

Celebrating the Life of
Richard David "Dickie" Dudley

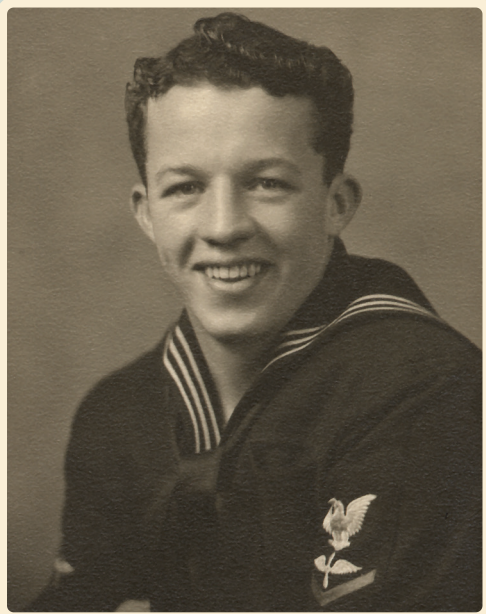


October 29, 1923 - August 27, 2013

"Life is not a dress rehearsal."

Richard David Dudley, Wausau's prominent and hard-charging businessman with a give-back attitude, died at his home on August 27, 2013.

A larger-than-life presence on the Wausau and Central Wisconsin landscape for decades, Dick Dudley was born in Waupaca on October 29, 1923.



**"If you ever get your tail in a crack,
it's going to be your family who pulls
you out."**

Dick Dudley moved to Wausau in 1925 when his father, Robert J. Dudley, was hired as a branch manager for Armour & Company. Soon, Wausau was home base for Robert and Stella Jones Dudley and their four personable and hard-working sons: Jefferson James "Jay" Dudley, Robert Lee "Bob" Dudley, Lauren Charles Dudley, and Richard David Dudley.

Graduated from Wausau High School in 1942, Dick joined the U.S. Navy that same year. He was a distinguished veteran of World War II, serving as a gunner in a torpedo bomber in the Pacific Theater. He flew 138 combat missions over three years. When his ship, the U.S.S. Gambier Bay, was sunk in the battle of Leyte Gulf, he spent 57 hours in the South Pacific before he was rescued. He received 12 service medals and decorations including the Purple Heart, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Presidential Unit Citation, and four air medals. "I made up my mind while I was in the water that if anyone was going to get out of there alive, I was going to be one of them," said Dudley.

After serving his country and continuing his education at the University of Wisconsin, Dick returned to Wausau. He married Eileen Deneen in 1949 and together they had four children, all of whom survive: Mary Catherine Dudley (Greg Wortman) of Santa Fe, NM; Robert James Dudley II (Penny) of Wausau; John Deneen Dudley (Amy) of Mosinee, and Ann Dudley Shannon (Robert) of Stevens Point. Dudley is survived by eight grandchildren: David Dudley, Katherine Dudley, Mary Dudley,



Margaret Dudley, Megan Dudley Spatz (Josh), Courtney Dudley, Michael Shannon, and Andrew Shannon. He had one great grandchild, Aaliyah Easton.

Eileen Dudley died in 1984 after a courageous battle with cancer.

In 1990, Dick married real estate developer, Nancy (Kurszewski) Wanta, who survives. Dudley's stepsons include Todd Wanta (Julie), Troy Wanta (Ginger Reed), and three step-grandchildren: Amanda Stephenson, Angela Wanta, and Trent Wanta, all of Las Vegas, NV.



Broadcasting:

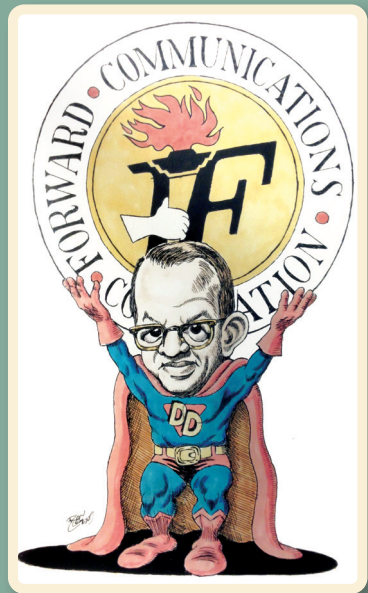
“I was a round peg in a round hole.”

Dick began his professional career in broadcasting as a salesman at WSAU radio in 1947, and was named General Manager of the station at age 27. Dick aggressively expanded and grew the company that owned WSAU, helping it become part of Forward Communications Corporation, a major independent national media company which owned and operated radio stations, television stations and newspapers throughout the United States, including properties in Wausau, WI; Madison, WI; Marshfield, WI; Kaukauna, WI; Sioux City, IA; Waterloo,



IA; Peoria, IL; Wheeling, WV; Odessa, TX; Great Bend, KS; Tallahassee, FL, and Moorhead, MN.

Dick was named president of Forward Communications Corporation in 1963, and chairman and chief executive officer in 1981. In 1984, Forward Communications Corporation was sold to Wesray Corporation, a nationally known venture capital group. Dick continued as an owner, and operated the company as president and chief executive officer for its two principals, William Simon, former United States Secretary of Treasury, and Raymond Chambers, an East Coast industrialist. Forward was sold to Adams Communications in 1988.



