

Punches, Neil L.



Muskegon - Neil Levear Punches was born in Muskegon on February 16, 1927 to Lloyd Punches and Dorthea (Nielsen) Punches. In his early years, he and his mother moved around Michigan following his father to various CC Camps. They eventually settled in Muskegon where he attended Muskegon Heights schools. Shortly after graduating, he joined the Air Force with dreams of becoming a pilot. In the middle of his training the war ended and he was sent home. He eventually achieved his dream and obtained a pilot's license and flew for pleasure.

After several years, he joined the Army and was sent to Berlin, Germany. This is where he met Rita Gerstner, a farmer's daughter from Kansas. She was working as a civilian

secretary for one of the Generals. They were married on July 30, 1949, and a year later they welcomed their daughter, Linda.

In 1953, he returned to Muskegon with his family to help Neil's parents run Punches General Store, working seventy hours a week. Neil and Rita's sons, Brian and Greg, completed their family and helped continue the legacy of Punches, which went on to become Punches Thrifty and then Orchard Market.

Neil and Rita were blessed to have many wonderful adventures together. They enjoyed hunting, camping, boating, snowmobiling, and visited over 25 different countries.

Neil's survivors include his wife of 73 years, Rita; children, Linda (Bob) Mills, Brian (Marla) Punches and Greg (Lynn Brown) Punches; grandchildren: Tim (Lauren) Mills, Maren (Mike) Pearson, Heidi (Travis) Bolles, Heather (Craig) Claussen, Holly (Dan) Hazekamp, Rachel Punches and Josh Punches; and 14 great-grandchildren. Neil was preceded in death by his granddaughter, Taya Marie Mills, in 1977.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to his caregivers Julia, Pam H., Denise, Pam C., and Penny. They would help Neil maintain his "independent" spirit, while at the same time keeping him safe, which wasn't always easy. They also want to thank the Fruitport Fire Department, Trinity Health, and Harbor Hospice.

Neil would be pleased to share his trophy room with family and friends, as they share their special memories with one another. Family and friends gathered Sunday, June 11 at his home. In lieu of flowers, contributions to Harbor Hospice Foundation would be appreciated. Arrangements by the Sytsema Chapel of Sytsema Funeral and Cremation Services. Share memories with the family at www.sytsemafl.com.

New board for Fruitport Lions 75th Anniversary year 2023-2024

by Heidi Tice

The Fruitport Lions Club installed their new board at their Banquet on June 28, 2023. Ready and willing to serve their community for 2023-2024 the new board members are as follows:

- Lion Nancy Cook – Club President
- Lion Angie LaNore – 1st Vice President
- Lion Tom Piper – 2nd Vice President
- Lion Dennis Cook – 3rd Vice President
- Lion Ivan Ivanov & Lion Clayton Kemmerling – 2 year Directors
- Lion Rick Tice & Lion Kevin Nelund – 1 year Directors
- Lion Pat Stressman – Club Secretary
- Lion Glen Selle – Club Treasurer
- Lion Fred Yonkers – Lion Tamer (in charge of club assets)
- Lion Bob Jados – Tail Twister (in charge of club morale)
- Lion Pat Stressman – Past President
- Lion Heidi Tice – Membership Chairman

Fruitport Lions club are always looking for new members with a heart for their community. If you would like to join the Fruitport Lions please contact any of the above Lions or just come and attend a meeting. The club meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at Whitlows Forerunner Restaurant on Airline rd. 6:30 p.m.



New Board of Directors



Lion of the Year, Bob Jados



New President, Nancy Cook & Outgoing President, Pat Stressman

Follow us on facebook!

Ages 21+ please

PRIVATE PARTIES & GROUP EVENTS

Our unique barside bowling set up is a great venue for parties and corporate events, call us for details and availability!

LIVE MUSIC EVERY WEEKEND

Stop in or visit our Facebook page to check out our schedule of events.

FULL BAR • DRAFTS • FOOD • MUSIC • BOWLING • DARTS

At the corner of Airline and Pontaluna | 231-865-3215

DESERVED

MORE THAN 75% OF AVAILABLE BENEFITS HAVE NOT BEEN CLAIMED IN MUSKEGON COUNTY.

IF YOU'RE A VETERAN THAT HAS BEEN HONORABLY DISCHARGED, OR THE WIDOW, WIDOWER, CHILD, OR DEPENDENT OF A VETERAN, YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A NUMBER OF BENEFITS THAT YOU'VE EARNED AND DESERVE.

THE MUSKEGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS IS HERE TO HELP. VISIT YOURVETBENEFITS.COM OR CALL (231) 724-7143 TO FIND OUT.

yourvetbenefits.com

THIS MESSAGE IS SUPPORTED BY THE MICHIGAN VETERANS AFFAIRS AGENCY AND THE MUSKEGON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

FRUITPORT LIONS PANCAKE SUPPER Community Event

Friday, February 2, 2024 5:00pm - 8:00pm
Fruitport High School Cafeteria Prior to the
Fruitport vs Spring Lake Basketball Game

VS

(All-you-can-eat Pancakes)

Cost: Adults - \$5.00 / Children 10 years & under - \$3.00

(Includes all-you-can-eat Pancakes, 2 Sausage Links, Orange Juice, Milk or Coffee, Dessert) (Gluten-Free pancakes upon request)

PLUS BAKE SALE

Sponsored by the Fruitport Lioness Club

Come early before it sells out!

Tickets may be purchased from Fruitport Lions Club members, Leo Club, or at the door. Proceeds will go to the Fruitport Lions LEO Club.