



## Frank Castjohn

November 27, 1939 - September 10, 2008

Mr. Frank Castjohn ?Founder of Strawberry Cup dies? Age 68 and a resident of Pumpkin Center, Frank passed away Wednesday, September 10, 2008 at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Frank was a true renaissance man. He retired from the Bridge Maintenance Division of the Louisiana Department of Transportation. Although his work required daily travel throughout the state, Frank still found time to coach youth soccer (12 years), baseball, swimming and football. As president of the Soccer Association, he leased 27 acres in Hammond and with other volunteers developed a ten field complex for 750 children. In 1987 he founded the ?Strawberry Cup? Soccer Tournament which hosts 100 teams annually; and he served as director of the program for three years. Frank instrumented soccer programs in Hammond and Ponchatoula high schools, serving as head coach at both He received many commendations and awards for his innovative solutions to bridge repair problems, having developed several methods that speed up bridge construction and repair. One of Frank?s most noteworthy achievements in 1986 was the design, fabrication and installation of trolleys to ride on the support cables of the I-310 Mississippi River Bridge at Luling. His design saved hundreds of thousands of dollars while allowing hands-on inspection. Among his numerous resulting commendations were: Special Merit Award from the Secretary of LA DOTD; article in ?Engineering News Record?, a worldwide engineering publication; nomination as ?Man of the Year? by ENR and a cash incentive award from the Louisiana Civil Service League. Frank

was also cited by the Chief Engineer for his work in the New Roads Ferry Landing Emergency Repair. Frank was active in the Steel Structure Painting Council and the Heavy Movable Bridge Committee, both being international technical organizations dedicated to improvements of existing technology. Frank's exceptional self education since high school was demonstrated when he passed an extremely difficult, highly technical "Engineer in Training" exam in 1979 while pursuing an engineering license. He was also a certified bridge inspector. Since his retirement in 1998, he was engaged in inspection of 100's of bridges for structural engineering firms. "In his spare time" Frank liked to hunt, fish, scuba dive, camp, treasure hunt and build and operate "ham" radios. He learned his electronic skills during his tour of duty in the US Air Force. He has also successfully designed, built and raced cars. Frank Castjohn was born in Chicago, Illinois on November 27, 1939. He is the oldest of 3 children (brother Martin Jr. and sister Lynnae) born to the late Martin and Betty Jasek Castjohn. Frank's dad, a mechanic by trade, left Louisiana for the Chicago area looking for the silver lining. There, he met Betty and they wed. They moved back to Louisiana in 1941. Frank's paternal grandparents are from Italy and maternal grandparents are from Poland. Frank graduated from Hammond High School in 1958. Frank started his Highway department career in May 1964, working in District 62 construction gangs until 1976. Mr. Gorman Pounders came to Hammond and asked Frank if he wanted to transfer to Statewide Maintenance and work for Al Dunn. "Took me a week to think about it, been here ever since". Frank is registered with the Louisiana State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and has his EIT Certificate based on his experience and passing the EIT examination. He is also a former member of the United States Soccer Coaches Association, the United States Soccer Referees Association, the Louisiana Soccer Coaches Association and the United States Masters Swimming Association (Senior Olympics). In 1989 he set the Southeast Region record and finished 6th in the nation in the 100 meter freestyle for the 50 to 54 year old age group. In 1995 Frank was awarded the highest award any civil service employee in

Louisiana can receive, "The Charles E. Dunbar Award", for designing an inspection trolley for the Luling Bridge cable system. Frank traveled to exotic places, many you never heard of, some you would like to forget? I'll list just a few: Monkey Island, East Main, East Park, Dularge, Matthews, Deer Park, Shaw, Thomas, Cloutieville, Proverncal, Flatwoods, Lena, Cane River, Gorum, Derry, Bermuda, Red Dirt, Sun, Cotton Valley, Vivian, Pine, Ball, Sheridan, Valentine, Bonfouca, North Draw, Bayou Liberty, East Pearl, Grand Lake, Black Bayou, Gibbstown, Forked Island, Wax Lake, Gibson, Pinhook, Klondike, Montegut, Reggio, Yscloksey, Shell Beach, Chef Menteur, "The? Rigolets, Clifton, Woodworth, Angola, Baritaria and lots of other places I can't recall?" in Louisiana?--. Frank figured that it would take about ten years for a working man in the Maintenance Division to "work" his way up to a "living" wage? so he had to hire young kids and train them. Typical was one application from a young man whose experience was "racking balls" in a pool hall? he worked/learned and stuck with the Department. Now he is a Boat Captain. Another application (for a promotion) wrote under "types of equipment operated?": "If it rolls, crawls, slides or floats? we can operate it?". One last quote from a former supervisor "can't even find Frank? ----- guess that's true ----- now-----". He is survived by his wife, Mildred Castjohn; son, Bryan Castjohn of Loranger; son, Martin Castjohn, Madisonville; two daughters, Barbie Puro of Savage, Minnesota, Tana Castjohn-Poe of West Monroe, Louisiana and son, Frank Davis of Lumberton, Texas. He leaves behind grandchildren, Ashton and Ava Castjohn, Loranger; Jacob and Julie Castjohn, Madisonville; Timmy and Ryan Tierney, Alexis and Eron Puro, all of Savage, Minnesota; Robin Sweet and Frannie Poe of West Monroe, Curt and Cody Davis of Lumberton, Texas and one great-grandchild, Mckenzie Mims. Relatives and friends of the family are invited to attend the funeral services from the chapel of Brandon G. Thompson Funeral Home, west of Hammond on Saturday, September 13th at 11:00 a.m. The family requests that visiting hours be observed Friday, September 12th from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. and

again on Saturday, September 13th beginning at 9:00 a.m. until the funeral service time. Interment will follow in Carter Cemetery in Springfield.

Condolences and other information available online at [www.bgthompsonfuneralhome.com](http://www.bgthompsonfuneralhome.com) Arrangements have been entrusted to Brandon G. Thompson Funeral Home of Hammond.