



Donald "Butch" Mantzke

September 30, 1931 - March 29, 2020

Donald "Butch" Mantzke just hit a fairway wood to the green, for a birdie putt, after a long straight drive. At the age of 88, and after a courageous battle with Parkinson's, Don passed into the arms of his Lord, with his loving family by his side on Sunday, March 29, 2020. He was a genuine, loving and dedicated Grandfather, Father, and Husband, who enjoyed sharing his sense of humor and passion for life.

Don was born in a farm house near Winslow on September 30, 1931, the son of John and Gladys (Meacham) Mantzke. He grew up knowing the value of a penny and lived an idyllic childhood in Lena, playing baseball with his friends and helping his dad as he operated a local tavern called the Lena Tavern.

Don is a 1951 graduate of the Lena High School. Don served his country in the US Army during the Korean War with the 398th Engineering Battalion based out of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. He went on to graduate from Carthage College in 1957. On April 1, 1961, Donald married the love of his life, Judith Kunkle in Rockford. They raised two children and celebrated almost 60 years of marriage.

Don was a dedicated school teacher and administrator for 39 years in the Shannon/Eastland School District. He was a member of the Shannon American Legion for over 50 years and served as Commander several times. He served on the Shannon Volunteer Fire Department for 13 years. Don was a member of Bethel Methodist Church in Shannon most of his life, serving on many committees. He also served on the Carroll County Board for many years, and the Cherry Grove Shannon Township Board and was Township Clerk for over 25 years.

Don loved, and was loved, by his family, friends and thousands of students whose lives he helped develop over the years. He had a huge heart and would often share his wisdom through songs or sayings that were memorable. He was a sports enthusiast, both as a participant and coach, winning the first Eastland Basketball Girls Regional in 1990. He never missed his children's and grandchildren's sporting events, including baseball,

football, basketball, soccer, softball and volleyball, and was proudest to watch as Eastland, and his grandkids participated on several winning teams. In his younger years he enjoyed bowling.

When he wasn't coaching, teaching, or rooting on a sports team, Don could be found teaching his grandchildren how to golf, fish, or just mowing the lawn. He loved golfing with friends and enjoyed shooting a 69 on his 69th birthday, and has since golfed his age many times. Don would say, "There is always time for a game of Euchre." He loved playing cards with family and his men's poker group.

Don will be dearly missed by his wife, Judith of Lake Carroll; his son, David (Julie) Mantzke of Somonauk, Illinois; his daughter, Amy (Matthew) Jones of Lake Carroll; six grandchildren, Doris, Nelson and Grant Mantzke, Adam (Elizabeth) Young, Austin Young and Gabrielle Snyder; his first great-grandchild on-the-way; and his sister, Kathryne "Kate" Warthen of Lena. Don is preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Jeanne.

A private family service will be held Friday, April 3, 2020 at Bethel Methodist Church in Shannon. Burial will be at Chapel Hill Cemetery, Freeport with Military Rites. You may watch the service on Facebook Live at 11:00 a.m. Friday, or listen from the Church or Funeral Home websites in the near future.

The family is hosting a visitation from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 2, 2020 at Bethel Methodist Church in Shannon. If you wish to attend, please remain in your vehicle, forming a line. An attendant will direct your family to enter at a time to keep proper spacing, to eliminate person-to-person contact, while still being able to pay your respects to Donald. In Don's memory, a memorial fund has been established.

