



## David A. Ladd

February 24, 1935 - April 25, 2024

Dodgeville – David A. Ladd, age 89, of Dodgeville, passed away peacefully on Thursday, April 25, 2024, at the Upland Hills Health Nursing & Rehab Center. Dave was born on February 24, 1935, in Dodgeville, the son of Herbert and Leota (Noble) Ladd.

Dave graduated from Cobb High School. In 1956, he married Nancy Jacobson in Dodgeville. They moved to Madison and Dave worked for Regenber Paint company as a salesman calling on paint stores across Wisconsin. They later moved back to Dodgeville to open their own paint and wallpaper store, Ladd's Color Spot. In 1972, Dave and Nancy founded Walnut Hollow Farm, the leading US manufacturer of quality wood surfaces for the Craft and Hobby Industry. With a lot of hard work and dedicated employees, the company was very successful. Dave was the President and CEO of Walnut Hollow until the late 90's when his children took over management of the company. In April, 2021, the company founded by Dave and Nancy was sold to Universal Forest Products in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dave was an accomplished business person and a steward of the land. He loved the outdoors and spent his free time hunting and fishing, taking care of his walnut trees, planting wildflower prairies, watching the birds and other wildlife at his childhood farm and property near Edmund, and spending time with his granddaughters and his beloved dog, Chelsea. Many Canadian

fishing trips and hunting trips with his friends were enjoyed over the years.

He was very active in the Dodgeville Community and volunteered his time to serve on the Chamber of Commerce, the Dodgeville Tree Board & Main Street Program, and the Upland Hills Hospital Board. Dave was a founding member of Farmer's Appreciation Day, the Harry Nohr Trout Unlimited Chapter, the Iowa County Prairie Restoration project, and the Driftless Area Land Conservancy. He taught hunter safety to hundreds of students and enjoyed planting trees with students on National Arbor Day. He also served on the National & Wisconsin Walnut Councils, Wisconsin Conservation Congress, the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board, and the Natural Resources Foundation Board. Dave was a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Dodgeville.

Over the years, Dave won many business and environmental awards including the State of Wisconsin's Small Business Person of the Year presented by the US Small Business Administration, National Small Business Person of the Year 2nd runner up, the John H. Brogan Award presented by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Conservationist Lifetime Achievement Award presented by Gathering Waters Conservancy, and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Hall of Fame. Dave was also inducted into the Craft & Hobby Association Hall of Fame and the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame.

With the help of a friend from the craft industry, Dave wrote a book entitled "Uff-Da! What a Ride!", a Norwegian Boy's Journey to Success. He was very proud of this book and made sure all of his acquaintances received a copy as soon as it was released in 2014.

Dave is survived by his children Jeff (Liz Heimerl) Ladd of Dodgeville, Sandy (Tom) Bartelt of Mt. Horeb, Chris (Kathy) Ladd of Dodgeville; his

granddaughters Hannah Bartelt and Emma Ladd; and many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Dave was preceded in death by his wife, Nancy Ladd; his son Scott Ladd; his parents Herbert & Leota Ladd; his brothers Chad Ladd, Herb Ladd, Jon Ladd; his sister Phyllis Graves; his nephew, Alan Ladd; and other close relatives and friends.

Private family services will be held along with a celebration of life at a later date.

The family would like to thank Drs. Grunow & Grieshaber, the wonderful staff at Upland Hills Nursing & Rehab Center, Upland Hills Hospice, Crestridge Assisted Living, and all of Dave's friends and colleagues for their kindness and support.

The family suggests that memorials be made to the Upland Hills Nursing & Rehab Center, 800 Compassion Way, Dodgeville, WI 53533 or the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, 211 S. Paterson St., Suite 100, Madison, WI 53703.

# Cemetery Details

## East Side Cemetery

601 E. Division Street  
Dodgeville, WI

# Events

**Details are pending.**

# Tribute Wall

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“ *My condolences to Dave's family & friends*



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**marie lewis** - May 22, 2024 at 02:31 AM



“ *To the family of Dave. I am so sorry to hear of Dave's passing. He was such a good friend. He gave me my first real job after high school to work at the Color Spot, working the counter (didn't get the top of a gallon of paint once in the shaker and spilled paint all over) making deliveries estimating barns for painting and went around Wisconsin and Minnesota to place wallpaper books. I even helped him cut down a couple of Walnut trees before Wood Hollow. His work ethic was instrumental in my career after College. Visiting him at Upland was a highlight in my day. One last thing, I would have dinner at times with Nancy and you kids we would play badminton and he would beat me which was humbling. I hope this isn't too long, but I wanted to show how important to me. May you all find peace*

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**Jon Jacka** - April 29, 2024 at 04:19 PM



“ *You were a good friend while I was in office!*

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**DuWayne Johnsrud** - April 28, 2024 at 09:10 AM