

N.D. media icon dies

■ Friends, coworkers remember Curtis Sorbo

By Monique Vondall
Herald Staff Writer

An icon in North Dakota media passed away on Sunday, leaving behind fond memories for his friends and coworkers in the media world.

Curtis Allen Sorbo, 83, helped to start two of the major television stations in the state, including KFYZ-TV in Bismarck in 1953 and KMOT-TV in Minot in 1957.

Fond memories

He was the general manager for WDAZ-TV in Grand Forks for 14 years — from 1967 until his retirement in 1981. Sorbo was also instrumental in hiring Terry Dullum at WDAZ.

"He hired me — along with Chuck Bundlie — in 1975," Dullum said. "I worked with him until he retired."

Dullum said that Sorbo was "a very nice man — a gentleman in every sense of the word."

His death came as a surprise to Dullum, who said he recently saw him at his 25th anniversary open house at WDAZ in May and then again earlier this summer. "And he was looking good — better," Dullum said. "He will be missed."

Bundlie, who worked with Sorbo to pave the media road in North Dakota, also remem-



Sorbo

Bundlie's fondest memories of Sorbo were his acts of kindness and thoughtfulness. Once, when Bundlie and his wife had just built their lake cabin, Sorbo and his wife, Bernice, showed up at the door with a bottle of champagne to christen their new home.

"He drove 125 miles just to do that," Bundlie said.

And in 1975, when Bundlie's mother died, the Sorbos were at their doorstep with a hot-dish.

Every Christmas, Bundlie said, the Sorbos would bring in refreshments for the whole staff.

"He had a soft way of handling things," he said. Although Sorbo was the station manager at WDAZ, Bundlie said that he never acted like

he was the boss. "I don't think I ever heard him yell at anybody."

his close friend and former coworker. "We were friends for an awfully long time," Bundlie said. "He was a gentle man and a kind man."

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"He personified the 'come now let us solve this together' attitude," Bundlie said. Like Dullum, Bundlie was surprised at the death of his longtime friend and coworker.

Sorbo is survived by his wife, Bernice; sons Keith Brian (Marlys), Ogden, Utah and Curtis Allen (Judy) Jr., Adams, N.D.; six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; sisters Janice (Denis) Monson, Edinburg, N.D., and Cleo (Duane) Stenseth, Grand Forks.

■ **Services:** 2 p.m. Wednesday, University Lutheran Church, Grand Forks

■ **Visitation:** 5 to 7 p.m. today at the Amundson Funeral Home and one hour before the funeral service in the church.

■ **Burial:** Memorial Park Cemetery.

The family suggest that memorial gifts be designated to the University Lutheran Church in Grand Forks.