



Walter J. Rummel, age 93 of Sebewaing, passed away Saturday, November 12, 2011, following a brief illness. He was born at home in Sebewaing on September 14, 1918 to Carl H. and Mary (Kahlmann) Rummel. He attended Immanuel Lutheran School, Sebewaing High School and Michigan State College/University, graduating in 1940, with a degree in journalism, which was his lifetime passion. He wrote his first published story in The Sebewaing Blade in 1932, when he reported on his eighth grade camping trip. Later, he was encouraged by Blade owner Herman Muellerweiss to write stories during high school, and a love of writing and photography began. He was a German translator for the government during World War II in Chicago, and later was payroll supervisor for Saginaw Steering Gear in Saginaw. He worked at newspapers in Portland, Cheboygan and Allegan and published the Dow Chemical Company's "Dow Diamond" magazine.

Walt Rummel got into small-town journalism in 1947 when he bought The Pigeon Progress and Elkton Advance. He was able to purchase his hometown Sebewaing Blade in 1951, which he published for the next 45 years. He wrote millions of words and snapped thousands of photos about matters of importance to Sebewaing and the Thumb Area between 1947 and 2009, a remarkable 62 years. He encouraged local business and industry expansion, led merger efforts for local schools and ceaselessly promoted Thumb tourism. He led The Blade in technology, becoming one of the first three newspapers in Michigan to convert to offset printing in 1957, now the worldwide publishing standard.

He was known as "Mr. Sebewaing" due to his lifetime love for his hometown and Thumb, and for the wealth of history knowledge he shared. He was a co-founder of Thumb Web Offset Publications, a regional printing plant. He published nearly a dozen local books, including the "Sebewaing 150" History Book in 2003, and was editor of the Michigan Lutheran statewide publication for nearly 25 years. A lifelong baseball fan, he was proud to have seen Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Hank Greenberg and Ted Williams play. He interviewed Orville Wright and Eleanor Roosevelt, and also dined at the White House on two occasions, with Presidents John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan.

Walt Rummel served as President of the Sebewaing Chamber of Commerce and Immanuel Lutheran Church, where he was baptized in 1919 and was a lifelong member. He served on the Sebewaing Public

School Board of Education, Scheurer Hospital Board of Trustees, Michigan Press Association and was Chairman of the Huron County Republican Party, but voted for his share of Democrats, too.

In 1941, he married Margretta Pryer in East Lansing, with whom he had three sons, John P. (Mary) Rummel of South Haven, James C.R. (Tami) Rummel of Dexter and Mark W. (Sally) Rummel of Fenton. He was preceded in death by his wife, Margretta. In 1991, he married Dorothy (Error) Collison in Pigeon, who survives him, along with a step-son, Allen (Terry) Collison of Pigeon. Other survivors include his brother-in-law, William Pryer, sister-in-law, Erma (Kilgus) Rummel, and Joanne Rummel; seven grandchildren, Margaret Wilson, Robin O'Dell, Mark R. Rummel, Thomas Rummel, Timothy Rummel, Sarah Green and Andrew Rummel; three step-grandchildren, Mindy Brink, Kelly Lisowski and Loren Collison; 17 great-grandchildren, plus many cousins, nieces and nephews. Besides first wife, he was preceded in death by his parents, his oldest son, John P., grandson, Matthew, his brother, Carl T. "Junior" Rummel, as well as many cousins and other relatives.

A celebration of his life is planned from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, November 20, 2011 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Sebawaing. A Memorial Service will be conducted at 4 p.m., with Pastor Charles Kuhl officiating. Cremation has taken place, and interment will be in Immanuel Lutheran Cemetery. Memorials may be made to Immanuel Lutheran Church's Radio Fund of Sebawaing or Scheurer Hospital of Pigeon.