



John Dan Norton, Sr.

NOV 11, 1930 - JAN 6, 2024



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MEMORIAL PARK
Funeral Home & Cemetery

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John Dan Norton Sr. passed peacefully from this life to the next on Saturday January 6, 2024, after a very brief illness. He was born November 11, 1930, to Ina Margaret Bishop and Willie Frank Norton both of whom preceded him in death. He was also preceded in death by his loving wife of 71 ½ years, Dr. Virginia M. Norton, one granddaughter, Rebecca Marie Turner, son-in-law, Patrick O’Roark, his twin sister Clara Ann Norton Hampton Kelley, brothers, William, George, Jim and Julius Norton and another sister, Edna Earl Norton. Dan is survived by his three children, daughter, Terry Norton O’Roark and sons, John Norton Jr. (Norna) and Dennis Norton (Sarah), three beloved granddaughters, Megan O’Roark (Darwin Fu), Molly O’Roark (Ronnie MacDuff), Catherine Norton Simpson (Nathan), and one great-granddaughter, Natalie Grace Simpson, whom he cherished. He leaves behind his loving and supportive sisters-in-law, Lucy Wall and Jamie Dickson, as well as 7 nieces and 9 nephews who called him “Uncle Dan”.

Dan started his life with very humble beginnings, born the last of 7 children, who all lived in a small wooden house with no running water or electricity for the first 18 years of his life. Dan attended school in Middleton, TN, where in his teenage years, he and his brother Jule earned a few pennies driving a mule-drawn school wagon. Dan and his twin sister graduated from Middleton High School in 1949, the only siblings to finish high school. After graduation, Dan rode a train to Memphis, where he went to live with his Uncle Gordon Bishop. During this time, he worked at the Continental Baking Company as a shipping clerk, to earn money to attend college. It was on this job, that fate intervened, and he accepted an invitation to attend a birthday party for the girlfriend of one of his buddies at the Baking Company. At this party, he met a 15-year-old Virginia Alma Marino, and they became inseparable. They married 2 ½ years later in June of 1952, and remained married for 71 ½ years until her death this past October.

After spending a year working at the Baking Company, Dan travelled to Martin, TN, and spent one semester at UT Martin studying Agriculture. Deciding that Martin was too far away from



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Virginia, Dan moved back to Memphis and attended Memphis State University for one semester, this time studying business. After one semester, Dan was hired by the United States Post Office as a “Temporary, Indefinite, Substitute Clerk”. He continued to work for the Post Office for the next 38 years, in positions ranging from accountant, auditor and postal inspector. When he retired in 1989, Dan held the position of

Regional Budget Officer/Manager for the Southern Region. In his “retirement years”, Dan had many interests and stayed very active and as such, he found himself with a myriad of different jobs. One of his most notable ventures was managing the Santa and Easter Bunny Stands at the Oak Court Mall, where for several years, he actually served as “Santa.” It was in this role that he taught all three granddaughters, two nieces and one nephew how to manage a business - from customer service to balancing the receipts at the end of every day. Dan also earned his Real Estate license and worked as an Agent for Crye-Leke Realtors. He and Virginia were investors in farmland and residential rental properties. After 15 years, Dan “retired” again and started his own accounting business and worked part-time for International Paper. At age 92, Dan held the distinction of being the oldest active practicing CPA in the state of Tennessee.

Dan served his country for over seven years in two different branches of service. He served in the Tennessee National Guard in 1949, the Army Reserve in 1954-55, and the Army 1955-57 during the Korean War. In 1957, he joined the Air Force Reserve where he was at the rank of A1C until 1961. In his time of service, he earned certificates in Marksmanship and good conduct metals.

In 2006, Dan and Virginia moved to a new retirement community, The Village at Germantown. During his years at the Village, Dan served as Treasurer for the Village council and established the Employee Recognition Fund. Additionally, he worked to establish a tax-exempt foundation, with the express purpose of assisting residents with financial difficulties to continue to live at The Village. He served as treasurer for the foundation for many years. Often, you could find Dan working behind the scenes and assisting Virginia in her many pursuits, which meant he might be running the sound system, working on programs or fund-raising – whatever was needed. He often joked that he was Virginia’s “unofficial Administrative Assistant.” In March of 2023, Dan was recognized with a special award by The Village at Germantown for all his extraordinary work.

