



# Railsplitter Obituary



## **Zane C. Zander**

24 December 1934 – 9 March 2023

Zane C. Zander, age 88, of Brillion, passed away on Thursday afternoon, March 9, 2023 at home after a lengthy battle with cancer, surrounded by his loving family.

He was born on December 24, 1934, in Manitowoc, the first child of Elliot and Margaret Specht Zander of Brillion. Graduating in 1952 from Brillion High School, he continued his education graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Stout in 1957. He taught Industrial Arts Education for one semester before being drafted into the U.S. Army in January of 1958.

His military service found him in Korea in 1958, with the 1st Cavalry sitting on the 38th Parallel. After arriving in Korea as a Private in his assigned position, he was promoted rapidly to a Specialist 5, then after a brief period he was awarded a Direct Commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve. After completing his two years as an enlisted soldier, he returned to Brillion and joined the U.S. Army Reserve in Manitowoc as a 2nd Lieutenant. He retired with 20 years of service in 1978 as a Major, with his last duty station being Fort Sheridan, Ill.



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He started out working for his father at The Brillion News and discovered that Brillion was a growing community and along with his brother, Noel, purchased The Brillion News/Zander Press Inc. on April 1, 1973. In his 32 years as the President/Co-owner of Zander Press Inc., he grew the business substantially and retired in 2005, selling the corporation to the fourth generation of Zanders, his four children. In addition to his duties of running the company and printing sales, Zane was also responsible for ad sales for the Lake to Lake Shopper and The Brillion News, in a time when he would walk down Main Street visiting with the business owners, getting their ads and story ideas for the newspaper, or printing orders, or just shooting the breeze.

In 1961, he met the love of his life, Carol Sodergren, and they married on November 25, 1961. They had four children: daughters Elizabeth, Darcy and Kristine, and son Michael. They celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary in November of 2022.

Zane was a pillar of the community. He was the remaining founding member of the Brillion Optimist Club, being a member for 50 years and lifetime Optimist member. He was also a member of Bloedorn-Becker-Jensen Post 126 American Legion for over 50 years as well as a lifetime member of the American Legion and was a member of the Brillion Planning Commission for over 45 years. As a small businessman and a newspaperman, he was an unofficial historian of Brillion and seemed to know the backstory of every business that was in each Brillion area building for the last 100 years, and was a wealth of knowledge about the long-time local families. In October of 2021, Zane was honored by receiving the Michael S. Ariens Community Leadership Award.

His second love after his wife and children was old cars - owning them and restoring them. Zane was active in the Ford Model A Club (MARC), the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA) and the Packerland Region of the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America (VCCA) and at many times was instrumental at filling many offices in these organizations. For two generations, he was chairperson for the Swap Meet and Car Corral for the Appleton Car Show. Not even Zane could compile a comprehensive list of the vehicles he owned over the years. Most loved were his 1930 Model A Woody Wagon, 1954 and 1963 Corvettes, and a 1968 Camaro convertible. He was honored to have several of his restored antique





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vehicles in very prestigious collections. His 1936 Chevrolet Suburban, which GM used in a nationwide advertising campaign in magazines, billboards and television in 2002, is located in the GM Heritage collection in Flint, Mich. and his 1954 Corvette Nomad, which he recreated from scratch over the course of 7 years from just some photos of the concept car on display in 1954, is in The Klairmont Collections, a private museum in Chicago. (Search YouTube - "1955 Chevrolet Chevy Corvette Nomad Wagon Motorama Concept on My Car Story with Lou Costabile" for a view of this "one of one" incredible creation that Zane and his friends built.)

His love of cars and car friends took him on many journeys, some annual such as the Hershey, Penn. car show, and more locally car show and swap meets in Iola and Jefferson, Wis. Zane had the ability to spot the glimmer of chrome or glass of an abandoned 50's car from unfathomable distances and be able to identify it by the way the light hit his eye and intuition. Like a true car guy, Zane enjoyed junkyards and junkyarding. He made a week-long trip each year to Minnesota and South Dakota with friends looking at old junked cars and buying parts for his vehicle restoration projects. He will be greatly missed at the local chapter of the Packerland Region VCCA club, both at the meetings and also in the driving tours, having been there seemingly forever.

Zane is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carol Zander; his children: daughter Beth Wenzel of Brillion and her children: the late Tyler Wenzel, Lucas Wenzel, Garrett (Jessica) Wenzel and their children Ezra Malchek, Nash, Axel and Neli Wenzel; and McKenna Allison and her sons Emmitt and Kolby Allison; daughter Darcy Zander-Feinauer (Dale) of Oshkosh and her children: Bailley (Kevin) Lindgren and their daughter Tenley Lindgren; Wyatt (Yvonne) Lemmers and their children Lennox and Knox Lemmers; daughter Kris Bastian (TJ) of Brillion and their children: Tristian and Grace Bastian; and son Mike Zander (Heather) of Provo, Utah and their children: Samuel (Abigail) Zander, Walter (Rachel) Zander and Margaret Zander and her fiancé Grant Robbins; and foreign exchange daughter, Helene Nilsson of Sweden and her son, Arwid Nilsson. Zane is also survived by his sisters: Bette Pollino and Faye (Tom) Enneper; along with many in-laws, nieces and nephews and step-grandchildren and step-great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Elliot and Margaret Zander; a brother, Noel Zander; and a beloved grandson, Tyler Wenzel.



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In his physically declining months, Zane was given spiritual life when he put his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and accepted His free gift of eternal life and redemption through God's amazing grace by faith.

Funeral Service will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, March 13, 2023 at Faith United Methodist Church in Brillion. Officiating will be Rev. Dale Eggert. Burial will be in the old Brillion Community Cemetery. Military Rites will be accorded by the Becker, Bloedorn, Jensen American Legion Post 126 of Brillion.

Friends may call at the Pielhop Wieting Funeral Home, 215 South Main Street in Brillion, on Sunday afternoon, March 12, 2023 from 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. The visitation will continue at church on Monday morning from 9:00 a.m. until 10:45 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Brillion Area Family of Funds c/o Community Foundation Fox Valley Region, 4455 W Lawrence St, Appleton, WI 54914, which will help support the community that Zane loved and into which he invested so much of his life.

