



Donald Raymond Walton

April 30, 1927 - March 12, 2024

Donald R. Walton, 96, died peacefully on March 12, 2024, at the Windemere in Cedar Falls surrounded by his family.

Mass of Christian burial will be 10:00 a.m. Monday, March 18, 2024 at St. Patrick Catholic Church, with interment in the Greenwood Cemetery, both in Cedar Falls. Rosary will be 3:30 p.m. Sunday followed by a visitation from 4 to 7 p.m. concluding with at 7 p.m. Vigil Service at the Richardson Funeral Service.

Don was born April 30, 1927, in Clinton, Iowa, the second of four sons born to Raymond E. and Magdalena (Manemann) Walton. He graduated from St. Mary's High School in 1945, then joined the U.S. Navy to serve in the South Pacific during World War II. After service, he graduated from St. Ambrose University in Davenport in 1951 with his B.A. He was awarded his M.A. from the University of Northern Iowa in 1962.

On August 22, 1952, he married Rita Herrity of Clinton, the love of his life, to whom he was married for sixty-one years until her passing in 2013. Rita continued to be a felt presence in his life even after her death.

Don worked as a junior high teacher for the Cedar Falls School District from 1953-1955. Then he worked as the Personnel Director for Viking Pump Company from 1955 to 1965. From 1966 to 1993 he was continuously

employed by the University of Northern Iowa, first as Director of Personnel, rising to Assistant Vice President of Personnel Service.

During his later years at UNI, to keep himself busy Don worked as a weekend night clerk at the Howard Johnson's on University Avenue. For several years, he also operated the Burbridge hot turkey sandwich stand at the annual National Cattle Congress in Waterloo.

Don's interest in university human resources also took him to Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, from 1984 to 1988, and Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas in 1988. After retiring from UNI, he worked at Hawkeye Community College as a Workforce Development Specialist. His other work included as a GED substitute teacher and service as a mediator for the Iowa Public Employment Relations Board for many years. In all, he dedicated over 30 years of service to the public and working persons.

Faith, family, and work defined Don Walton. He watched his father, a railroad engineer, die of a brain tumor at only 14 years of age. Initially rejected for service by the U.S. Navy for his flat feet, he traveled to the Chicago induction center, balanced on the outside edges of his feet, and was accepted, which he considered a significant life accomplishment. He did not like taking "no" for an answer. While he fell for Rita when he was in fourth grade, won her box lunch chicken dinner at a St. Valentine's auction in 1942 (tipped off by her girlfriends), and slipped his class ring into her pocket when he shipped out for the war, when he returned from overseas, Rita was then a novice in a Carmelite convent. In 1946, while ushering a wedding at St. Irenaeus Church, they reunited. Despite the lack of comparable fringe benefits, Rita chose Don over the convent. His blue eyes and infectious laugh probably helped.

Don was a dedicated parishioner of St. Patrick's in Cedar Falls. He served as an usher, on various committees, including as President of the Parish Council,

as a member of the board of the St. Vincent DePaul Society, Eucharistic minister, and Den Leader for Cub Scout Pack 70. For years, he took 3 a.m. shift for the perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist at the Columbus High School Chapel in Waterloo. He occupied the same pew at 7:30 a.m. mass every Sunday, following the prayer of the rosary. He loved his other parishioners. In turn, he felt their love for him, for which he was very thankful.

Not until his final retirement did Don have much spare time. He focused on Walton and Herrity family history, completing a detailed volume on the Walton family tree, but he was still chasing the birthplace in Ireland of the family progenitor and immigrant to American, Patrick Walton. He continued to counsel his children and their children about careers and workplace issues. He never missed the many important family events. He always loved tinkering with old Plymouth and Dodge convertibles and will miss the guys at Aikey's Auto Salvage. The concerns of residents of his retirement community also became his concerns in his later years.

Don Walton collected people of all kinds and enjoyed getting to know all about them. He was known for his helping hand and ready smile and laugh, but he could be dogged in pursuit of what he thought was right. He was a man of faith, shown in good works. His well-springs were the Catholic faith and family. He loved Cedar Falls, foregoing several career opportunities elsewhere. His family lived on West 18th Street, Main Street, 13th Street, and finally, on Grand Boulevard. The Sturgis Falls parade watched from the same spot at 11th and Main was a tradition for him. He will miss not seeing finished the new welcome sign to downtown.

Don is survived by two brothers, Joseph (Patricia) Walton, Nathaniel F. (Mary) Walton, three sisters-in-law, Patricia Walton, Rose Walton, and Jeanne Herrity. His pride and joy were his five children Ruthanne (Jon) Weispfenning,

Winona, Minnesota, D. Raymond (Jacqueline) Walton, J.D., Regina (Wayde) Blumhardt, Jacqueline (Jeff) Jorgensen, Waterloo-Cedar Falls, Iowa, and Tom (Lori) Walton, J.D., Waukegan, Iowa. His survivors include fourteen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. Don is preceded in death by his parents, wife, Rita, younger brother Eugene Walton, five sisters-in-law, four brothers-in-law, three nephews and two nieces, and many old friends he will see again.

