



Don Swanke

January 10, 1924 - January 10, 2011

Obituary of Don Swanke

Don Reetz Swanke, Leesburg, beloved husband, father, grandfather, uncle and friend, passed away on January 20, 2011, surrounded by his family. He was born January 10, 1924, to Dr. Edwin A. and Ida (Zachow) Swanke in Ida Grove, Iowa. He was preceded in death by his parents, and a brother Col. Edwin A. Swanke.

He is survived by his wife Brenda of the home, daughters Jean Swanke, Arkansas, Jan Swanke, Clermont, Deena DeThomas, Clermont, sons Jim Swanke (Toots), California, Stepson, Bryan Green, (April) Tennessee, Grandchildren Cristy and Misty Swanke, Haley, Lindsay and Casandra Pennington, Robert and Ryan Swanke, Wyatt Green, many nieces and nephews, and his sweet little dog, Bella.

Mr. Swanke graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1949 earning an engineering degree and commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. Prior to his appointment to West Point, he was stationed in Goose Bay Labrador, and the Aleutian Islands, where he served as squadron leader for rescue boats. He served at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California as a nuclear weapons

officer for five years.

After receiving an honorable discharge as a Captain in the Air Force, Don was employed by TRW in CA as an engineer for 14 years, where he led the team that launched the first test ballistic missiles. He later was Program manager with DMJM Engineering building the gaseous centrifuge enrichment plant (nuclear) in Portsmouth, Ohio.

Don's next project was in Kuwait City, Kuwait for DMJM, where he and his team refurbished the Kuwait University. While there, the country was invaded by the Iraqi Army, and Don and his wife were taken captive by the Iraqis and held in Baghdad for three months until their release in November 1990. After the U.S. Invasion (Operation Desert Storm), Don returned to Kuwait to continue his work on the project.

Since his retirement, Don has enjoyed golfing, playing poker and participating in the many social activities with his wife and dear friends in Nottoway Village at the Plantations. Don's sense of humor, fun spirit and kind heart were an inspiration to those around him. He lived his life with integrity and will be remembered for his gentlemanly ways and keen interest in others and in life.

Funeral services will be held Friday, January 14, at 11:00 a.m. at the First Baptist Church of Okahumpka. Burial follows at The Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

Services

Funeral services will be held Friday, January 14, at 11:00 a.m. at the First Baptist Church of Okahumpka.

Interment

Burial follows at The Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

Memorials

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Cornerstone Hospice in care of the Beyers Funeral Home, Leesburg.

Tribute Wall



“ *BG & Jan, i was so sorry to read of Uncle Don's passing. My reuniting with him & getting to know my uncle is a highlight of my life. His love & compassion for me and my family is very special. Please accept our deepest condolences for your loss. Love, Susan & Gregg*

Susan & Gregg Martin - October 01, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ *Rick and I wish to express our sympathy to Brenda and Don's family. We have many memories of Don during Rick's employment with DMJM. Our thought are with you during this time.*

Martha Gallman - October 01, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ *Don Swanke*

October 01, 2014 at 12:00 AM