S. Navy as a medic and served in various Navy hospitals in the Western U. S. His travels continued from there and took him to every continent on earth. After the Navy, he went to work in Guam as a medic for a construction company. At the time Frank was finishing his duty, his father George had given up farming in Wisconsin and was working seasonally doing construction in Alaska. Frank went to Alaska to be with his dad and seek out his fortune. He made Alaska his home for most of 35 years. This is where he married Marilyn (Milne) Schwantes and raised two sons, Chris and Joel Schwantes. While in Alaska, Frank and Marilyn started a general construction company and built single family homes, condominiums and apartments. Today, the family owns and operates most of the complexes they built.

Frank's second home was Hawaii. As a child, he fell in love with the South Pacific and during the 1970's and 80's he and his wife put deals together to

build condominiums in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii. Despite finishing the projects and returning to Alaska, Frank left a big part of himself in the islands, and he spent much of his time there throughout the rest of his life. In 1983 Frank and Marilyn bought an apple orchard in Orondo, Washington, where, in "retirement" he started a new career as an orchardist. Frank loved to garden and grow things, and he really enjoyed seeing all the apples every fall. During his later life, Frank and Marilyn traveled extensively, allowing him to see all those things he wanted to see as a boy. Even though Frank spent his life exploring and experiencing new places and things, his mid-western roots were very important to him. He traveled yearly from wherever he was back to Spencer for the Schwantes Family Reunion, which often drew nearly 200 Schwantes' from all over the country.

Frank played just as hard as he worked. He was an avid tennis player, skier, scuba diver and pinochle player. Above all, he was a devoted family man, known by his wife, children and grandchildren as someone you could depend on no matter what-this was true right up to the end of his life. Frank Schwantes died peacefully in his home in Orondo, Washington on April 28, 2011 at the age of 85. He is survived by his wife Marilyn, his youngest son Joel, his wife Carol and their children Jamie, Nick and Tori, as well as his oldest son Chris, his wife Roberta and their children Allie, Ariel and Cayley; one sister, Carolyn Melim, Chicago, IL; one brother, William Schwantes, Port Edwards, WI and numerous nieces and nephews. Frank was a loving and thoughtful husband, father and grandfather, and he will be greatly missed by all.

A remembrance gathering will be held at his home at a later date. A second remembrance gathering will be held at the home of his son in Palmer, Alaska and a memorial service will be held this summer in Spencer, Wisconsin. Arrangements are in the care of Heritage Memorial Chapel, East Wenatchee.