Dan and Virginia were both very involved at Christ Methodist Church, where they were long-time members. Dan served in numerous volunteer positions to support the church, including the Shepherd’s School, which was a non-profit school for under privileged children in the downtown



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area of Memphis. In 2009, Dan was recognized as “An Unsung Hero of the United Methodist Church” for his service to the church.

Dan was a humble and modest man who possessed an incredibly strong work ethic. When asked to list the most important dates in his life, he answered, “The day I met Virginia, the date we were married, the dates of the births of our children, the day I graduated from the University of Memphis (BBA May 1969) and the date I passed the CPA Examination (August 1971)!”

Dan was a kind-hearted, generous and supportive man, who was quick-witted, loved a good story or funny joke. He was always willing to put his knowledge, strength and financial know-how into helping anyone in need. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and loved him.

A Celebration of Life service and reception will be held on Friday, January 26, 2024, at 10:30am, at The Village at Germantown: 7820 Walking Horse Circle, Germantown, TN 38138.

A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024, at 2:00 pm in Wilson Chapel at Christ Church, 4488 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN. The family will receive friends for visitation, an hour prior to the service, starting at 1:00 pm.

In lieu of flowers, the family would be honored if you made memorial donations to a nonprofit of your choice or to one of the following:

Dr. Virginia M. Norton and Dan Norton Scholarship Fund at the University of Memphis - supportum.memphis.edu/nortonscholarship · The Village at Germantown Foundation - <https://www.village-germantown.com/about-the-village/the-village-foundation> · Christ Church - <https://www.christchurchmemphis.org/stewardship>





Events


John Dan Norton, Sr.

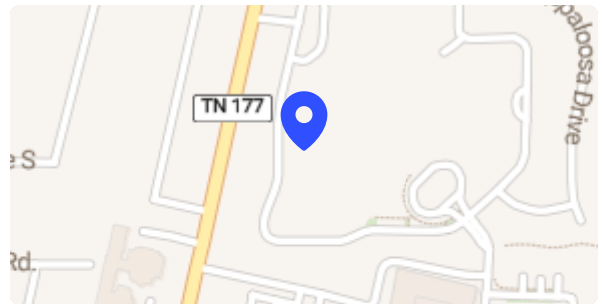
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Celebration of Life

 **Friday**, January 26, 2024

 10:30 AM CT


 **The Villages of Germantown**
7820 Walking Horse Circle, Germantown TN

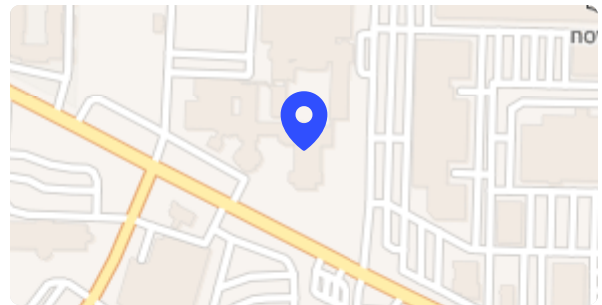


Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, January 27, 2024

 2:00 PM CT

 **Christ United Methodist Church- Wilson Chapel**
4488 Poplar Avenue, Memphis TN 38117





Tribute Wall

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Wayne A Norton posted:

Dan was one of the finest people I have ever known, and he certainly made the Norton family proud. He was my first cousin and one of the few Norton cousins I was fairly close to, even though we were nine years apart. (Many of the others I did not even know since my father was the "baby" of a large family.) One of my first memories of Dan was the "talk" after he and Virginia married. I was just a youngster then, and I'm not sure whether it was Virginia's age or her religious affiliation--she was Catholic at the time--that caused most of the ruckus. But to hear some of the relatives talk, it was a huge scandal. Somehow it all worked out, didn't it. A visit with Dan and Virginia was a must on a trip to Memphis during the last few years, and I'm sure going to miss their good company. Lives well lived! Rest in peace. You are missed!

January 24 at 3:17 PM



Mary Talley January 25 at 1:24 PM

Sorry I am sick and will not be able to attend Dan's services. I have had Covid. I am now having Coughing spells. Thanks to Dan and Virginia and others for all the family reunions. Praying, hugs and kisses for you. Love Mary (Sissy) Talley



Jonette Rukstad posted:

Remember both of your parents with love and gratitude for their years of service to The Village at Germantown. They were both very special people. Jonette Rukstad (Ron's wife)

January 11 at 9:55 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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