Cemetery

Events

Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens

2514 Rte. 26 South

Freeport, IL, 61032

APR

2

Visitation

04:00PM - 07:00PM

Bethel United Methodist Church

217 S. Hickory Street, Shannon, IL, US, 61078

Comments



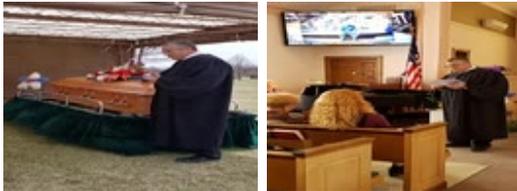
“ 51 files added to the album Service Photos



Law-Jones Funeral Home - June 04, 2020 at 02:37 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Service Video



Law-Jones Funeral Home - April 13, 2020 at 11:27 AM



“ Aunt Judy, David and Amy,

I was so sorry to hear that Uncle Donny had passed away! I remember the many Thanksgivings that we got together when we were young. Uncle Donny was always there to welcome us with his big smile, kind words and often a joke or two. I have many fond memories of him and especially the time he invited me to go golfing at Lake Carroll. He was so very patient and had words of encouragement no matter how bad I was! He will be missed by all that knew him and is one of the greatest men I have ever had the pleasure of knowing,

Todd Chase

Todd Chase - April 10, 2020 at 11:27 AM



“ I was sorry to hear of Don’s passing. He was my Teacher and Coach and I’ll never forget our regional championship win in ‘90. I don’t think I appreciated all those years ago what he gave of himself and his free time to us girls and our team — not to mention the extraordinary patience to take us from basic skills to being game ready let alone a regional championship! He was always willing to let me commute back and forth to Lanark from Shannon before I had my license so I would not miss a game or practice for which both my parents and I were grateful! I also did not have enough appreciation for his veteran status and wish I would have thanked him more for that. He not only did a good job teaching us Math but I know I picked up lifelong expressions that always remind me of him... especially “now we’re cooking on the front burner” or “ now we are cookin’ with gas!” He taught us well and always commanded our respect and I truly believe he loved his job and coaching us over all those years and I’m so grateful!

My deepest sympathy to his family for your loss and I will keep you in my prayers.

Sincerely,

Valerie Rothermel-Nelson

Valerie Rothermel-Nelson - April 05, 2020 at 12:23 PM



“ Judy and family.

I am sending my sincere sympathy. I went to school with Butch and he always had something to tell with a big smile. He was one of a kind with a big heart. He will be missed by everyone who he crossed paths with. May he rest in peace.
Vera Kempel

Vera L Kempel - April 03, 2020 at 12:33 PM



“ He was a great teacher. I as he always said was cooking on the back burner. I will always remember him. Sending thoughts and prays for all family

Maureen Lancaster - April 02, 2020 at 12:57 PM



“ He would always sing the tune, "Can you read can you write can you smoke your daddies pipe". First he was my teacher, for math and biology, in grade school, then a friend after I graduated. We attended Bethel together and I was asked to bare a flag for the Memorial Day service one year, and he was one of the other three to also bare one. I think I got my love of numbers from being in his class. A wonderful man with many great memories shared by a great many people. Godspeed good sir, and rest well knowing you were a treasure to many.

Thad Schrader - April 02, 2020 at 11:54 AM



“ Butch and I golfed together for years and almost every week day. I could never beat him but one day it finally happened. The next Sunday in church when we were asked to share our joys and concerns I announced that my joy was that I finally beat Butch Mantzke on the golf course. He laughed about that and reminded me for months of my announcement and laughed again. He had the sweetest swing in golf. Will miss you Don. Our condolences to your family in their loss.

Barry Meyers

Barry Meyers - April 01, 2020 at 10:56 PM



“ Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Donald "Butch" Mantzke.



April 01, 2020 at 02:50 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Donald "Butch" Mantzke.



April 01, 2020 at 01:39 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald "Butch" Mantzke.



April 01, 2020 at 12:48 PM



“ Dave, I am so sad to hear the news about your father. Reading his obituary made me realize what a wonderful man he was. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.

Tammy Johnson - April 01, 2020 at 09:46 AM



“ Dear Amy,

My condolences to you and your family. I direct this to you because I know you and love you. Loss is heard to bear alone. I read your father's obituary and was inspired by his life story. Please know I'm thinking of you and your family and send you my love and prayers.

