



Francis D. Mills

December 18, 1948 - April 22, 2016

There are many stories about Francis D. (Frank) Mills - but none of the really good ones can be told in public. His mischievous streak is the stuff of legends, like the time in 10th grade when he and two buddies caught the hat of a parish priest with a fishing rod from the gym balcony during a school play. There's more to the story - but it can't be recounted here. His sense of humor is legendary, too, like the conversation he had recently with his brother, Emmett, about being an organ donor - but the rest of that one is also best shared in private.

Mr. Mills was a funny man, but he was also "the man" - the one you called when you needed help moving, a ride to the airport, or the lawn mowed - something he did regularly for his aging parents and in-laws, often wearing his Lawn Ranger T-shirt. "Frank would do anything for anybody," said his twin brother, Rick. "He had a heart of gold."

That heart stopped beating on April 22 when Mr. Mills, 67, of Royal Oak, died of pancreatic cancer after a diagnosis less than six weeks earlier.

Mr. Mills was Mr. Personality - ever ready with a witty comment or a funny story. He lived his life to the fullest, a life that included a multitude of friends. "It seemed as if Frank knew half the people in the world - and he had a special name for everyone", said his sister, Patricia Janeway. "P-att'y, Count Rickula,

Skinny, Igmo, Fussy One, Fussy Two, Hubba Bubba, I., Tuna Fish, Teener, K-Dog, P-Dog, E-Dog, Doggy Daddy - I think if you had 'dog' in your name, you were really special."

Mr. Mills loved dogs, the Detroit Tigers, golf, his Mercedes-Benz convertible and God (not necessarily in that order) - but his greatest love was his wife of 12 years, Sheila, whom he met in 1st grade and married nearly 50 years later. "He made a promise to me on our wedding day to keep me laughing," she said. "He kept that promise."

Mr. Mills was a partner in Brite Ideas, a chemical manufacturing company in Detroit that makes Gutter Brite and Wheel Brite - products he conceived. Often re-inventing himself, he previously was part-owner of a bar in Maui and partner in a limousine service in the metro Detroit area. He was the consummate salesman, at various times selling everything from pharmaceuticals to home health care services to automotive aftermarket products. It was often said, "Frank could sell ice to an Eskimo."

Mr. Mills graduated from St. Mary's High School in Royal Oak, studied mass communication at Wayne State University and served in the United States Navy. He was an active member of the Knights of Columbus as well as a past member of the parish council and a lector at National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica in Royal Oak.

Born and raised in Royal Oak, Mr. Mills is preceded in death by mother Jacqueline, father Emmett and brother John (Kathy). Survivors include his wife, Sheila (Widgren); stepdaughters Andrea (Eric) Munzenberger and Jennifer (Jason) Everts; grandchildren Eric Lewis, Mia Lewis, Ingrid Everts and Rocky Everts; brother-in-law Richard (Jan) Widgren; brothers Emmett (Gayle) and Richard (Mary); sisters Jacqueline (Richard) Aubuchon, Patricia (Kevin) Janeway, Mary Jo (Paul) Mercier and Gwen Smith; many nieces and

nephews; and his rescue greyhound, Lightning.

Mr. Mills will be missed by many, including members of the "He-Man Woman Haters Club" (you know who you are).

Friends may call Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. (with a prayer service at 7 p.m.), at the Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W. Eleven Mile Rd., Royal Oak. A funeral mass will be held Wednesday at 10 a.m. (visitation at the church begins at 9:30 a.m.) at National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica, 2100 12 Mile Road, Royal Oak. Interment will follow at Oakview Cemetery in Royal Oak.

Cemetery Details

Oakview Cemetery

1032 N. Main Street
(south of 12 Mile Road)
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 26. 2:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Scripture Service

APR 26. 7:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Funeral Mass

APR **27**. 10:00 AM (ET)

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica
2100 W. 12 Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48073

Tribute Wall



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Francis D. Mills.* ”



April 26, 2016 at 02:22 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Francis D. Mills.* ”



April 26, 2016 at 01:57 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Francis D. Mills.* ”



April 25, 2016 at 02:12 PM



“ *Jim & Jean Van Voorst purchased the Adoring Heart for the family of Francis D. Mills.* ”



Jim & Jean Van Voorst - April 25, 2016 at 11:34 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Francis D. Mills.*



April 25, 2016 at 11:06 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Francis D. Mills.*



April 24, 2016 at 05:35 PM



“ *Oh! We had so much fun in the eighties. My children and I adored Frank. It was a time when our organization MAIL and the laboratory business was at its peak. Will miss you Frank...*

Bob Bielenda

Bob Bielena - April 24, 2016 at 10:25 AM



“ *My condolences to the family. Death claims the lives of those we love. Recall pleasant memories you shared with your loved one. God promises that the dead will live again.-Isaiah 26:19*

Ms. Dee - April 24, 2016 at 06:34 AM

AG

“ Annie and Bill Gruzowski purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Francis D. Mills.



Annie and Bill Gruzowski - April 23, 2016 at 11:43 PM

SH

“ Our thought and prayers are with the whole Mills family during this hard time. We were so sad and sorry to hear about Frank passing. You all are in our thoughts and prayers. Much love. Sue and Bill Hertle

Suzanne Hertle - April 23, 2016 at 09:53 PM

BH

“ Frankie was a "classic" on the golf course....I'd say to him to keep the club in his hand, not put it in the bag...he'll need to hit it again....he would have a quick comment not meant for virgin ears and more more deliberate than ever and smile about it!
Frankie was a Beauty and will be missed by all

Bob Hirzel - April 23, 2016 at 06:21 PM

PH

“ Franco, You will be missed. Your stories, sense of humor & those jokes will also be missed. Your smile lives on as does your spirit. RIP and will see you....again...
sooner or later, your friend, always, patrick haley

patrick haley - April 22, 2016 at 09:27 PM