

To, Bob  
Love, Mardell

*Celebrating*  
THE LIFE OF

## Robert "Ufe" Ufen

July 27, 1935 - June 12, 2019

**Memorial Service:**

10:30 a.m., Saturday, September 28, 2019  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Miller, South Dakota

**Minister:**

Pastor Max Miller

**Eulogist:**

Nick Carr

**Soloist:** Brian Ufen

"I Can Only Imagine"

"Welcome Home"

**Music Selections:**

"Angel's Calling"

"Well Done"

**Interment:**

G.A.R. Cemetery  
Miller, South Dakota

**Social Hour:**

3:00 p.m., Saturday, September 28, 2019  
Miller Country Club  
Miller, South Dakota

Arrangements Entrusted to

Reck Funeral Home - Miller, South Dakota

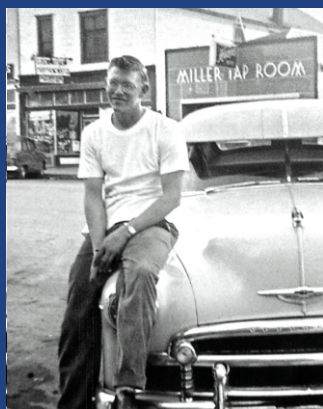
[www.familufuneralhome.net](http://www.familufuneralhome.net)



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Robert Ufen, 83, of Colton, SD, formerly of Miller, passed away Wednesday, June 12, 2019 at his home after a hard fought 3 month battle with cancer.

Robert Eugene Ufen was born on July 27, 1935 on a small farm South of Miller to George and Lenore (Danburg) Ufen. Ufe was the second of three children born to the George Ufen family, preceded by his "older" brother Jack and younger sister, Patricia. Ufe loved growing up in the country and would tell stories to his grandkids about growing up with no running water and listening to baseball and radio shows like The Shadow, Gene Autry's Melody Ranch, Have Gun Will Travel, and Gun Smoke on radio station WNAX.

Ufe attended Corrin School South of Miller through the 8th grade. He was very proud of his little one room schoolhouse and often brought his grandkids to the school so he could share this experience with them. When he was in the 7th grade, his brother Jack bought him a volleyball and taught him how to play basketball, from then on Ufe developed a love of sports. As a freshman in 1949 Ufe began his high school years in Miller where he excelled in athletics, was a member of the Glee Club, was elected class Vice-President, and was in awe of the showers with running water. Having grown up in a farmhouse with no running water, this was quite exciting and he relayed this story to many. Ufe was the first to admit that he was not the scholarly type but was definitely a people person and spent more time focusing on athletics, girls, his friends, and just having fun!

After graduating from Miller High in 1953, Ufe briefly attended the University of South Dakota to play football. After injuring his knee and no longer able to play football he packed his bags and returned home to Miller where he began working at the ASC office. 12 years later Ufe began a long and satisfying career in the insurance industry first at First National Bank, then in 1977, a brief two year position as Vice President of Hershey State Bank in Hershey, NE where he was also elected mayor of this small rural community. Ufe and Mardell returned to Miller in 1979 to help care for his ailing father at which time he accepted a position managing the insurance agency for Hand County Bank and stayed in this position until his retirement in 2013. Ufe often commented on how much he loved and enjoyed the people he worked with and the farmers he got to serve.

Bob made the best decision of his life when he asked for Mardell Gerdon's hand in marriage. He married the love of his life on March 9, 1958 at the Miller Lutheran Church. To this marriage four loving daughters were born. Bob and Mardell cherished their time with their daughter's and were very happy to have raised them in such a wonderful community. From 1981 through 2000, Bob and Mardell owned and operated Bob's Drive-In, known for their Pizza Burgers and Bob's specials, where many Miller youth got their first summer jobs. Bob and Mardell were fortunate to have taken many fun trips together

to Hawaii, Florida, and California but his favorite was always Las Vegas. They saw many entertainers in Vegas, but his favorites were Sammy Davis Jr., Connie Francis, and Debbie Reynolds. Ufe also loved the slots and you could always find him in the wee hours of the morning testing his luck with the one armed bandits and drinking a cold beer.

Ufe was an avid sports fan and loved listening to or watching his Minnesota Twins and Vikings. For many years he played baseball and softball, enjoyed bowling at the Corral Lanes as well as meeting friends after work at Sommer's Bar for card games and red beers. Ufe enjoyed golf and many an hour was spent on the grass at the Miller Country Club. He played many rounds with his longtime friends, Marv Augspurger, Don Juhl, Wally Baker, Doc Derouchey, Toad Winsell, Dick Frank, and many others.

Ufe never met a stranger, if he entered an establishment and knew no one he would leave having made new friends. Ufe has been described as "the life of the party" and a "great friend". Many of his closest friends felt as he wanted them to, like family. He loved his friends as deeply as he loved his family and was grateful to have been fortunate enough to be surrounded by them and in his final weeks was humbled by your outpouring of love and support for him. Ufe appreciated it and we his children appreciate it & our words cannot thank you enough.

Ufe was a very kind and compassionate person and would do anything for anyone. He served on the Miller City Council, was a member of the Kiwanis Club, the Miller Country Club, the Lutheran Church, was a longtime scorekeeper and public address announcer for the Miller Rustlers and would donate his time and money to various Miller area charities and activities. He was very proud to have been inducted into the Miller Athletic Hall of Fame. He loved the South Hand Old Settlers Picnic and attended nearly every picnic and played softball or baseball there for over 60 years.

Ufe loved his family and was very proud of his children, beaming with pride when telling you about his grandchildren. Ufe is survived by those of us fortunate enough to have shared our life with him: Karla, Paul, Emily (Tom) Postlewait and Zach Fischenich of Byron, MN; Claudine, Nick, Sarah and Rachel Carr of Gilbert, AZ; Jennifer, Bruce and Kate Jones of Sioux Falls, SD; Renae, Harold, Hillary and Hayden Hastings of Colton, SD; his brother, Jack and Ramona Ufen of Miller, SD; and his sister, Patricia and Stan Hansen of Rapid City, SD.

Ufe was a wonderful caring, kind & humble person who wasn't afraid to give you a hug and let you know he loved you. He battled cancer the same way he approached life; he gave it everything he had. We are better for having known him, will miss him terribly but are grateful he gave us a model of human decency and kindness that we should all strive for.

Ufe was preceded in death by his wonderful loving wife of 43 years Mardell and is once again united with her.