Aunt Judy Jones

Judy Jones - March 31, 2020 at 09:14 PM



“ Don as many knew him was always Mr. Mantzke to me. whether coaching me on the baseball field or the basketball floor he was always teaching. Even after school he would try to help me officate a basketball game as a fan. we always shared comment .i was also his neihsbor and never passed up a ride to school. Mr. Mantzke you will always be in my heart forever. Steve coon

steve coon - March 31, 2020 at 06:16 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald "Butch" Mantzke.



March 31, 2020 at 05:51 PM



“ 108 files added to the album Family Photos



Law-Jones Funeral Home - March 31, 2020 at 05:06 PM



“ I wouldn't say that I knew Don a whole lot. But after living with his grandson, Adam, for many years. I did visit with Don over multiple occasions. He was always loving, long hearted, and compassionate. Even when Adam and I didn't deserve his grace, he still showed us grace and love. What an amazing man who showed us how to love your wife, raise a family, and make an impact in others lives.

Justin Case - March 31, 2020 at 12:45 PM



“ Kind hearted*

Justin - March 31, 2020 at 12:46 PM



“ I knew Don for a little over 30 years and can only remember him mad one time. Years ago he lost a giant walleye right next to the boat despite my best coaching efforts.... He was so distraught he threw the fishing pole into the middle of Lake Carroll right after!

The anger lasted about 5 seconds and the hysterical laughter and teasing by all of us in the boat lasted the rest of the day... He was a peach of a guy and I will miss him...

JY - March 31, 2020 at 08:36 AM



“ Dear Judy and Family. Our very deepest and most heartfelt sympathy in your loss of Don.
You are in our thoughts and prayers.
Mike and Theresa Lake

Mike & Theresa Lake - March 30, 2020 at 10:55 PM



“ Mr. Mantzke was not the substitute teacher you wanted to see sitting behind the desk in your home-room teacher's absence. If that was the case, any chance of an easy day of horsing around just went out the window. But if your classmates behaved well enough, you might catch the twinkle in his eye as he accused the class clown of "being dumber than a box of rocks" or drawing a chalk circle just a little too high on the blackboard and requiring said clown to hold the tip of his/her nose in it while standing on their tip-toes. After school you would undoubtedly see him in the bleachers at the game cheering the same kid to victory. While I will always remember his funny sayings and antics, I will most of all remember his love for our community and the kids in it. He will leave a big hole in not only his family but the community. My deepest sympathy.

Ashley (Byers) Deal - March 30, 2020 at 10:34 PM



“ 'A home run in an elevator shaft.' Poetry for a pop-up. Will think of you fondly through all these quarantine Euchre games, coach.

Rachel Koning Beals - March 30, 2020 at 08:00 PM



“ From "now we're cooking on the front burner" in math class to serving him beer while golfing at Lake Carroll....always full of energy! You will be missed Mr. Manske.

Colette Koch Andrjeski - March 30, 2020 at 07:05 PM



“ JH Math with the overhead projector, blue markers, container of blue water with toilet paper to wipe the foils clean...

RyanB - March 31, 2020 at 01:18 PM



“ Mr Mantzke as I knew him from grade school! Also neighbors while I was growing up playing with his children . So sorry for your families loss! He touched many lives along the way. God Bless

Pamela (Knight) Duball - March 30, 2020 at 06:41 PM



“ What a gentleman! I met him when he was coaching the Eastland girls at the Deb Norman Tournament at Fulton! I could tell from the start how respected he was from his athletes, students, parents, and community! Thank you sir for making this world a better place!

Gerry Kreuder - March 30, 2020 at 05:45 PM



“ Ron And Sue Johnston lit a candle in memory of Donald "Butch" Mantzke



Ron and Sue Johnston - March 30, 2020 at 05:27 PM



“ Matt and Amy and family, so sorry to hear of Butch's passing. May the grace of God be with you and our deepest sympathies. RIP Art and Ann Crouse

Ann Crouse - March 30, 2020 at 05:03 PM