



**Richard S. Pepper  
1930-2021**

Richard Pepper, one of the construction industry's most respected leaders, passed away peacefully on January 28th, 2021.

Richard began his career working as an estimator for Pepper Construction, which was founded by his father in 1927. He assumed leadership of the company in 1957 and continued in a leadership role until his passing. Together with his beloved wife, Roxy, Richard grew Pepper Construction into a nationally recognized construction firm with annual revenues exceeding \$1 billion. The company is headquartered in Chicago and operates offices in Barrington, Indianapolis, Columbus, Cincinnati and Milwaukee.

Partnership was the hallmark of Richard and Roxy's marriage and the foundation of their work, their relationships and their service to others.

From the company's early days building garages at the end of World War II to decades building museums, hospitals, schools, retail destinations, hotels, offices, industrial warehouses, apartment buildings and more, their work shaped the communities across the nation.

With Roxy by his side, Richard propelled the construction industry forward. Among his many leadership roles, Richard served as a life director to the Associated General Contractors of America, chairman of the Chicago and Northeast Illinois District Council of Carpenters Apprentice and Trainee Program and as trustee and treasurer for the Council's Welfare and Pension Fund. Richard's belief that construction deserved an organization to advance the industry's professionalism and ethics inspired him to become a founding member of the American Institute of Constructors (AIC). He also brought his peers together to form the American Contractors Insurance Group (ACIG), which fosters collaboration on best practices to increase safety and minimize risk.

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To further education in the field, Richard and Roxy endowed Northwestern University's undergraduate laboratories in Civil and Environmental Engineering. The Pepper Family Foundation later created a fund to support the discipline, and in 1998 Northwestern dedicated the Civil and Environmental Engineering Wing of the Technological Institute to the Peppers. They were also crucial in establishing the Executive Management program for Design and Construction, where many Pepper team members actively teach.

Known for their generosity, Richard and Roxy's support has impacted vast numbers of community and educational institutions including Melody Elementary School, the Northwest Suburban Council of the Boy Scouts of America, the Swedish Covenant Hospital Foundation, Maryville's Center for Children, the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and the Lincoln Park Zoo.

Northwestern University, where Richard met Roxy in 1949, held a special place in their hearts. Richard earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering and Roxy earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Communications. Richard and Roxy joined the John Evans Club in 1957 and held individual leadership roles in the giving society. Roxy was a club trustee; Richard was John Evans Club chair from 1980 to 1983. At the end of his term, he was named life director. The Northwestern Alumni Association granted the couple a 2001 Alumni Medal, Richard a 1986 Merit Award and a 1987 Service Award, and Roxy a 1995 Service Award. In addition to the Engineering Department, the Peppers avidly supported the School of Communications, where they endowed the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. The Peppers also supported the Athletics Department throughout the years. Avid sports fans, in 2016 Richard and Roxy served as the lead benefactors of the University's new baseball stadium, Rocky and Berenice Miller Park, which is named in honor of Roxy's parents.

Richard is survived by his loving wife Roxy with whom he enjoyed 69 years of partnership in marriage; five children: Stan (Chris) Pepper, Lynda (Bob) Bollman, Richard Pepper, Lisa Pepper, and Scot Pepper; as well as 18 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. Richard was preceded in death by his son Dave and daughter-in-law Katy.

Due to the pandemic, the family held private services. To sign the guestbook please visit <https://www.davenportfamily.com/obituary/Richard-Pepper>. Notes and cards can also be sent to [tributes@pepperconstruction.com](mailto:tributes@pepperconstruction.com). These will be compiled so the family can reflect on them.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that any tributes be direct toward The Pepper Family Foundation, extending the legacy of community support that Richard and Roxy established. Contributions can be sent to The Pepper Family Foundation, 411 Lake Zurich Road, Barrington, IL 60010.