



## Donald J. Kerley

December 27, 1951 - November 1, 2018

Hampton - Donald J Kerley, 66, of Hampton passed away Thursday November 1, 2018 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born in Indianapolis, IN on December 27, 1951, the son of the late Robert and Clara Mae (Stadtman) Kerley.

A 1970 graduate of Kings Park High School in Kings Park, NY, he was a 1974 graduate of The United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO and he proudly served 20 years in the United States Air Force. In 1980 Don became a pilot with Delta Airlines where he worked for 36 years before retiring in 2016.

Family and travel meant the world to Don and he loved sharing adventures with those close to him. The house became the focal point for impromptu “power feeds” of all the children and their friends. He had a great appreciation for life, friends, sports and most of all his country. He was a modest man who was involved in many community activities.

He is survived by his wife Denise, of Hampton as well as his daughters, Jill of New York, NY, Kim & David of Sarasota, FL, and Courtney & Tyler of Westerly, RI; brother, Robert of Conyers, GA and sister Andrea of Fontana, WI, sister in law Michelle & Ed of North Berwick, ME and brother in law Marc & Debra of Swampscott, MA and his 4 nephews.

A celebration of his life will be held at 10:30 am on Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at the United Church of Christ 295 Atlantic Ave North Hampton. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited. Burial will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Vets Count New Hampshire, [vetscount.org/nh/support-us/make-a-donation/](https://vetscount.org/nh/support-us/make-a-donation/)



# Comments

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“ I am so sorry to hear of Don's passing, which I have just learned of. He was just such a wonderful man, who always saw the positive in everyone he came in touch with. He gave so much to the Winnacunnet lacrosse program as a coach and he was always on the sideline supporting our field hockey program. I am deeply saddened to hear Don is no longer with us but his spirit of generosity and goodness will stay with the many people whose lives he touched. Our sympathies to all of his family.  
Linda



**Ozzie and Linda Osborne** - November 14, 2018 at 07:16 AM

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“ I was a 1974 AFA classmate with Don. He was a great American. He was a heck of an athlete. I am glad I knew him. RIP Don. Jeff Jacobs

**Jeffrey Jacobs** - November 08, 2018 at 11:37 PM

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“ As several have said before..."74 Forevermore"! I too was with Kerls in Cadet Squadron 01...Fun One...and remember his smile and graciousness. He always had a smile and a kind word for everyone. After graduation, we crossed paths at McGuire AFB again...I was an air traffic controller (the guy who always tries to keep pilots from making their on time departures and landings) but Kerls was still the same gracious guy I knew at the Academy and cut me plenty of slack! Unfortunately, our paths diverged and we didn't keep in touch through the years but old friends and memories are always cherished. As you grieve the loss of your dear husband, dad, brother and uncle know that your family is in our thoughts and prayers. God bless you and keep you close in your time of sadness ~ Frank & Joanie Forsyth, Racine, WI Isaiah 41:13

**Frank Forsyth** - November 07, 2018 at 08:21 PM

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“ Teammate, friend, classmate. You’ve left this world a better place. Thank you. Keep cradling the ball, we will play again.  
Mac

Ed McIlhenny - November 07, 2018 at 06:48 AM

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“ Ghirardelli & Fruit Condolences Gift Basket was purchased for the family of Donald J. Kerley.



November 06, 2018 at 06:14 PM

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“ Don and I played lacrosse together at Kings Park, and then were recruited together to play at the Academy. So, we're classmates twice over. I remember we spent our last night as 'civilians' in a motel downtown (Colorado Springs) before heading out to begin Basic Training the next morning. A bit of a nervous evening!

Despite playing a somewhat violent sport and matriculating at a military academy, Don was always a gentle person and good spirit, comfortable in his own skin. I hope he touched many lives with his generous nature.

Fred Gibson

Fred Gibson - November 06, 2018 at 12:44 PM

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“ I did not get to meet Don, but I held him in high regard because he sent a very special message to my late husband and I when we married in 2007. My husband was Col. Cyrus Reyon Shockey, Ret.,, and Don’s uncle. My deepest sympathies on the loss of a wonderful person.

Candace Eales Shockey - November 06, 2018 at 10:36 AM

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“ What a pleasure it was to know and fly with Don for many years at Delta Air Lines. Besides being the consummate professional he had that calming smile and warm personality that could bring together any flight crew. You could feel his warmth and sincerity and want to smile with him. Don, you will be missed and as you fly west, may our Lord hold you forever in the palm of his hands.

Chris & Eileen Nevins

Chris Nevins - November 05, 2018 at 10:34 PM

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“ Don and I were classmates at USAFA and in the same squadron from basic training through our first year. He was a great friend, always willing to lend a helping hand, and always had a positive attitude. My sincere condolences to all the family, and my thoughts and prayers are with you. RIP, Don, and "'74 Forevermore" until we meet again.

Mike Burnside  
Georgetown, KY

Mike Burnside - November 05, 2018 at 09:07 PM

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“ All of us from the 1st Cadet Sqn, Class of 74 remember Kerls; he was as much a part of us as we were a part of him. Over many years, it still seems like yesterday. '74 Forevermore. We'll miss him. Big E/Gaicho

Eric Holck - November 05, 2018 at 08:42 PM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Donald J. Kerley.



November 05, 2018 at 05:54 PM

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“ Dear Denise, Courtney, Kim, Jill, Bob and Andy,

Heartfelt condolences to you. My memories of time spent with all of you always makes me smile. Your love for one another lit up the room. Don was one of the best. So kind and caring, as a high school friend and 40 years later. Keeping you in my prayers.

