



SLOPTOWN ROAD IS QUIET NOW...

I can see Protar's cabin through the window now. The boundary maples that were planted 150 years ago to mark the edge of my property are bare, and there is nothing to obscure the view. Soon everything will be white and I'll have six months to think about summer.



JOHN M. "JACK" CROUSE JR.

APRIL 30, 1944 - DECEMBER 10, 2008

DAYS

by Billy Collins

Each one is a gift, no doubt,
mysteriously placed in your waking hand
or set upon your forehead
moments before you open your eyes.

Today begins cold and bright,
the ground heavy with snow
and the thick masonry of ice,
the sun glinting off the turrets of clouds.

Through the calm eye of the window
everything is in its place
but so precariously
this day might be resting somehow

on the one before it,
all the days of the past stacked high
like the impossible tower of dishes
entertainers used to build on stage.

No wonder you find yourself
perched on the top of a tall ladder
hoping to add one more.
Just another Wednesday,

you whisper,
then holding your breath,
place this cup on yesterday's saucer
without the slightest clink.



John M. "Jack" Crouse Jr., age 64, of Grand Rapids and Beaver Island passed away unexpectedly December 10, 2008 on Beaver Island. He was preceded in death by his parents, John M. and Betty Mae Crouse. He is survived by his wife Maureen Abele; his children, Geoffrey Crouse of Naples, FL, Jennifer Crouse of Grand Haven and their mother, Mary Jane Crouse of Grand Haven; brother, Robert (Sherry) Crouse of LaGrange, KY; sister Elizabeth Erickson of Coldwater, MI; grandchildren Tristan and Isabella Crouse; also nieces and nephews. A Memorial Gathering of John's family and friends will be Monday December 15, 11 a.m. at O'Brien-Eggebeen-Gerst Funeral Chapel, 3980 Cascade Rd. Visitation will be Sunday 3-6 p.m. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Little Traverse Conservancy or Beaver Island Historical Society.

John was born in the spring of 1944 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and spent the first years of his life playing on the battlefield. At age seven, his family moved to Benton Harbor, Michigan. After his school years and marriage, John settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan with his wife where they had two children, and later moved to Grand Haven. In 2003 he remarried. John's professional background spanned nearly four decades in the visual arts. During that time, he worked with many of the nation's top photographers, film makers, printers, designers, and art directors. His work was recognized for its innovative visual imagery and was regularly featured in design anthologies. He received over 100 national and international awards. John served on the professional advisory board of Ferris State University's school of visual arts. He was also a regular monthly contributor to the Grand Haven Tribune's editorial page. After his retirement in 2004, he moved to Beaver Island where he pursued his lifelong passions in history and storytelling. He worked in real estate sales, which gave him the chance to walk the island he said reminded him of growing up in Gettysburg. He was chairman of the Publications Committee of the Beaver Island Historical Society. Although his work was what he did, it is not who he was. His life was his family and friends. He was well loved. He will be greatly missed.