

Daniel G. Corborn, 86
Sauk Rapids, MN
July 25, 1930 - Mar. 15, 2017



A Mass of Christian Burial was noon March 20, 2017, at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Sartell for Daniel G. (Dan) Coborn, age 86, who died peacefully March 15 at his home in Sartell surrounded by loved ones. Burial was in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Sauk Rapids.

Visitation was from 3-8 p.m. March 19 at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Arrangements have been entrusted to Williams Dingmann Family Funeral Home, Sauk Rapids.

Dan was born July 25, 1930, to humble beginnings as the third of seven children to Duke and Florence (Gram) Coborn.

Like most Depression era children, he was put to work at a young age to help make ends meet. He – alongside his three brothers, Bob, Bill and Ron – took odd jobs as young boys. From checking eggs under a light for freshness to filling soft drink bottles to wrapping fish amidst the pungent odor, there were few jobs the Coborn brothers didn't do.

Dan's youth was colorful – full of mischief, antics and risk. In later years, he wasn't proud of the trouble he had caused but he always took the good from the bad. His childhood experiences taught him lifelong lessons of patience, enduring optimism and the power of second chances.

Dan graduated from Sauk Rapids High School in 1948. He went on to attend St. John's University, where he played football. Temptations outside the classroom led to poor grades. One afternoon the Abbot called Dan to his office to bestow wisdom, "You know, Dan, the world needs truck drivers, too." Dan got back on the straight and narrow and graduated in 1952 with a degree in economics.

Dan married Mabel Hansen of Rockville on Sept. 9, 1952. He went on to serve in the U.S. Army where he was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for two years. Upon discharge, he was accepted into law school at University of Minnesota, but declined the opportunity and returned to Sauk Rapids to work for his father. Dan quickly became his father's right-hand man and assisted with a variety of management duties. In 1959, Dan and his brothers found themselves at the helm of the company after their father's unexpected passing.

Dan led the company over the years with bold vision and resolve. He was the eternal optimist and had the ability to say so much while saying so little. His basic principles for business, leadership and treating others well, endure throughout the company today.

Dan felt a tremendous sense of duty to his community. In 1967, he and his wife Mabel became charter members of United Way of Central Minnesota. He was also a founding member of Boys & Girls Club of Central Minnesota.

Dan's leadership in the grocery business and commitment to his customers and community earned him recognition over the years. In 1987, he was named Minnesota Grocer of the Year by Minnesota Grocers Association. He also received accolades from College of Saint Benedict, National Grocers Association, St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, St. Cloud State University and United Way of Central Minnesota. In 2002, he received the Father Walter Reger Distinguished Alumnus Award from Saint John's University – the highest honor they bestow – for outstanding service to the Saint John's community by an alumnus. In 2013, Dan and Mabel were presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the CentraCare Health Foundation.

Dan's philanthropy was born out of wanting to give back to those who had been so good to Coborn's. In 1999, he was honored to receive an award on behalf of the company when Coborn's, Inc. was named one of the Ten Most Generous Companies in America. The award was sponsored by John F. Kennedy Jr.'s magazine, *George*.

In his later years, Dan found satisfaction in watching his son Chris and his management team lead the company into new possibilities. Well into his 80s, Dan would drive from his home in Sartell to the former Coborn's, Inc. office on the east side of St. Cloud, just to be there and read the paper. He moved a little slower in his later years, but he never missed an opportunity to attend a Friday morning staff meeting. "It's good to see you, Dan," employees would tell him. "It's good to be seen," he'd reply.

Dan summed up success in these simple terms, "You work hard, you know what the goals should be, and if you want to put in enough blood, sweat and tears, you'll succeed."

Dan and his wife Mabel loved each other dearly during their 64-year marriage. They enjoyed travel, golf and leisure time with family and friends. They generously opened their home to gatherings and fundraisers over the years. Dan was a family man to his core. He loved his children, grandchildren and was especially excited when his first great-grandchild entered the world in January 2017.

Dan is survived by his wife Mabel and his five children, Shelly Coborn, Chris (Becky Bergner) Coborn, Suzy (Marty) Ellis, Duke (Amy Armstrong) Coborn and Tom Coborn; grandchildren, Danny (Tina) Coborn, Maria Coborn, Emily Coborn, Michael Coborn, Peter Coborn, Maggie Ellis, Jack Ellis, Charlie Ellis, Duke Jr. Coborn and Willy Coborn; great-grandchild, Dahlia Coborn; and his sister, Nancy Fandel. He was preceded in death by his parents, Duke and Florence Coborn; brothers, Bob, Ron, Bill and Neil Coborn; his sister Betty Clepper and his grandson, Nicholas Coborn.

The family is eternally grateful to Darlene and the CentraCare Health Home Care and Hospice team, as well as personal caregivers April, Lori and Michelle.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Coborn Family Foundation, or CentraCare Health Home Care & Hospice.

Obituary, guestbook and video tribute available online: www.williamsdingmann.com

Our Country is in Mourning, A Soldier Died Today.