



Reuben VanDorn 'Van' Cooper III

April 27, 1945 - May 25, 2025

On April 27, 1945, Drew, Mississippi's newest parents, JoNell Gregory Cooper and Reuben VanDorn Cooper Jr., welcomed their first child. The birth certificate read: Reuben VanDorn Cooper III, but over the years, he answered to many names—Van, big brother, Coop, Dad, uncle and later, PawPaw. Though born in Greenwood, Mississippi, Van spent most of his childhood in West Helena, Arkansas, where he was a proud member of the Delta Sigma fraternity and graduated from Central High School, class of 1963.

In 1968, he welcomed his only child, Angie, and graduated from the University of Tennessee Pharmacy School with high honors. Two years later, he moved to Forrest City, Arkansas, where he would plant roots for a pharmacy career that spanned more than 55 years. He began as co-owner of Palace Drug Store, later became manager of Super D Drug, and continued working as a relief pharmacist until late 2023. If you knew Van, you know “retirement” was never quite in his vocabulary—he showed up and served faithfully, even through health challenges.

Van was a longtime member of First Baptist Church of Forrest City and more recently a devoted attendee of First United Methodist Church. His faith shaped every corner of his life, grounding him in quiet integrity and genuine compassion for others.

He was also an avid fisherman, most at home on the Little Red River in Heber Springs, especially with his fishing buddies nearby. Trout fishing was a particular love, and the story of him helping land a world record brown trout

was one he told proudly and often.

He cheered loudest for the Arkansas Razorbacks—unless one of his grandkids was playing, in which case, their team came first. He was a regular in the stands, a constant encourager, and the kind of presence you remember long after the final buzzer.

Van is survived by his daughter, Angie Cooper Holland:

his three grandchildren: Meredith Grace Holland (Jake Norrenberns), Andrew Cooper Holland (Kaylie), and Ruthie Claire Holland (JP Rodebaugh); and four great-grandchildren: Samuel Cooper Holland, Jack Oliver Holland, James David Holland, and Sophie Grace Holland.

He is also survived by his brother, Thomas Gregory (Greg) Cooper; his cousin and dear friend, Gene Powell; and a host of beloved family, friends, classmates, and colleagues.

A celebration of Van's life—a life lived with deep love, quiet faith, and unwavering generosity—will be held at the First United Methodist Church in Forrest City, 10:45 A.M., Saturday, August 30, 2025. Visitation will begin 10:00 A.M., until the time of the service. You may log on to stevensfuneralhome.net for the online registry.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 30. 10:00 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
620 E. Broadway
Forrest City, AR 72335

Memorial Service

AUG 30. 10:45 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
620 E. Broadway
Forrest City, AR 72335

Tribute Wall

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“ Cooper family and friends, Condolences to your family. I remember him many years ago as a pharmacy in the plaza, and later at Super D drug Store, and the last time I saw him at Price Harris drug store. He loved doing his job.



Shirley Williams Thorn - August 27, 2025 at 09:08 PM

AM

“ We had many happy days when you and Greg lived in Sylvan Ridge and I lived nearby on 7th Street. You were two years older and our relationship was distant for many years after you moved to the South side of town and we both went our separate ways after high school. When your health started to fail and you ended up in Jonesboro for the last years of your life, we met again through Facebook and God's divine appointment, Our phone calls and my three visits from Austin cemented our friendship again. We had almost daily conversations and some days there were multiple conversations until Jesus took you. I think I was a sounding board when you really someone to listen. It was then that God really brought us together and our friendship deepened. I do hope that I was able to help you get through all of your health issues until the end. I treasure our phone calls and visits. They were priceless. RIP in peace, good friend. You fought the good fight and, in the end, you were the victor. We shall see each other again. Al

Al Martin - May 30, 2025 at 06:53 AM