



## Frank Michael Stech Jr.

July 25, 1952 - July 4, 2010

On July 4th, 2010 at 3:53 in the afternoon, at his home surrounded by family and friends, the Great Spirit finally said, "OK, Wa goosh Bim bi Wa too (Running Fox), it is time for you to begin your journey home." Frank Michael Stech, Jr was born on July 25, 1952 to Frank and Harriet (Heisler) Stech, Sr. in Detroit Lakes, MN. Frank is the eldest of 8 children; the father of 9 children, stepfather to 2 children, and the grandfather of 18.

His education began at St. Benedict's Mission, continued at St. John's Preparatory School in Collegeville, MN and at Bemidji State College in Bemidji, MN. Frank was also a certified EMT and First Aid instructor. Frank spent his sophomore year of prep school in Melk, Austria, where he met his "brother" Helmut Becker and was "adopted" by his family; then Helmut spent a year at St. John's and was "adopted" by the Stech family.

Frank was raised on a farm north of White Earth where he began his love of animals. Later he raised his own sheep. He hoped to spread his love of animals to his children by making sure they had plenty of pets; which included tarantulas, hamsters that multiplied like crazy, Joni the corn snake (who loves white mice, and only got lost once in the house once!), Snowball the dog (who had many predecessors), Pogo the parrot, various canaries and cockatiels. Frank loved to go to auctions and rummage sales. Ruth always chuckled at the treasures he found and watched as he added them to his collections. Frank loved to read. He was an avid Louis L'Amour and Zane Gray fan and read many of their books. He was currently reading Don Pendleton's Stony

Man. Frank was the family storyteller. Every birthday party or holiday get together he was always asked by his many nieces and nephews to “Tell us your ghost stories, Uncle Frank, the one about...” and that’s all the encouragement he needed. He had a captive audience every time. Frank was also the best Little League coach White Earth ever had. Frank was a kind, caring and giving man. He helped many people over the years by giving them money until they got on their feet, clothes or household things, and food, never once expecting anything in return. He had a soft spot for elders and children. Frank was a wonderful listener and speaker and could always find the just the right words to make you feel better.

Frank worked for the White Earth Bait Shop for several years (which by the way, is the first time Frank and Ruth met – she was catching and selling him frogs to be freeze dried!). Frank enjoyed being a Bingo caller for White Earth Community Council, especially being able to tell his jokes and tease the ladies! He was currently an EMT on the White Earth/Naytahwaush Ambulance crew; was Director of the White Earth Ambulance Program for a time; an EMT and first Aid instructor; and owned and operated buses for the Mahnomen school district. Frank was a member of the mi da wi win grand medicine lodge. Every summer Frank took his family to work and camp at Lake Lena, MN where he was a valued teacher up until the time of his death. Frank was a member of the Bear Clan.

Frank is survived by his wife, Ruth (Oppegard) Stech of 24 years; his father, Frank Stech, Sr.; his sons: Jason (Madeline) Bellanger, of St. Michael, ND, Christopher Stech, Rochester, MN, Eric (Shannoah) Stech, White Earth, MN, Daniel Stech-Kohler, Bemidji, MN, John Stech, Mahnomen, MN, Andy (Amber) Stech, Ogema, MN, Frank (Lindsey) M Stech III, Paul Stech and Jesse Stech, all of Naytahwaush, MN; two daughters, Stacey (Travis) Bly, Waubun, MN, and Rosella Oppegard of Naytahwaush; three brothers: Rob (Karen) Stech, Mahnomen, Charlie (Sheila) Stech, and Bill (Leah) Stech, both of Waubun, “brother” Helmut Becker (Dena) of Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada; and four sisters: Theresa (Bob Moran) Donner, Waubun, Mary Stech,

Phoenix, AZ, Harriet Stech, Frazee, MN, and Stella (Larry) Jagol, of Fertile, MN; 18 grandchildren; many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his mother; grandparents; in-laws; and one grandchild.

Frank's family wishes to thank: Dr. Carson Gardner, his doctor at the White Earth Clinic; Dr. Shelby Terstriep, his Oncologist at Roger Maris Cancer Center and her nurse, Sheila; Dr. D. Bier, Radiologist; and the staff and nurses at MeritCare in Fargo that came to know Frank and treated him with respect and dignity. Thank you to the Home Health workers that came to care for Frank at his home. Thank you to Frank's care givers from Hospice of the Red River Valley, who came to his home whenever we called to provide care and comfort to Frank. We switch to the White Earth/Naytahwaush Ambulance crew who loved Frank and were with us through it all. Thank you to the many, many friends and family who came to visit Frank in the hospital and at home. He so enjoyed everyone's company.

Soar like an eagle, Frank! You will never be forgotten! We love you! Thanks for the memories! Until we meet again.

Traditional Native American Services were held at the Naytahwaush Sports Complex in Naytahwaush, on Wednesday, July 7th beginning at 10:00 AM. An all night wake service was held at the Sports Complex beginning at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, July 6th and continuing until services on Wednesday. The spiritual leader was Clifford "Skip" Churchill. The pallbearers were Rob Stech, Charlie Stech, Bill Stech, Helmut Becker, Oscar "Sunfish" Oppegard and Alan Oppegard. Honorary pallbearers were the visiting drum chiefs and the White Earth/Naytahwaush Ambulance Crew.

Burial was at the Stech Family Cemetery.

# Tribute Wall

KK

“ *Ruth, sounds like you married a wonderful man. May your many memories sustain you and your family during this hard time. I will keep you in my prayers.  
I remember you, Roberta, and Lyda when we were in grade school.*  
Kerri

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**Kerri Thornton ( Kremple)** - July 08, 2010 at 11:48 PM

LA

“ *Dear Uncle Frank Stech Sr  
On Wed morning we drove up to Mahnomen to meet some friends.  
Later, I heard about Frankie Mike's service in Naytahwaush. Also, I read the notice in the Fargo Forum and Mahnomen Pioneer.  
We extend our deepest condolences with great sadness.  
Lorene, Michael, Angi, Justin, Gavin and Nicolos*

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**Lorene Mislivec Austin** - July 08, 2010 at 11:54 AM

TB

“ *I am deeply soory to hear about Frank. I will always remember his laughing smile and heart felt advice he would give to me. He will be missed.*

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**Tracie Bellanger** - July 07, 2010 at 11:41 PM

CW

“ *Sorry to hear of Frank's passing. I took many bus rides with Frank, he was a very nice man whom I truly respected.*

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**Charles Wake** - July 07, 2010 at 10:44 PM

AL

“ We were very sad to hear about Frank ,he will be deeply missed and always remembered with lots to smiles, we will keep you and your family in our prays .

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**alvin lovelace** - July 07, 2010 at 12:25 PM

TH

“ My thoughts and prayers to the Stech family. He will be missed by all those that new and loved him. Take care and love you.

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**Tina Heisler Hanebuth** - July 06, 2010 at 01:54 PM