



# SAVAGE PACER

## Jens Bohn, dedicated to service in Savage, owner of Razor's Edge, dies at 76

By Tory Cooney vcooney@swpub.com Apr 19, 2018

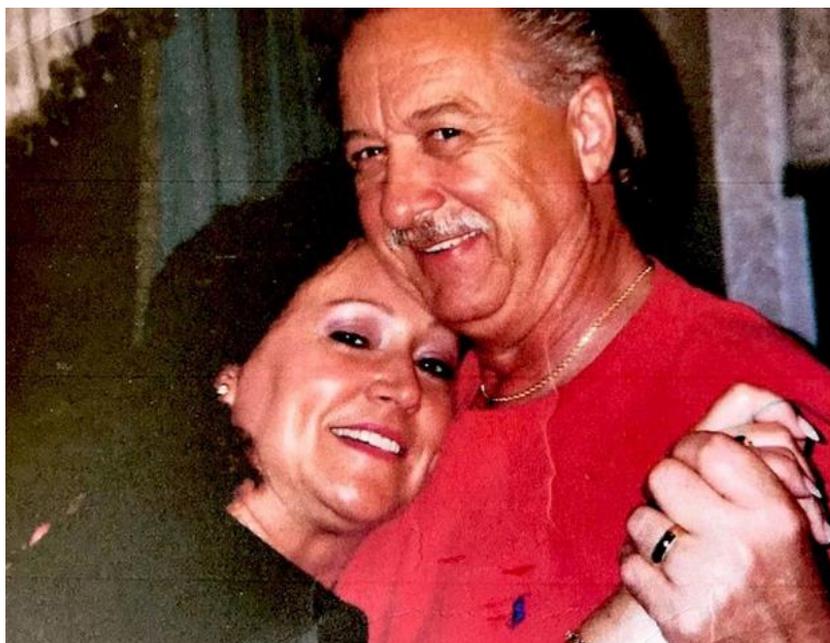
Jens Bohn would close his Savage barber shop, Razor's Edge, around 6 p.m. Or 6:30 p.m., if a latecomer needed a trim. But that was seldom the end of his day.

Nearly every week, Jens Bohn would pack a little black bag with scissors, clippers and a comb, then make his way to the hospital rooms, retirement facilities and the homes of clients who couldn't make their way downtown. Just to make sure that they remained looking and feeling their best.

"He was always helping somebody," said his wife, Joyce Bohn.

Jens Bohn, who died at home Monday, April 9, leaves behind a legacy of quiet kindness and community service, his family said. He was 76.

His barbershop was a prime place for residents and newcomers alike to find out about what was happening in Savage and its six chairs were nearly always full with men talking, drinking coffee and reading newspapers or magazines.



### JENS BOHN

"Words are few and thoughts are many---watch that twinkle in his eye."

Football 3, Baseball 2, Lettermen's Club 2.



It was the only place you could get your hair cut in 10 minutes, then stay for two hours, Jens Bohn's sister, Savage Mayor Janet Williams, remembers one of his customers saying.

Despite the omnipresent conversation, Jens Bohn himself was never particularly talkative, noted salon manager Bridget Peterson, who worked for him since she graduated from cosmetology school at the age of 19. He would just listen intently, occasionally making a quiet comment to his nearest customer or sharing a dryly humorous one-liner with the room.

That is, unless you had questions about Dan Patch. Jens could answer any of them, family and friends said.

He served as the president of the Dan Patch Historical Society for 23 years and grew up with the story of harness racing champion Dan Patch. Everyone who grew up in Savage did, said Will Williams, one of Jens Bohn's close

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# SAVAGE PACER

childhood friends and his brother-in-law

But Jens Bohn's interest intensified as he got older and began collecting antiques, including Dan Patch memorabilia from across the country, some of which is still on display at Razors' Edge and in the Savage Library's Heritage Room.

