



Virgil Herbert Steinhoff

April 29, 1932 - June 7, 2021

Virgil Herbert Steinhoff, 89, of Hopkins, Minnesota, passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by family, on June 7, 2021. Private family services and burial will be held at Dawn Valley, Bloomington MN. Memorials may be made to the Cannon Valley Trail.

Virgil was born on April 29, 1932 in Belmont, Wisconsin. After graduation from Belmont High School he started working for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad (CNW). He spent his entire career (45 years) working for the CNW, his first position was constructing the railroad track. He worked his way up in the CNW and held a variety of jobs for them. The last 20 years of his career, he was Manager of Industrial Development & Real Estate. His territory was the Midwest and Mountain West. He purchased land for the CNW to access the coal in Western Wyoming and Montana. The last several years of his career was spent selling off unused railroad lines. His favorite career accomplishment was the creation of the Cannon Valley Bike Trail. He is the Founder of this trail and is the impetus for the trail being created. The CNW wanted him to sell the trail to several landowners from Red Wing to Cannon Falls. Virgil told the CNW executives that it was a beautiful trail and should be kept for public use. He spent several years putting together a group of citizens and organizations (MN Parks Foundation/Charles O. Richardson, Red Wing Republic Eagle/Albert Marshall, etc.) to raise the money to make the trail a reality. An article in the Minneapolis Star Tribune dated December 5, 1983

describes the creation of the trail.

Virgil taught his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren the values of hard work, honesty and love. His brightest smiles were when he was with his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Virgil is survived by his loving wife, Joan, of 68 years: two children, Keith (Dione) Steinhoff, Tess (Kent) Schroeder: five grandchildren, Lindsay (Logan) Merkwae, Brian Schroeder, Tanya (Kyle) Fulton, Afton Steinhoff and Ronald Steinhoff: three great grandchildren, Ellie Merkwae, Cora Merkwae and Koen Fulton and nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents Walter and Frieda (Mester) Steinhoff, brothers Guerdon, Everett and Leonard Steinhoff and sister, Ruth Steinhoff.