

Owner knew his Cozy Corner

Son learned facts of family business, used lessons in life

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As a child at his father's side and later as a man carving his own path, Raymond Robinson Jr. learned the importance of knowledge, perseverance and family.

Mr. Robinson, co-owner of Cozy Corner restaurant at 754 North Parkway, would use these lessons along his final journey as he battled colon cancer. He died Saturday at his North Memphis



Raymond Robinson Jr.

home at the age of 47.
Born Aug. 11, 1961, in Denver to Desiree and the late Raymond Sr., "Ray" — as he was known to family and friends — learned the Cozy Corner ropes as a teen, paying close attention as his father cultivated the family business, along with longtime friendships that began there. The Robinsons have owned the restaurant, known for its Cornish hens and unconventional barbecue, since 1977.

Mr. Robinson "knew everything there was to know

about that business, from top to bottom" his mother said.

The elder Mr. Robinson began teaching his two children — including older daughter and current co-owner Leota "Val" Bradley — the tricks of the trade early, and the teenaged Mr. Robinson picked up quickly.

"I once asked my husband if he was going to get out of bed to open up the restaurant, and he said, 'I don't know how to open it; Ray always does it,'" recalled Desiree Robinson.

His older sister Val remembers her brother's strength, gentle nature and intelligence.

"Although he never had too much to say, he was def-

initely knowledgeable," she said. "Whatever he knew, he knew it, and you couldn't shake him."

Mr. Robinson was an alumnus of Northside High School and attended Austin Peay State University and Devry Institute. He was a member of New Azusa Ministries and of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

Mr. Robinson also leaves a son, Shun L. Williams, and a grandmother.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at Peace Baptist Church, 1537 Tayner St., with burial in Elmwood Cemetery, 824 Dudley.

Harrison's Funeral Home has charge.