

Knuth, Dan



Age 75, of New Brighton, formerly of Mabel, MN passed away peacefully October 5, 2020 due to complications of Alzheimer's disease after

a 6-year decline faced with dignity and grace. Raised by a single mother, Lois, and several aunts after his father died young, Dan was a feminist who worked for Planned Parenthood while in graduate school. He was an environmentalist who participated in the first Earth Day. Dan graduated from Mabel High School, earned a BA from Mankato State and a PhD in Physical Geography and Geology from Indiana University. He started his career in Minnesota, working as a hydrologist at the MPCA, a professor at Macalester, and as an environmental consultant. Dan served in the Minnesota House of Representatives, representing the cities of New Brighton and Mounds View from 1982-1987. He was proud to have helped secure ongoing treatment for New Brighton's water that was polluted by activities at TCAAP. He authored legislation creating the Office of Pipeline Safety. Dan was the director of the Office of Solid Waste Management and he worked in public affairs at 3M for many years. He finished his career as a lobbyist, working for criminal justice reform and the promotion of transit and biking before retiring in 2014. Dan always thought of himself as a "boy from Mabel" while living a big life of adventure and travel. He and his wife, Joann, traveled to all 7 continents and also loved family trips to the North Shore of Lake Superior and the Minnesota Driftless Area he considered home. Dan was an Eagle Scout and a lifelong Scouter. He worked at Camp

Hok-si-a in Lake City and at Philmont Scout Ranch in NM. Dan helped start a Cub Scout Pack, Boy Scout Troop, and Venturing Crew in New Brighton. He served on the Board of Northern Star Council and was a Council Commissioner. He valued serving on the Metropolitan State Foundation Board. Dan loved connecting with people. He knew people everywhere and joked that he was "on the streets" doorknocking every year for local campaigns. One of Dan's great joys was helping young people. He served many kids in scouting. Dan was a mentor to young lobbyists at the state capitol, where he was known for being kind, ethical, and good-humored. His legacy lives on through his impact on countless community leaders across Minnesota and beyond. Most of all, Dan loved his family. He and Joann shared a loving and affectionate marriage of 45 years. He was deeply proud of his children, John and Kate, and was a hands-on dad. He enthusiastically supported his children's careers, working on Kate's campaigns and becoming an avid collector of John's artwork. Dan will be deeply missed by many. He is preceded in death by his parents Lloyd and Lois Knuth; Aunts Stella, Mildred, and Irene (James); and nephew Mark. He is survived by his wife Joann, children John (Taylor) and Kate (Sam), grandchildren Mateo and Maud, his in-laws Gordon and Linda Backlund, niece Melanie (Clyde) Klaumann and their children. A private funeral will be held. A memorial service to bring Dan's expansive community together and to honor his life will be held when it is safe to gather. In lieu of flowers, memorials to Northern Star Council, BSA or Climate Generation: a Will Steger Legacy are much appreciated.