



Donald Gundersen

May 22, 1934 - March 13, 2024

CEDAR FALLS – Donald "Don" M. Gundersen died Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center.

Don was born May 22, 1934, in Dickinson County Iowa, the son of Cyril and Julia (Ukasick) Gundersen. He graduated from Odebolt High School in 1952. In 1959 he married Mary Jo Greiner in Keota, Iowa, and to this union three daughters were born.

Don received his bachelor's degree from Iowa State College in 1956, a master's degree from the University of Northern Colorado (Greeley) in 1962, and an Education Specialist Degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1971. He was a veteran of the US Army serving in Korea during the occupation following the Korean War (1956-1958).

Don taught for three years in the Whiting Community School before serving as high school principal for five years in the Milford School District followed by ten years in the Red Oak School District. In 1977 he became the Superintendent of Schools in Dike, a position he held for the Dike-New Hartford School District for twenty-one years until his retirement in 1998.

Don served on many committees and boards primarily supporting education. He served as president of both the Association of Secondary Principals and

the School Administrators of Iowa. He was appointed and served on the Iowa Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners, the chair of New Iowa Schools Development Corporation, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Iowa Cash Anticipation Program. He received the prestigious American Association of School Administrator Service Award for his distinguished service to exemplary achievement in education. His volunteer contributions included the Lions Club both in Red Oak and Dike, Dollars for Scholars, and St. Gabriel Knights of Columbus.

Don is survived by his daughters Camilla Gunderson of Cedar Falls, Jennifer (Robert) Kopriva of Clear Lake, and Denise (Leon) Aalderks of Dike; grandchildren Jacob (Holly) Kopriva, Rachel (Jason) Murphy, Megan Kopriva, Andrew Aalderks, and Alexandria Aalderks; great-grandchildren Kai Kopriva, Koen Kopriva, and Nora Murphy; his very best friend Lucille Whitehead and her family Ellen (Scott Fortune) Whitehead, Joellen Hatchett, Jane (Randy Hogancamp) Whitehead, and Sara Whitehead; his sister Suzanne (Kenneth) Roeder of De Smet, South Dakota and sister-in-law Patty Greiner, brother-in-law Larry Schachel as well as many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife Mary Jo, parents, two brothers James (Marjorie) Gunderson and Marlin (Shirley) Gunderson, and his sisters Cindy Gunderson and Julianne (Robert) Chedester.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:30 am Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, Reinbeck, Iowa. Visitation will be from 4-7 pm Monday, March 18 at Richardson Funeral Service in Cedar Falls and one hour before the service at the church in Reinbeck on Tuesday. A private family burial will be at St. Mary's Cemetery in Keota, Iowa at a date to be determined.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the Dike-New Hartford Dollars for Scholars for which he served as the first president.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 18. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Richardson Funeral Service
615 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 266-3525
richardsonfuneralservice@gmail.com
<http://richardson.funeralplan2.com>

Visitation

MAR 19. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

St Gabriel Catholic Church
21275 U Ave
Reinbeck, IA

Mass of Christian Burial

MAR 19. 10:30 AM (CT)

St Gabriel Catholic Church
21275 U Ave
Reinbeck, IA

Tribute Wall

JR

“ Joel, Tara, Stratton, and Ralphie purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Donald Gunderson.



Joel, Tara, Stratton, and Ralphie - March 18, 2024 at 12:54 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Donald Gunderson.



March 18, 2024 at 09:44 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald Gunderson.



March 18, 2024 at 08:50 AM

DD

“ Dawn Dennis planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Gunderson.

Dawn Dennis - March 18, 2024 at 08:50 AM

MH

“ As elementary principal at La Porte City and then as a consultant with the Iowa Dept of Education, I had the pleasure of knowing and working with Don in a number of ways. Don was such a "classy" leader in education and a leader who was respected by so many educators and administrators. My sympathy to all the family members.

MARVIN HRUBES - March 17, 2024 at 07:38 PM

-C

“ -Chad purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Donald Gunderson.



-Chad - March 17, 2024 at 01:53 PM

M2

“ Mike, Darla, Kevin, and District 2 purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Donald Gunderson.



Mike, Darla, Kevin, and District 2 - March 16, 2024 at 06:23 PM

M2

“ Mike, Darla, Kevin, and District 2 planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Gunderson.

Mike, Darla, Kevin, and District 2 - March 16, 2024 at 06:23 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Donald Gunderson.*



March 16, 2024 at 02:57 PM



“ *Alex, Nick, Katie and Ben Fortune planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Donald Gunderson.*

Alex, Nick, Katie and Ben Fortune - March 16, 2024 at 02:57 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald Gunderson.*



March 16, 2024 at 10:53 AM



“ *Sandy, Keven, Raechel & Luke planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Donald Gunderson.*

Sandy, Keven, Raechel & Luke - March 16, 2024 at 10:53 AM

LF

“ Love, Caryl Dennen and family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Donald Gunderson.



Love, Caryl Dennen and family - March 15, 2024 at 05:36 PM

LF

“ Love, Caryl Dennen and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Gunderson.

Love, Caryl Dennen and family - March 15, 2024 at 05:36 PM

TF

“ Tom and Pat Boe Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Donald Gunderson.



Tom and Pat Boe Family - March 15, 2024 at 11:43 AM

FF

“ From Your North Central Wyndham Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Donald Gunderson.



From Your North Central Wyndham Family - March 15, 2024 at 11:26 AM

FF

“ *From Your North Central Wyndham Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Gunderson.*

From Your North Central Wyndham Family - March 15, 2024 at 11:26 AM