



## Thomas R. Prawdzik

December 29, 1931 - September 18, 2015

Thomas R. Prawdzik, age 83 of Clare, passed away Friday, September 18, 2015 in Mt. Pleasant. Tom was born the son of the late Leo and Ann (Grygier) Prawdzik on December 29, 1931 in Boyne Falls. He graduated from Boyne Falls High School in 1950, and spent one year at Michigan State College. Tom was drafted into military service in July of 1952 where he served in the Army. He spent his military career at Fort Knox and was discharged in July of 1954. He then returned to Michigan State College and graduated in 1957 with a degree in Wildlife Management. He met Dorothy Beer in Gaylord at a polka dance, and they were married in Petoskey on May 17, 1958. They raised three children together and later enjoyed spending time with their six grandchildren. Tom was known as the most successful ruffed grouse hunter of the modern era. Articles of his expeditions of ruffed grouse hunting have been published in Field and Stream and in The Pointing Dog Journal. He was also featured in the book entitled A Passion for Grouse. He was involved in the Ruffed Grouse Society, The Lions Club and was a parishioner and usher at our Lady of Hope Catholic Church. He had worked as a District Wildlife Biologist of the Michigan DNR. After his retirement in 1992, Tom and Dorothy spent more time traveling all over the Midwest to indulge their passion for dancing to polka music. They spent time traveling to their grandchildren's various sporting events and he continued to be an avid sportsman by acting as a ruffed grouse guide to various hunters from around the U.S. He enjoyed spending time outdoors deer hunting, fly fishing or hiking through the woods.

Tom was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and loyal friend. He will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by his many friends and family members.

Tom is survived by his wife Dorothy; children, David (Ann) of Clare, Debbie (Kevin) Singles and Dennis (Beth) both of Lake Orion; his siblings, Jerry of Wyoming, MI and Diane (Steve) Kidder of Charlevoix; his grandchildren, Jodie, Kyle, Justin, Ryan, Megan and Tyler. Tom was predeceased by his sister Dorothy and brother Don.

Services will be held at Our Lady of Hope Parish - St. Cecilia Site on Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at 11 A.M. with Fr. Prentice Tipton officiating. Burial will be in the St. Cecilia Catholic Cemetery. Visitation will be held on Tuesday from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 at the Clare Chapel of Stephenson-Wyman Funeral Home, and prior to the services at Church beginning at 10 A.M. A Vigil Service will take place at the Funeral Home on Tuesday at 7 P.M. Memorial contributions may be made to the Prostate Cancer Foundation or to Our Lady of Hope Parish. On-line condolences may be made at [www.stephenson-wyman.com](http://www.stephenson-wyman.com)

# Cemetery Details

## St. Cecilia Catholic Cemetery

411 Schoolcrest Ave.  
Clare, MI 48617

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **22**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)  
1005 North McEwan St.  
Clare, MI 48617  
(989) 386-7451  
wymanhf@chartermi.net  
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

## Visitation

SEP **22**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)  
1005 North McEwan St.  
Clare, MI 48617  
(989) 386-7451  
wymanhf@chartermi.net  
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

## Scripture Vigil Service

SEP **22**. 7:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)  
1005 North McEwan St.  
Clare, MI 48617  
(989) 386-7451  
wymanf@chartermi.net  
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

## Visitation

SEP **23**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady of Hope Parish, St. Cecilia Site  
106 E. Wheaton Street  
Clare, MI 48617

## Service

SEP **23**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady of Hope Parish, St. Cecilia Site  
106 E. Wheaton Street  
Clare, MI 48617

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ *My condolences to Tom's family. He was the consummate professional and one of the cleverest people I ever met. He knew how to get the best out of everyone he came into contact with. The MDNR and the State of Michigan are better for his efforts.*



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**Dave McRae** - November 08, 2017 at 06:40 PM

PB

“ *I was very sorry to learn of Tom's passing.*

*Growing up, I have fond memories of Tom and his hunting dogs. As a fellow grouse hunter, my father had so much admiration for Tom as a friend and as an outdoorsman.*

*My condolences to the entire family.*

*Peter Block  
Park Ridge, Illinois*

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**Peter Block** - September 23, 2015 at 08:50 PM

GE

“ It was so sad to hear of Tom's passing when I got home last evening from a bear hunting trip. My name is Greg Eagle and I am a retired Conservation Officer. Tom and I shared district meetings together, as I was the district environmental enforcement supervisor. I remember Tom as a gracious, friendly and open-minded person. Environmental regulation and enforcement work was a part of the DNR at the time; though not always well respected by the traditional Conservation Department purest employees and managers. Tom did not fall into that group and always respected the work of what is now the Michigan DEQ and those who shared his concern for Michigan's natural resources. I respected Tom for treating me like a full member of the DNR team and liked him for the very nice person that he was.

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**Greg Eagle** - September 23, 2015 at 12:28 PM

AT

“ Tom will be in my prayers. He was a good friend and a gentleman.

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**Andy Tingstad** - September 23, 2015 at 10:58 AM

JP

“ I did not know Mr Prawdzik personally...only to read about his grouse hunting adventures published in hunting magazines. We spoke once on the phone about Setter Bird Dogs though. Mr Prawdzik enjoy the Grouse Coverts above & I hope to join you someday for a hunt of a lifetime.

