



Charles O. Barnes

April 27, 2002

Charles O. Barnes, of Fairmount or “Chuck” as he was commonly known, passed away on Saturday April 27, 2002 at the age of 76. He was born on July 8, 1925, near Auburn, New York. In 1943, he graduated from Solvay High School and entered the armed forces. A staff sergeant in the army in World War II, he fought in the South Pacific from New Guinea, through the Philippines, to Japan where he was part of the occupational forces. Following his return to central New York in 1946, he and Janice Knapp were married. Two years later he joined the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation where he worked first as a lineman and later as a supervisor of construction projects until he retired in 1985. Highlights of his years with Niagara Mohawk include working to restore power following hurricanes in the 1950s; construction of transmission lines from the nuclear station at Nine Mile Point; and completion of the electric lines supplying power to the Olympic venue in Lake Placid in 1980. So well, in fact, did he complete the last task, that the president of Niagara Mohawk, John Haehl, recognized his work: “It is not often that we receive letters of commendation, particularly from the Public Service Commission. I have received just such a letter from Chairman Charles A. Zielinski expressing his congratulations on the completion of the Lake Placid 115 kv line. I would like to express my own appreciation for the efforts you put forth in this matter which have reflected credit on the Niagara Mohawk image.” Of this, he was very proud. His family would claim Chuck Barnes was indeed an Olympic Champion. About the time he started working for Niagara

Mohawk, the first of his four children, Durand Barnes of Hawley, PA, was born. His family eventually grew to include three more children—Jeffrey of Oswego, Janice of Fulton and DeEtte of Oswego—two daughters-in-law, and six grandchildren. After retiring, he kept busy with gardening, church activities, traveling to see the country and his family, and spending time at his camp in the northern Adirondacks. His wife of 55 years, children, grandchildren and extended family were the focus of the rest of his life. A true gentleman, warm, hard working, and, faithful, Chuck Barnes was a special man. His friends, colleagues, and fellow church members could depend on him for a helping hand, a kind word, and even a friendly ribbing when needed. To his family he was devoted, generous, and loving. He was always willing to dog-sit, chauffeur, fix a leaky faucet, build a deck, or share a good story. Genuinely content with his life, his booming voice and infectious laugh brightened any room. In fact, he would often claim that “the sun always shines on Charlie”—and in our hearts it always will. He will be deeply missed. Services are 11 a.m. Wednesday in Fairmount Community Church. Burial, Greenlawn Memorial Park, Warners. Calling hours are 4 to 7 p.m. Tuesday at B.L. Bush & Sons Funeral Home, 10 Genesee St., Camillus, NY 13031. Contributions may be made to Fairmount Community Church Memorial Fund, 4801 W. Genesee St., Syracuse, NY 13219.