



William Alfred LeBlanc

November 5, 1922 - January 16, 2019

William Alfred LeBlanc, 96, of Brimley, Michigan passed away peacefully with his son Jim at his side on January 16, 2019. Born November 5, 1922 in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, he was delivered by medicine woman Sarah Marshal, who is said to have walked to the Soo from Brimley for the occasion.

He had a long life filled with adventure and opportunity. He studied at the Indian school, a one room schoolhouse, because there were no Indians at the public school in Brimley. He was an eager student, who quickly finished his lessons, then went on to work on the other classes' assignments. His teacher was impressed with him and recommended he travel to Kansas to attend the Indian school at Haskell. He loved going there, because he hated the work on the farm. He came back to Brimley when the school opened for Indian students and finished his senior year at Brimley High School, graduating in 1940.

He always wanted to be busy, and to make a difference. He joined the Civilian Conservation Corps at Eckerman, where he tended the trees that had been planted. From there, he went to Cadillac Lumber in the Soo, where he was a tram mule, running cars full of lumber along an elevated track. He always said the job requirements were that you be fast and dumb.

He soon went to Detroit to look for work. He worked at a car plant, studying automotive body work at night. The call to arms came and he joined the US Marine Corps in 1943. He served on the battleship New Mexico in the Pacific theater. He operated an anti-aircraft gun, and was at Iwo Jima before the battle.

When the War was over, he returned to Detroit, where he met and married Aimee Cote. They had three children, Elaine Schuster (James), James LeBlanc (Cathy) and Judith LeBlanc (Tony Ragusa). He worked at Highland Nash, then for Glenn Pontiac in collision repair. In 1956, the family moved to the Soo, where Bill worked at Ted Caffey in collision repair. He became shop foreman. He later sold double wide homes and life insurance. He served as Chippewa County Republican Chairman.

In 1964, the family moved back to Detroit, where Bill became a collision adjuster for Allstate. He also ran for GOP State Representative. in 1966, but lost in the primary. His service earned him some opportunities. He was appointed by Governor Bill Milliken to the Michigan Commission on Indian Affairs, where he served for many years, from Commissioner, to staff member to Executive Director. He initiated studies into the education conditions for Indian students in Michigan, and into health conditions. His work resulted in the Michigan Tuition Waiver. He was one of many who worked on it, but he was a spearhead.

He worked for the Michigan Department of Public Health, where he obtained Michigan's advances on Community Health Representatives (CHRs). He

brought that program to Bay Mills. He also worked on a similar program at the Michigan Department of Social Services. His goal was always to improve the quality of life for Native Americans.

Bill met and married Drusilla Burns and moved to Perry, Michigan. She had three sons, Karl, Keith and Ken, who lived with them. Bill became their Dad, and they are part of the family. Bill was ordained a non-denominational Christian minister, and opened a church in Perry, My Father's House.

Bill also served at the Michigan Commission on Veteran's Affairs and returned to the Indian Commission where he served as Executive Director until the Commission closed. He retired at that time.

Bill and Dru moved to Brimley and built a house in the Bay Mills Indian Community, where he lived until he died, among his family and friends. He was predeceased by his wives Aimee and Dru, his brothers Alphonse, Lawrence and James, his sisters, Armella, Agnes and Audrey. He is survived by his brother Walter George LeBlanc, six children, five grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren and 4 great great grandchildren. Visitation will be Saturday January 19, 2019 from 9:00am until 1:00pm at the Armella Parker Senior Center in Bay Mills. Traditional Services will be Saturday January 19, 2019 at 1:00pm at the Armella Parker Senior Center. Burial will be at Mission Hill Cemetery in the Spring. Online condolences may be left at www.clarkbaileynewhouse.com

Tribute Wall



“ *William Alfred LeBlanc*

October 05, 2023 at 09:54 AM



“ *William Alfred LeBlanc*

October 02, 2023 at 10:14 PM



“ *William Alfred LeBlanc*

September 01, 2022 at 07:49 PM



“ *William Alfred LeBlanc*

May 15, 2020 at 02:42 PM