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**John Patterson** - September 22, 2015 at 04:02 PM



“ *Blooming Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .*



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September 22, 2015 at 01:09 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .*



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September 22, 2015 at 01:00 PM



“ *I was privileged to be active in the Ruffed Grouse Society during the time that legends like Tom Prawdzik and Gordon Gulion were helping make the society a major conservation group. I too have a passion for grouse and grouse dogs, attested to by my still having 10 dogs at this time. Knowing this, Tom was kind enough to send me a copy of his memoirs in which he recounted the many good grouse dogs he had. One of the last times we spoke, I told him none of my dogs had achieved a championship in field trials. He said “From what I hear your dogs are able to compete at the highest levels of field trials”. Again, my friend and neighbor was accurate and I thanked him for the compliment. God rest his soul. I know he is in God's good grouse covers with his dogs now.*

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**George D. Najor** - September 22, 2015 at 11:49 AM

RM

“ *R. Peifer, J. Johnson, J. Smith and fellow grouse hunters MN purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .*



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**R. Peifer, J. Johnson, J. Smith and fellow grouse hunters MN**

- September 22, 2015 at 11:01 AM

PK

“ *Tom, Good bye, I will miss you. You were a wonderful father, sportsman, husband, and companion. The most significant and memorable adventures of my life were spent with you and Mike VanLokeren, each fall, chasing ole wiley behind great setters. Spending time in the woods with the greatest grouse hunter of our times was a special treat upon itself. Enjoying celebratory dinners at the Doherty Hotel with your beautiful wife, Dorothy, were special as well. Thank you for the memories, God Bless. Paul Keiswetter*

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**Paul Keiswetter** - September 22, 2015 at 09:55 AM



ML

“ This grouse season will not be the same without TOM. Paul Keiswetter and I have hunted with TOM since the mid eighties. Gentleman TOM was always on time, never said a foul word, never shot first and always backed you up without saying I got it. He always complimented you on your shot even when he rolled it. We are going to miss Tom but also Dorothy's grouse sandwiches home made cookies fresh cider crisp apples and her pleasant smile at dinner at the Doherty after a hunt. Tom is going to be missed by all of us who crossed his path and the thousands who only wished they had the opportunity to do so. To a great MAN  
Michael Van Lokeren

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Michael Van Lokeren - September 21, 2015 at 01:41 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .



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September 21, 2015 at 12:41 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .



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September 21, 2015 at 11:49 AM

PS

“ Over the years since I retired, I've thought many times about Tom & wondered how he was doing. He was a much respected & a person I had great affection for. I am very sorry to learn of his passing. Please accept my sincere sympathy and best wishes . Paul Schlueter.

Paul Schlueter - September 21, 2015 at 09:29 AM



“ I grew up learning about grouse and woodcock hunting and always hearing of the famous grouse/woodcock expert biologist Tom Prawdzik. I remember going on a grouse seminar field trip and being taken to a drumming log that Mr. Prawdzik was studying. I never met you personally sir, but consider you a friend. May you R.I.P.

Paul Tutro - September 21, 2015 at 09:18 AM

LM

“ Lisa M. purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .



Lisa M. - September 21, 2015 at 08:27 AM

DR

“ Dear Dorothy and Family,  
Of all the supervisors I have had over the years, Tom was the best. More than that, he was a fine, caring man who knew wild places well and cared about conserving the wildlife that lived there. Tom welcomed me, ran interference for me, encouraged me, listened well, and best of all, respected me as a person. I share with you in the loss of a man who never had a bad grouse season, even in years when many people were whining that grouse numbers were down.

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**Doug Reeves** - September 21, 2015 at 07:38 AM

RM

“ Dear Dorothy and family. Our prayers are with you on Tom's passing . We can remember good times talking with you and Tom at polka dances. Rose and Leo Markel

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**Rose Markel** - September 20, 2015 at 05:48 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas R. Prawdzik .



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September 20, 2015 at 01:54 PM

CS

“ Our association during the years we both served at the DNR District headquarters in Gladwin are memorable. He was a teacher, a friend and a solid employee with real loyalty. Craig B. Smith, DNR retired

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**Craig B. Smith** - September 20, 2015 at 10:19 AM

MS

“ I am so sorry to hear of Tom's passing. I was a new Conservation Officer in Isabella county, when Tom was the wildlife biologist in Clare. Being the only woman officer in the area was difficult at times, Tom was always very supportive to me and had my back I always thought very fondly of him and his support. He was a very nice man and will be missed. I am now retired but do remember those times and Tom's helpfulness. May he rest in peace. Mary Sherzer

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**Mary Sherzer** - September 20, 2015 at 08:55 AM



“ I was assigned to Gladwin County when Tom arrived at the District.. He was an absolute breath of fresh air.. I always thought that what we said was listened to when talking business with him.. There was a standing joke at that office about you knew how many game biologists were in by the number of dogs parked in the back yard, and Tom's were the best.. I have good memories of Tom, and share the sadness of your loss... David B. Neitzke, Conservation Office Retired, Free Soil, Mi

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**David B Neitzke** - September 20, 2015 at 07:13 AM

JD

“ One of my first field assignments was the Gladwin District Office, in 1973. Tom was the consummate professional biologist. I enjoyed listening to him and knew he truly loved and respected the resources he was involved in on a daily basis. No one knew more about the ruff grouse cycles and habitat needs than Tom. I truly respected and admired his wealth of knowledge, he so freely shared. He will be greatly missed. All our prayers and thoughts are with Tom's family and friends today. John & Joanne Driver

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**John Driver** - September 20, 2015 at 06:08 AM

NH

“ Dorothy and family”

*We extend our sympathy to you in your tremendous loss. Tom was a great man and so knowledgeable about wildlife, we know that was his calling. We will surely miss him and his dogs.*

*All our love to you.*

*Nyle, Betty, Doug, Dawn, Miles, Julia and Dan Haggarat*

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**Nyle and Betty Haggarat** - September 19, 2015 at 03:38 PM