



Donald Lester Merkle

April 24, 1945 - September 20, 2014

Donald Lester Merkle, 69, of Alhambra, Illinois passed away on September 20, 2014 at St. Louis University Hospital.

Don was born on April 24, 1945 in Highland, IL to Lester and Mabel (nee Iberg) Bohnenstiehl. He was adopted at age 2 by his uncle and aunt, Richard and Virginia (nee Bohnenstiehl) Merkle.

Don graduated from Highland High School in 1963 and from the University of Illinois-Champaign in 1968 with a BS degree in animal sciences. Don married Donna Hosto on January 20, 1968, at Salem United Church of Christ in Alhambra.

He was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army and served from 1968 until 1973, achieving the rank of Captain. During this time, he served one year in Vietnam as a reconnaissance pilot where he was awarded a Bronze Star. After the military, Don worked for Ralston Purina as a district sales manager. Don and Donna lived in Ft. Riley, KS; Monmouth, IL; and Quincy, IL before moving back to Alhambra, IL in 1980 to farm with his father-in-law. After his retirement, Don became a financial planner with Fortune Investment Group in Festus, MO.

He was a member of Salem United Church of Christ, Highland Lions Club,

VFW Post 5694, Highland, IL, American Legion Post 1147, Alhambra, IL, and Madison County Farm Bureau where he served on the board of directors for nine years.

Don's greatest enjoyment in life came from spending time with family and friends, traveling, and playing games with his grandchildren.

Don is survived by his wife of 46 years, Donna and two daughters, Danna (Christophe) Valsecchi of Basking Ridge, NJ and Dione (Ray) Booth of Rochester, IL, and three grandchildren: Bianca Valsecchi, Danielle and Darren Booth. Other survivors include three siblings, Lila Manville of Highland, IL, Dale Merkle of Lebanon, MO, and Dennis Merkle of Highland, IL, and a sister-in-law, Gail (John) VanWinkle of Belleville, IL, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Don is preceded in death by his parents, brother in-laws, Larry Hosto and Bill Manville, sister in-laws, Kathie Hosto Loyet, Cathy Merkle and Helga Merkle.

Arrangements are being handled by Dauderman Mortuary in Alhambra, IL.

Visitation will be held from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Tuesday, September 23, 2014, at Salem United Church of Christ in Alhambra, IL and from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM on Wednesday, September 24, 2014, at Salem United Church of Christ in Alhambra, IL.

Funeral service will be at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, September 24, 2014, at Salem United Church of Christ in Alhambra, IL., with Rev. Jerry Amiri, Pastor, and John Mindrup, Assistant Pastor, officiating.

Interment will be at Salem Cemetery in Alhambra, IL.

Memorial contributions may be made to Salem UCC Memorial Fund or to the Charity of the Donors Choice.

Tribute Wall

PM

“ *I was so sorry to hear of Don's passing. I will miss him. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers. Pam Morgan*

Pam Morgan - September 23, 2014 at 09:16 PM

MO

“ *Sad to hear about Don. You will be in my thoughts and prayers. Mike Otto*

Michael Otto - September 22, 2014 at 11:40 AM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald Lester Merkle.*



September 22, 2014 at 11:38 AM

LU

“ *So sorry for your loss. Praying for peace and comfort during this sorrowful time for you. Noah always remembers Don calling him "Eddie". Will be thinking of you all and praying for you all.*

LaDonna Utley - September 21, 2014 at 06:51 PM