Mary Ann Vassallo

Mary Ann Vassallo - November 05, 2018 at 04:11 PM

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“ Kerls and I were classmates and roommates at our initial Delta Air Lines class. So sad to hear of this news. What I can say about Don, a truly nice gentleman. I hope his family can find peace in knowing Don was liked and admired by those he met.  
Bruce Stuart

Bruce Stuart - November 05, 2018 at 03:59 PM

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“ I am proud to say that I was stationed with Don during his time with the 18 MAS and the 732 MAS at McGuire Air Force Base, NJ. What I remember well is that Don was always the consummate Officer and a Gentleman. A gentle soul, he always had a kind word, a positive outlook, and a smile to share. It was truly a pleasure to have served with Don. May the family find comfort in knowing that Don made a difference in this world.



antoinette kolesnikov - November 05, 2018 at 03:26 PM

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“ To those of us from 1st Squadron, Don will always be known as Kerls. As we bonded during our three years together, none of will ever forget the marathon games of Pong and hockey. Most of all, we will remember the friendship.  
Kegs

Jim Keagle - November 05, 2018 at 03:23 PM



“ Don was a great guy. We worked together at Delta Air Lines and it was always a pleasure to see him walk into the crew lounge or the cockpit. Always upbeat, positive and smiling, Don brought joy and laughter to this world.

**Dave Bushy** - November 05, 2018 at 01:32 PM

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“ I went to high school with Don and have many fond memories of him and our group of friends. He was a sweet, kind and caring soul and I was so glad to reconnect with him on Facebook. I remember his curly blonde hair and how he was always smiling. Don was a friend to everyone at KPHS, respected and loved by many. I send my heartfelt condolences to his family and pray for comfort and peace for all of you during this most difficult time. May he rest in eternal peace.

**Debbie Glasscock** - November 04, 2018 at 09:06 PM



“ Teammate, friend, classmate. You've left this world a better place. Thank you. Keep cradling the ball, we'll play again.

Ed McIlhenny

**Ed McIlhenny** - November 07, 2018 at 05:09 AM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donald J. Kerley.



November 04, 2018 at 11:24 AM

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“ So sorry to hear that "Kerls" has passed on. I knew him as an excellent lacrosse player at the Academy, a gifted pilot, the best man at my wedding, my roommate when we were stationed at McGuire AFB, and without a doubt one of the finest human beings I have ever met! He had a great smile and a genuine concern for others that was hard to match. I wish we had stayed in touch more than we did but I have no doubts he was an outstanding pilot for Delta and an even better Dad to his kids! It is not often a person like Kerls comes along; I certainly share in your loss and hope you can find some comfort in knowing that all of us who knew Kerls always felt that he was one of our best; that he was a great example of the kind of person we aspired to be-dedicated, athletic, talented, kind, funny, and always ready to help others! They don't make em any better!! Our thoughts and prayers are with you!!

Ray Haile

Ray Haile - November 04, 2018 at 11:09 AM



“ Beautifully said

Margrit - November 04, 2018 at 01:25 PM



“ Don was an honorable, warm, human being and especially a great father! love and hugs and prayers for his entire family Aunt Maggie

Margrit Ralph - November 04, 2018 at 10:24 AM



“ Don has been an ever present Dad as well as a gentle soul in our lives. All of our children knew and admired him. That is a plus in these days of “ busy busy”. Don, you will be missed!

Doris rice - November 04, 2018 at 09:49 AM



“ I am so sad to learn of Don's passing. I knew him to be a warm and caring person, always smiling and willing to help. He will be greatly missed by everyone. With my deepest sympathy,  
Barbara Lizotte

Barbara Lizotte - November 03, 2018 at 10:57 AM



“ I am in shock at this news...Don was always smiling and so pleasant and interesting to have a conversation with. My heart breaks for the family. Sending comforting wishes and prayers as you deal with this loss.

**Roberta Lumibao** - November 03, 2018 at 08:24 AM

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“ Dear Denise. We are so very sad to hear of Dons passing. You and your family are in our thoughts. Our hearts ache along with yours. Love, Mark and Deb

**Deb Randlett** - November 02, 2018 at 11:42 PM

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“ Denise, Jill, Kimmie, and Courtney, our hearts are broken as are yours. Don is the Greatest, just the greatest man in our lives. His loss is overwhelming for the Jubbs. Always thinking of others before himself. Always lending a helping hand whether with family, friends, community, charity, or his Country. Always having the perfect advice or solution. We miss Don so very much and he will never be forgotten by us or anyone else who ever interacted with him. We are so fortunate to have had Don in our lives and will love him and all of you for the rest of our lives.

Jim, Margaret, Lindsay, and Jaime

**Jim Jubb** - November 02, 2018 at 09:04 PM

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“ Lenny LaForgia purchased the Tranquil Seas for the family of Donald J. Kerley.



**Lenny LaForgia** - November 02, 2018 at 09:04 PM

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“ To Denise and the entire Kerley family,

Please know our thoughts and prayers are with you all during these difficult days. We feel so very blessed to have reconnected with Don 6 years ago and feel so fortunate that Kim and David are now married. While Don was a dedicated Air Force veteran, a dedicated pilot and had many interests, it was always clear his greatest love and dedication was to his family.

Bob & Tricia DeColfmacker

**Bob & Tricia DeColfmacker** - November 02, 2018 at 04:57 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**David Decolfmacker** - November 02, 2018 at 03:00 PM