Jens Bohn joined the historical society a year after it was founded — the noontime meetings of the society's first year conflicted with his work too often to join right away — and would sell Dan Patch Days buttons and books from his shop. He also gave presentations about Dan Patch at the local schools, Willams and Joyce Bohn said.

The late Joe Eagan even entrusted the location of Dan Patch's grave to Jens Bohn, but made him promise not to divulge the information, for fear that someone would dig up the horse's grave. Never one to break a promise, Jens Bohn never shared the location, his wife said.

### A public servant

But his public service extended beyond his love of history and remarkable memory for detail. Jens Bohn was an early supporter of the Chamber of Commerce and served as a volunteer fireman for 20 years — despite the difficulty of leaving work in the middle of the day to go on calls, said his brother, Marc Bohn, who served with him on the department.

"He just figured it was a good thing to do," Marc said. "A way to help your friends and neighbors."

And if that wasn't enough to keep busy, Jens Bohn managed a few rental properties, owned and operated J.B. Limousine Service, and owned an antique store in Savage and The Peacock Inn in Chaska with his wife.



The diligence that not only allowed him to do so much, but drove him to it, came from his childhood on the Bohn family farm in Savage. There, the family kept 60 cows, though an additional 10 were housed in the horse barn on occasion. And Jens Bohn was out there milking, every morning and every evening, his siblings said.

So, it was only natural for that work ethic to shape everything that he did.

It also was likely at the root of his profound reluctance to take vacations. He would worry about what his customers would do while he was gone, Joyce Bohn said.

She was finally able to persuade him to take the occasional trip, but



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only if the exact dates were posted at least two months in advance, she said.

## 'A real barber'

Jens Bohn decided to become a barber while still in high school and developed a large, dedicated following during his 56-year-career. Even the brothers and friends he practiced on while in school and interning came to him for hair cuts. His brother, Marc, ended up with a particularly short flat-top and Will Williams once allowed Jens Bohn to dye his hair black, as practice, they said.

He was a "real barber," as the lettering on his front window proclaimed, and he was meticulous as he was traditional. Jens Bohn didn't allow his employees to wear jeans when Peterson started working there in 1997, though he eventually softened on that front, Peterson said.



However, he never wavered on his belief that you should always be there, even if you didn't have a customer, though would pop into the beauty shop to talk with the clients there when he was between customers, Peterson said.

He also remained particular about his own hair and had Peterson cut it every six weeks to keep his cowlicks under control, she said.

Everything that he had to do was tracked on the little square Post-It notes that he kept in his pocket and added onto throughout the day. He would also use the Post-Its to leave little notes for her, throughout their relationship, Joyce Bohn said.



The pair met just over 40 years ago when Jens Bohn's son, J.P. Bohn, introduced the pair. J.P. was a cook at Bumpers in Burnsville while Joyce worked there as a hostess and he set the couple up without revealing the connection right away, Joyce said.

Jens Bohn picked her up for their first date up in his limo, a dozen red roses in hand, and the rest was history. They married in 2001.

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# SAVAGE PACER

“He was just the most wonderful, thoughtful man,” Joyce Bohn said. “I never, ever heard him raise his voice at anyone. I never saw him mad at anyone.”

Jens Bohn was recognized for his contributions to Savage in 2004, when he won the Savage Chamber of Commerce’s Businessperson of the Year Award. He didn’t realize that the presenter was talking about him until halfway through the description of Jens Bohn’s contributions to the community. It was so unexpected, Jens had even slipped his shoes off under the table and had to shuffle to get them on before going up to accept the award, Joyce said.

“He kept saying, ‘I don’t deserve this!’” Joyce said. “But the award was to recognize people who give selflessly and Jens was definitely somebody who did that . . . Every time I’d turn around he was helping somebody.”

A Celebration of Life for Jens will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. on Monday, May 21, at the McColl Pond Environmental Learning and Event Center, 13550 Dakota Ave., Savage. A program will begin at 7 p.m.