



## Joseph "Bud" Zimmel

September 15, 1918 - May 14, 2013

Joseph "Bud" Zimmel, age 94, a resident of Royal Oak, died May 14, 2013. Beloved husband of the late Betty; loving father of Chris Zimmel and Kate Brian Abrell; and dear brother of Louis Suzanne Zimmel. There will be visitation Wednesday 2-8 p.m. with a 7 p.m. Rosary at the Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W. Eleven Mile Road 4 blocks E. of Woodward, Royal Oak. Mr. Zimmel will lie in state Thursday 10 a.m. until the time of the Mass 10:30 a.m. at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Clawson. Memorials to the Michigan WWII Memorial or Heifer International are appreciated. Share your memories at [www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com](http://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com). Bud's daughters, Chris and Kate, share some thoughts about their dad: Every Christmas, when we look at the manger scene, we look at St. Joseph and see our Dad. They were both simple men who had strong unshakeable faith, were devoted to caring for their families, and were behind-the-scenes kind of guys. Never flashy and pompous, always quiet and humble but getting the jobs done. Our dad was also a woodworker, an engineer, and liked to use tools. He was creative, a brilliant thinker, and a true problem solver. If there was a job to be done, he would do it without thanks and do it well. As a young father, he joined many others to be the driving force behind the creation of St. Dennis Parish where he was a member of the Holy Name Society. He was also instrumental in the building of the school, even supplying the groundbreaking shovel which he spray painted gold for the special occasion. He enjoyed simple tasks as well as mighty ones. He helped conceive and create the St. Dennis Credit Union.

He was proud of that accomplishment and the help it could provide people. He was a member of its Board of Directors for over 40 years. But he also got a kick out of creating and building shepherds' crooks and angel haloes for many kids that took part in the St. Dennis School Christmas plays. He never cared for the notoriety of doing volunteer work – he only wanted to be of service. He volunteered for so many causes, so many times behind the scenes. He did things of great importance with no recognition yet with great love. He boiled maple sap at a nature center, rang the bell for the Salvation Army, served at the Capuchin soup kitchen downtown, stayed overnight at the St. Dennis winter warming shelter, and we're sure many other things we never knew. He was a volunteer at Beaumont Hospital as an admission escort, helped plant trees and volunteered on boards and committees of all kinds. If you knew our dad, you were blessed. He was a great man, like St. Joseph, dedicated to family, friends, and anyone in need. He was there when you needed him. He didn't preach kindness and Christianity, he lived it. After caring for his mother in her last years, he then cared for our mom at home in her dying days, even after she suffered with terrible dementia. He gave up his life to her, refusing to put her in a nursing home. Our dad always had a smile, a kind word, and a wonderful sense of humor, even in his dying days. He never had a bad word to say about anyone. He brought great love and joy to all who knew him. He will never be remembered for what he did - he will be remembered for who he was. He taught faith, home, and love by example in the life he lived and the love he shared with all. Our dad was always a great teaser. He loved to tell jokes and had a quick wit to the very end. Known as Uncle Bud, he was a favorite uncle to every cousin. When we were kids at the beach, he cracked us up by putting salt in his navel and dipping celery in it. He embarrassed our older cousins by commenting loudly about "that blue stuff on your eyes" when their dates came to pick them up. He once took my cousin out into the start of a wild thunderstorm, only suggesting that they head back to the car when the hail starting falling – and admonished my cousin not to tell his mother lest she kill him. If fruits and vegetables guarantee a long life, his is a shining example.

He ate fresh sweet corn and tomatoes every single day in the summer. Another cousin moaned at dinner at the cottage one summer – oh, geez, Uncle Bud is serving corn and tomatoes AGAIN. He served in the Navy in World War II, repeatedly attempting to enlist but repeatedly turned down because of his bad eyesight. Finally, recruiters came to the defense plant in which he worked and asked for volunteers. He stepped forward and was given the option of Army or Navy. He said he could swim faster than he could run so he went into the Navy. He made a trip on Honor Flight Michigan to see the World War II Memorial and watching him pray at the wall of stars honoring the 400, 000 lost was so touching. He loved all kinds of flying machines and was gifted with rides in a biplane, a glider, a World War II bomber, and a balloon. At age 18 he designed and built an ice boat using an old motorcycle engine and a handmade propeller. After making some design changes, it was tested and clocked at 90 miles an hour across Mandon lake. He always wanted more for his daughters than he was able to do, encouraging a college education and encouraging us to do our best and know no limits. He realized the value of college because he was never able to complete a degree. He was a self-made man, an engineer who worked for Bundy Tubing Company for over 40 years. Near the end of his career, he was appointed as a US representative to the International Organization for Standardization for which he made several trips to Europe. Our mom was able to accompany him on some of those trips and it allowed them to have some great memories to share with us. Our cousin recently told Dad that when he asked for an explanation for anything, Dad took the time to give him the facts, figures, and rationale that made sense. He was a great man who dedicated his life to doing small, simple things but always with great love. We will miss him so very, very much. We could learn more about love and Christianity by spending just one day with our dad, than anyone could learn by reading the entire Bible. God is love, and so was our dad.

# Tribute Wall

DH

“*Uncle Bud was a very special person. A visit with him and Aunt Betty was always a must for us on each of our trips to Michigan from California. He always welcomed us with a big hug, a sunny smile and a genuine interest in what was happening with our family in California. Uncle Bud's love of life, wonderful sense of humor and dedication to his family were always evident. In the last years of his life, as the patriarch of the Zimmel family, we especially enjoyed hearing him tell colorful stories of the family from many years ago. Uncle Bud was indeed a genuinely good man, a gentleman of warmth and grace, who will be missed by all of us. Mary Jo and Dave Harbaugh*

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**David & Mary Jo Harbaugh** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MM

“*My prayers and thoughts are with you in this troubling time. Chris, your Dad seems like a great guy who will be missed. Rest in peace.*

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**Michael D. McCarthy** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

SS

“*Although I only got to visit infrequently, I can never remember a time visiting Uncle Bud and Aunt Betty when they didn't have smiles on their faces. They both spread their love for each other to those around them. Uncle Bud radiated a joy for life that I could only hope to emulate. He will be truly missed by his family immediate and extended and by everyone who was lucky enough to cross his path. Shari Seiner*

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**Shari Seiner** - March 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM