

# 1st Lt Frank E. Darden

## 391st BG / 573rd SQ

### B-26 Marauder Pilot



Frank lived in good health, mentally and physically, for 88 years. He passed away on 7/3/10, after battling pneumonia for 2 months and losing....

Frank was a man of many talents, and a true hero... He was a top-flight air force pilot, Flying the B-26 Marauder in WWII. He flew 61 successful missions over France and Germany, including supporting D-day, blowing up 15 railroad bridges, 5 German Panzer divisions, 2 supply depots and a fuel dump. He faced heavy flak and dive-bombers and survived a direct hit to his plane while hindering the German's retreat. He lost a few friends along the way. He was awarded many medals, including 12 Air Medals, which are awarded to airmen who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight, recognizing their single acts of merit or heroism.

Frank was a great athlete. He was a track star, winning 14 gold medals in High School. He was a champion bowler, and an avid golfer. He coached little league baseball for many years.

Frank loved playing cards, from bridge to gin rummy. One of his favorite games was cribbage, where he would go "zoom, zoom, see ya" when he had a great hand, or exclaim "Oh Rats!" when he had a lousy hand.

After the war, Frank had a successful career managing Passenger Services at Pan American World Airlines.

Frank lived his life in an exemplary fashion. He was always a man of great integrity, compassion, and humor. He set a near perfect example for his 3 children and 4 grand children by the way he lived his life. He showed his love for his neighbor by supporting 71 charities. He gave his time talent and treasure to St. Joseph's church, in Palm Bay Florida. For many years he served as an usher and a Eucharistic minister.

Most importantly, Frank loved his family and was a GREAT Dad. He was always there whenever any of us needed a friend, a counselor, a coach, a cheerleader, a confidant, a defender, an advisor... and his family loves him. We will miss him for the rest of our lives, but Dad will always be with us. His spirit will remain alive in our hearts. We, his family, will continue to live our lives in a way we hope will make him proud of the job he did raising us.

In loving memory, always... His children,

John F. Darden  
Kathleen Darden Adams  
Patricia A. Dunnigan