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**Wawa Announces Passing of Beloved Former President, CEO, Chairman
and Wawa Founding Family Member, Richard D. Wood Jr.**

Wawa's iconic CEO made an indelible impact on his family's company, the convenience store industry worldwide and the lives of those he served

Wawa, PA July 13, 2026 It is with profound grief that Wawa announced the death of Richard D. (Dick) Wood Jr., former President, CEO and Chairman of Wawa, Inc on Friday, July 10. For more than 55 years, Dick Wood was the visionary and driving force behind Wawa's business model, and a pillar of servant leadership, values and culture at Wawa. His impact will forever be felt by generations of Wawa associates, family members, customers, business partners and community organizations. He will be eternally recognized as a beloved treasure to the Company. [Learn more about Dick's lifelong impact in business and for customers, associates and communities in this documentary tribute video.](#)

Dick was born on March 4, 1938, in Philadelphia, PA. He attended St. Paul's School in Concord, NH, received his B.S. from the University of Virginia and his LLB from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He was married to Jeanette (Jean) Wood, and they had two children, Lisa and Richard. Jean predeceased Dick in 2025 and was a cherished member of the extended Wawa family and, for decades, was a warm and familiar presence alongside Dick, supporting him and engaging with Wawa associates at many company, cultural and industry events.

Dick Wood began his career at Wawa in 1970 as the company's first General Counsel, at the encouragement of Grahame Wood, his father's cousin and the founder of the first Wawa Food Market. He went on to lead Wawa for more than five decades as President, CEO and Chairman. Under Dick Wood's leadership, Wawa became a household name across the Delaware Valley and beyond and grew to employ over 36,000 associates in 900 stores across six states. He was instrumental in key initiatives that have helped Wawa grow and ultimately, to soar into new markets. A true visionary, he was the guiding force behind Wawa becoming a 24/7 operation, entering the fuel business, expanding to new states and sharing ownership with associates. But beyond Wawa's operational achievements, Dick Wood's deepest impact lies in the culture he created and championed at Wawa. A true servant leader, Dick Wood lived by a people-first philosophy and believed it was his job to "create an environment where each of us believes that we can make a difference." His passion for the stores ran deep, as evidenced by his tradition of touring stores to remain vigilant to the needs of associates and customers. He empowered people by championing an "ownership mindset" in all of Wawa's associates, which helped create the family-like bond associates have with customers that remains today. Today, Wawa is the 21st-largest privately held company in the United States, according to the 2025 Forbes rankings.

"Dick Wood was our true Lead Goose who was the guiding heart and soul of the company," said Chris Gheysens, Wawa's Chairman and CEO. "He is the reason why Wawa is the company we are today and why we enjoy so much share of heart from our customers and dedication from our associates. Dick had a profound approach to innovation and business that was truly centered on people, and it's a philosophy we will all work to carry forward. I am eternally grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside and learn lessons from Dick. He will forever live on at Wawa in all our hearts."

Dick Wood proudly carried on a legacy of innovation and loyalty that traces back to his great-grandfather, George Wood, who opened the Wawa Dairy in 1902. George's grandson Grahame Wood opened the first Wawa Food Market in 1964 and later brought Dick into the family business. Dick became President in 1977, CEO in 1980 and in 1982 he became Chairman and CEO. He remained Chairman and CEO until his retirement in 2004, after which he remained Chairman of the Board of Directors. In 2020, upon reaching his 50th anniversary at Wawa, Dick was appointed Chairman Emeritus.

During his time as President and CEO, Dick Wood championed Wawa's private and shared ownership model. He led the creation of the Company's Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) in 1992, which has now grown associate ownership to 38% of the Company, changing the lives of tens of thousands of associates and their family members. In 2008, he also established Wawa's Internal Care Team, a group dedicated to helping the Company's associates celebrate and address life events or issues with empathy and expertise.

Dick had a remarkable impact on the community and he expanded and grew his family tradition of philanthropy. Among those causes was a deep commitment to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), which through his leadership, now includes **The Richard D. Wood Center for Fetal Diagnosis and Treatment**, the Richard D. Wood Jr. and Jeanette A. Wood Endowed Chair in Pediatric Diagnostic Medicine, and the Wawa Volunteer Services including the **Wawa Coffee & Care Cart**, providing patients and families with a cold beverage or hot cup of coffee and comfort while getting care at the hospital. Dick was often seen pushing the Coffee Cart through the halls of CHOP to serve patients and families at their bedside. In 2019, Dick was honored at the CHOP Carousel Ball for maintaining an unwavering commitment to CHOP and for demonstrating tremendous generosity, humility and grace. In addition to CHOP, Dick was also a strong supporter of Bok Tower Gardens in Lake Wales, Florida, where he championed ways to allow everyone to experience the beauty of the gardens. Throughout his career, Dick inspired everyone at Wawa to serve and support thousands of non-profit organizations that worked to improve millions of lives and make the world a better place. Today, this can be seen through the impact of **Wawa and The Wawa Foundation, which have contributed more than \$200 million to community non-profit organizations** since inception.

"Dick Wood was unlike any other CEO I've ever encountered. He had a special mix of heart, compassion, empathy and humility that made him a true believer and practitioner of servant leadership. With Dick, people always came first, never him," said Howard Stoeckel, former Vice Chairperson and former President & CEO, Wawa. "At Wawa, we have a set of core values that we live by, and Dick is the one who brought them to life and instilled them into our culture. The lessons he taught all of us at Wawa to fly together to reach new heights are alive and well and will be for many years to come."

Dick Wood was a leader in the convenience store industry, and he was named and served as Chairman of the National Association of Convenience Stores in 1985. Throughout his life, Dick served on many business and community boards including: The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Bok Tower Gardens, Riddle Memorial Hospital, the Philadelphia National Bank, the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS), Quik Trip, Sheetz, and Pardee Resources Company.

Honoring a Life and Legacy of Servant Leadership

The Dick Wood College Scholarship was launched in 2021 in honor of Dick's 50th anniversary of service to Wawa associates and his commitment to ensuring everyone at Wawa had the opportunity to grow through education. Throughout his career, Dick championed college degree programs and tuition reimbursement,

which remain part of Wawa's benefit offer today. To celebrate this commitment and his life, Wawa will expand the scholarship fund to continue to offer opportunities for associates to expand their education. In addition, Wawa will provide support to fund free community days annually to Bok Tower Gardens in Lake Wales, FL, making the gardens open to all who want to experience them.

For those wishing to honor Dick's legacy, donations are recommended to:

- **The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia** to the [*Richard D. Wood, Jr. Center for Fetal Diagnosis and Treatment*](#) at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia by visiting [here](#);
- **Bok Tower Gardens**, Lake Wales, Florida by visiting [here](#).

Visit www.wawa.com/tribute to learn more about Dick's legacy.

On Monday July 20, coffee will be free in all Wawa stores as a way to honor Dick Wood and toast his legacy including customers, associates and communities across our chain.