



Donald F. North

August 12, 1930 - June 26, 2025

Donald F. North of Canton, Michigan, age 94, passed away peacefully on Thursday, June 26, 2025, surrounded by his family who rejoiced in seeing him smile as he transitioned to heaven.

In 1955, a mutual friend introduced Don to Patricia Leech. They wed in 1956, raised a family, and grew old together. Married for more than 60 years, Pat and Don navigated life's many ups and downs and remained best friends until Pat returned to her heavenly home in 2017.

Supportive and loving father to Stephanie Hurt, Donald (Irene) North, Jennifer (Phil) Krauss and Robert (Charlene) North, Don attended countless sporting events and band concerts as well as being active in Scouting with his sons. Don was a doppelgänger for Bob Newhart, who played Papa Elf in the movie Elf. This led to Don's great grandchildren thinking he actually was Papa Elf. In real life, Don is remembered by his children and grandchildren as the most generous man they knew. Not just a gift giver at Christmas, but a blessing to many throughout his life. He was the proud grandfather of Faith (Abbas Khalaf) Kuz, Trey (Stephanie) Krauss, Adrian (Brandon) Vargo, Sarah (Simon) Stock, Michael (Rebekah) North, Noah Vestal, Alexander North, James North, and Zachary North.

Don loved music and was a talented piano player. He was also an avid reader of everything from the Bible to physics lectures, from Jane Austin to the Diary of Ann Frank. His love of reading makes it fitting that just before he passed on to heaven one of his great granddaughters finished reading him a Junie B.

Jones chapter book.

Don was a beloved great-grandfather to Lilly, Luna, and Logan Vargo; Chloe and Harper Krauss; and Amelia Kuz.

Ever the hard-working servant spouse, Don took up cooking as a hobby in his retirement. His family remembers his incredible grilled pork loins and the debate on whether the herb-encrusted or BBQ cherry version was better will likely never be decided. Many summers he transformed his backyard into a floral paradise surrounding an immaculately clean pool that the family enjoyed for many years.

A graduate of Penn State University (BS) and Case Institute of Technology (MS), Don was a metallurgist. He worked at Republic Steel and later Ford Motor Company, where he retired after more than 20 years. Don was a longtime member at Trinity Church in Plymouth, where he served as a deacon, children's ministry volunteer, and ready kitchen helper.

Don was proud of his naval service as an officer on the USS Forrestal in the Mediterranean. This period of his life was the subject of his many epic tales, including one in which his quick thinking saved the day; another involving meeting former actress Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier of Monaco, as they toured the ship; and his ever-popular tale of having a private audience with Pope Pius the XII. He often boasted that his Naval division reported directly to President Eisenhower, but he never actually met Dwight in person.

Visitation is Tuesday, July 1, 2025 from 4 p.m. until the funeral service at 7 p.m. at Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, 46401 Ann Arbor Rd. W. (between Sheldon & Beck), Plymouth. Interment Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly. Memorial contributions can be made to the Trinity Food Pantry or Doctors without Borders. To share a memory, please use the Share a Memory tab on this web page.

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

4200 Belford Road
Holly, MI 48442

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 1. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Funeral Service

JUL 1. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Tribute Wall

KM

“ I loved seeing Don at Trinity. He was such a wonderful presence. I will remember his wonderful smile that always seemed to be on his face no matter what and his kind gentile spirit. Heaven will be more wonderful with him there. I know you all are missing him. Gods peace and love as you process this earthy loss.

Kay Metz - July 06, 2025 at 08:25 PM

JW

“ Don was a very good neighbor, all his years, in canton , when we we talked,.it was either about our naval experiance's ,or ford motor co. May he rest in peace with our lord jesus christ.

Jerry winalis - July 02, 2025 at 10:24 PM

SK

“ Don was always so kind and generous. Never afraid to start a conversation with a stranger.Considerate and thoughtful. I wish his family Peace and Love.



Sandy kimbro - July 01, 2025 at 05:55 PM

LR

“ Bible study was never the same when either you or Pat weren't there. You will be missed, Don. So glad I got to know you over the years. Linda Rettray

Linda Rettray - July 01, 2025 at 10:35 AM

MQ

“ *Sorry for your loss.*”



Michael Quint - June 30, 2025 at 03:20 PM