

**RANGER BILL MARLEAU KNEW AND PRIZED FAMILY
VALUES
6/11/96**

I have been waiting for the right opportunity to write about this subject for this column and I believe it is now.

Awhile back I came across a familiar name in the *Express*. The name was William Marleau, a local youth who was once again being lauded for his academic excellence. He is the grandson of William R. Marleau, a man whom I loved and respected. It made me very sad, indeed, that his grandfather was not here to read it. How proud he would have been of his namesake.

I first came to know of the young man's grandfather as a fellow Forest Ranger. Bill Marleau was a seasonal veteran when I came to work for the State in 1958. He became my mentor and friend. Some of my happiest days were spent roaming the bush with Bill. Much of the history and people of the area were relayed to me through him.

Born and raised in Big Moose, he spent his life there with the exception of his Navy service in World War II. His love and devotion for his home is reflected in his book, *Big Moose Station*.

Honest to the core, one of the greatest banes in Bill's life was dishonest people. A gentleman and devout Christian, I never heard him swear. The absolute worst possible thing anyone ever could be was a "No good pill." A favorite expression of his, and one I often use, is "It's hard to beat a man who will lie and cheat and go to church on Sunday."

We had adjoining Ranger Districts and naturally worked together much of the time. No matter where we went, Bill was on familiar ground and I learned much of its past and of its people in our travels. My most treasured memories are of our evenings in camp after a hard day on snowshoes. Each of us fortified by a glass of Port, we would visit on into the night on myriad subjects. On one rare occasion he even told me about the Kamikaze attacks on his ship and of how scared he had been.

He became very disenchanted his last years with the State. DEC politics and political correctness began to permeate all aspects of the work, a condition that violated his standards of truth and honesty.

Serious about life in general, Bill did have a light side. A prominent tenderfoot in beaver camp with us provided us both with a laugh. Arising one morning, the tenderfoot discovered mouse dropping on his washcloth. Realizing he did not know what they were, we watched intently as the tenderfoot rubbed them into the cloth instead of casting them off.

Bill Marleau represented many things to me, but none more obvious than husband, father and grandfather.

Dan Quayle was right and William R. Marleau proved it.

I would like to dedicate this column to all fathers everywhere in his name.

Fathers – God bless them all.