By 1989, Dick and his brother, Bob, formed Dudley Communications Corporation and Dudley Broadcasting Management to own and operate television stations, including stations in Grand Rapids, MI; Savannah, GA, and Seattle, WA. During the 1990s, Dick served as chairman and built the company into a significant national

independent television group. Dudley Communications was sold to The Tribune Company of Chicago on June 5, 1998. In addition to his brother Bob, Dick's son, John Dudley; wife, Nancy Dudley; Mark Schoenfeldt, and his business partner of 26 years, Paul C. Schlindwein II, all worked with him in Dudley Communications Corp.

Dick's full-throttle drive and recognized ability in broadcasting earned him the longest term ever as a director with the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). He also served as chairman of the radio board division of the NAB. He received the ***Grover C. Cobb Memorial Award*** from the NAB, an award presented to him in recognition of his contributions to broadcasting and government.

Dudley was the former president of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association and served on its board of directors and held other offices for 15 years. In 1989, Dick was one of the first 12 individuals elected to the Wisconsin Broadcasters Hall of Fame, with the criteria based on contributions to broadcasting, community, and the State of Wisconsin. In 2001, he received the American Broadcast Pioneer Award, presented by the Broadcasters' Foundation. This award is presented to individuals who have made an enormous contribution to the broadcasting industry and to the world.



"An entrepreneur is just a fancy name for a guy who is willing to take a chance."

While building Dudley Communications Corporation, Dick also became involved as an investor and executive in Adirondack Hydro Development Corporation, a private energy development and construction company based in New York. Dick served as president and chairman of Adirondack, assisting with the development of more than ten hydroelectric power sites on the East Coast, including projects ranging between \$10,000,000 and \$150,000,000. Dick assisted with all phases of development including local, state and federal natural resource and regulatory compliance, raising equity

and debt funds, and project management. In 1997, Adirondack was sold to Indeck Energy Corporation.

Dick continued to participate in the energy industry as vice president of Alpine Construction, a construction and development company based in New York.

Possessing tremendous business acumen, Dick was a founder or investor in more than 100 businesses throughout his lifetime. By 1998, Dudley expanded his venture capital streak to include two new investment companies, Dudley Investments, LLC, and Wildcatters, LLC, both of which are dedicated to supporting local and Wisconsin businesses through ownership interests, equity infusions, loans, and management expertise.

Through Dudley Investments and Wildcatters, Dudley backed businesses including Riiser Energy, Northern Wire Corporation, Office Solutions/SNA Enterprises, Stoney Creek, Rondele Specialty Foods, Energizer, LaFont South, Wausau Benefits, Lakeland Overhead Door Company, CarBuffs, Denzin Engineering, Miltrim Farms, Granite Peak Corporation, Central Blueprint, JBC Communications, Tranquil Settings, D'Lights, Stoney Creek Hospitality Corporation, Riverside Place, The Cleaner Image, Woodworker's Mart, and the Jefferson Street Inn.

These businesses have employed more than 2,100 people in the Wausau area. A tough talking, risk-taking businessman, Dudley would advise his adult children to be open to new opportunities but not to "get married to any business."

He served as a director of M&I Bank (now the Bank of Montreal) until 2006. Dennis Kuester, who was chairman and CEO of the Marshall & Ilsley Corporation from 1993 until 2010, wrote to Dudley and, in thanking him for his service, noted "it is apparent to me that you are 'Mr. Wausau.'"

Never one to retire, Dick Dudley developed the *The Dudley Tower*, an 11-story, state-of-the-art downtown office building in 2006. The



building is dedicated to the four Dudley brothers and is a centerpiece for downtown Wausau's revitalization. "If my three brothers were alive, they would think this building is the nuts," said Dudley. "I had to do it for my brothers."

In March 2013, Dudley provided the venture funds that allowed Wausau's American Legion Golf Course (now known as Tribute Golf Course) and restaurant to continue to operate.

"It isn't about what a difference an individual can make. It's what a total community can do together."

Forever a Wausau booster, Dick has been a long-time generous supporter of Wausau area causes, including the United Way, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Grand Theatre Restoration Committee, North Central Health Care Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, the Wausau Chamber of Commerce, and the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin. He received the Boy Scouts of America *Silver Beaver Award*, the Jaycees *Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award*, and was the Wausau School District's Hall of Fame recipient in 2001. The Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin honored



him with the *Lifetime Spirit of Philanthropy Award* in 2009. That same year, he received the *Leadership in Philanthropy Award* from the Boys and Girls Club of Wausau. In 2011, Junior Achievement of Wisconsin named Dudley a *Champion of Business*.

He was awarded a Doctorate of Humane Letters Degree in 1983 from Wheeling College in Wheeling, WV. Additionally, Dudley served as a director of Viterbo College in LaCrosse, WI, and on the Texas Christian University, School of Communications, Curriculum Advisory Committee.

Dick served on the Board of Directors of three major private foundations, including the Judd Alexander Foundation, the Schleuter Family Foundation, and the Dudley Foundation. In 2000, he funded and created the Dudley Foundation, Inc., which has donated more than \$2.5 million to community causes since 2001.



"There's a lot of ways to have fun in life. I've tried most of them."

In his free time, Dick Dudley enjoyed curling, duck hunting, golfing, reading, watching the Green Bay Packers (win or lose but winning was better!) and relaxing at Rainbo Lodge, located in Wisconsin's exquisite North Woods.

He will be sorely missed by the Wausau community and by his family. May he rest in peace, knowing he fought the good fight and left the world—and especially Wausau, Wisconsin—a distinctly better place.







May you be poor in misfortune,
Rich in blessings,
Slow to make enemies,
Quick to make friends.
But rich or poor, quick or slow,
May you know nothing but happiness
From this day forward.

An Irish Toast