Memorials may be given to the St. Patrick Catholic Church Foundation for the Future, St. Patrick Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul, or Cedar Valley Hospice, in lieu of flowers. Carved on Don and Rita's headstone is the request "Pray for Us." Please do so for them.

Cemetery Details

Greenwood Cemetery

the end of College St, north of First Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 273-8628

Previous Events

Rosary

MAR 17. 3:30 PM (CT)

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

Visitation

MAR 17. 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>

Vigil

MAR 17. 7:00 PM (CT)

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

Mass of Christian Burial

MAR 18. 10:00 AM (CT)

Saint Patrick Catholic Church
705 Main St
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Tribute Wall



“ *Lord's Prayer 44" Sonnet was purchased for the family of Donald Raymond Walton.*



March 17, 2024 at 09:33 PM



“ *Kim lit a candle in memory of Donald Raymond Walton*



Kim - March 17, 2024 at 03:46 PM

KI

To Don's family, he made such a positive difference in the short time I got to know him at St. Pat's CF parish. Just to see him @ 730 a.m. mass with his mini look a like daughter, I asked jokingly how they smiled the same "Do you know each other just a little." Don smiled & said "Just a little bit! She's my daughter, I am thankful for her in my life." He shared a neat conversation - as I as a photographer if I could take a photo of the two of them together, since they know each other. Don didn't hesitate - he knew I would enjoy that memory of the two of them in their same seat at St. Pat's. It's a keepsake photo that's for sure. As I didn't grow up in CF - I came to St. Pat's - so many nice wiser than me - I talked to them in the parking lot one time before I knew who he even was. What a great guy & conversation that was & he shared a hug to say "Thank you for coming over - you are so sweet - keep doing what you are doing too." I will miss our 'visits' after 730 a.m. mass. That photo I will give to his mini him daughter, who always took him to church on Sunday mornings! She was his blessing - he shared that thought too... Don will be missed @ St. Pat's parish! I am thankful to known him in some small & simple ways for as long as I did! His smile - his kind & caring ways were a treasure to so many @ St. Pat's! Thanks for those memories! - Just me, Kim

Kim - March 17, 2024 at 03:55 PM

RB

Thank you for your lovely words about our Dad. He will indeed be missed by so many. He loved St. Pat's so very much. I would love to see the picture you took of dad and my sister Jacque sometime.

Regina Blumhardt - March 24, 2024 at 03:34 PM

GT

“ His welcoming smile and interesting conversation will be missed by all his family and friends.

Gloria Tollefson - March 16, 2024 at 01:55 PM

RU

Thank you Gloria. Ruthanne

Ruthanne - March 16, 2024 at 08:35 PM

BH

“ I met Don at the ymca many years ago. Funny guy and we had great talks about life in general. He and another old duffer Leonard were pals in the locker room. They just cracked me up. Great guys. I want to live my life like Don. And I never knew that his daughter was Ruthanne who was in my graduation class at Columbus high school until years later. Rip buddy. Love to all the family

bob hertges - March 15, 2024 at 09:13 PM

MW

“ The East coast Walton's, Joe, Pat and their children Mary, Mark, Dan and Michael all send our heartfelt love to all of you. We loved Don! He was always a ray of light! He will be missed!

Mary Walton - March 15, 2024 at 12:26 PM

RU

Thank you! Ruthanne

Ruthanne - March 16, 2024 at 08:35 PM

MD

“ Mary D. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Raymond Walton.

Mary D. - March 15, 2024 at 12:22 PM

WM

“ So sorry to read this. Don was a wonderful man. I served with him in the St Vincent dePaul Society and went to school with Ruthanne. I witnessed his doggedness first hand in his battle with UNI administration. I witnessed his generosity of time and talent on numerous occasions. I am sorry to miss his funeral as I have a medical procedure scheduled for 10 AM Monday. But I will say a prayer for the Walton clan and trust Don will spare a little time to watch over me. God bless!

Bill McKinley

William McKinley - March 15, 2024 at 10:51 AM

RU

Thank you Bill. Ruthanne and the rest of Don's family.

Ruthanne - March 16, 2024 at 08:34 PM



“ Joan Coryn-Vargas lit a candle in memory of Donald Raymond Walton



Joan Coryn-Vargas - March 15, 2024 at 09:06 AM

RU

Thank you Joan. Ruthanne

Ruthanne - March 16, 2024 at 08:37 PM



“ *Sweet Sincerity was purchased for the family of Donald Raymond Walton.*



March 14, 2024 at 06:52 PM



“ *Don and Rita Walton were wonderful faith filled neighbors. His devotion to his Christian faith was evident in the way he lived his life. Grant Don Eternal Life and let Eternal light shine upon him. Bonnie and Dave Feist*

Bonnie Feist - March 14, 2024 at 05:12 PM



“ *With love, the Kay Connelly Family purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Donald Raymond Walton.*



With love, the Kay Connelly Family - March 14, 2024 at 04:23 PM



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



March 14, 2024 at 01:21 PM

YT

“ Your TruStage Customer Care Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Raymond Walton.

Your TruStage Customer Care Team - March 14, 2024 at 01:21 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Donald Raymond Walton.



March 14, 2024 at 09:20 AM

RT

“ Rabo Appraisal Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Raymond Walton.

Rabo Appraisal Team - March 14, 2024 at 09:20 AM