



## Donald Van Meter

September 5, 1944 - March 3, 2019

Donald Van Meter passed away on March 3, 2019 at the age of 74. He is preceded in death by his parents, Doris and Philip Van Meter and his sister in law, Janet Van Meter. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Sally; son, Joshua and his wife, Lauren, and their children, Grace and William. He is survived by his brother, Jay Van Meter, his daughters, Kerry Fenton and Jennifer Rucka, and her husband, Greg.

He is also survived by his brother-in-law, Daniel Freeman and his wife Laurie; his sister-in-law, Marilyn and her husband, Nat DiBuduo; and his brother-in-law, Philip Freeman.

He is also survived by nieces and nephews, Heather and her husband Brian Evans, Beth and her husband Ryan Hardester, Nicole and her husband Colby Linder, Marcus DiBuduo and his wife Amy, Analise and her husband Derek Elrod, Dustin Freeman and his wife Nina, and Douglas Freeman. He is also survived by many great-nieces and nephews.

Don was born in 1944 in Fresno, California. Always studious, he excelled in school. He also excelled in many extra circular activities. He played little league baseball and stopped one step short of becoming an Eagle Scout. As a young child he also developed a passion for music and studied piano for 14 years. He also played many different instruments in his high school marching

band. In his college years, he led the church choir at Easton Presbyterian Church.

In his senior year in high school he came in third in a national debate conference and decided to become a lawyer. However, during his senior year at Fresno State College (University of California at Fresno) he was asked to finish teaching a political science class for a professor who became ill. Don loved teaching so much that he decided to become a college professor instead.

Don received his PHD from The University of Wisconsin and joined the Ohio State University Political Science Department in 1970. He received tenure and won the Outstanding Teacher Award for the College of Arts & Sciences in mid-1970's. He was an active and prolific scholar.

In 1982, Don decided he wanted to work in government and took a job with then-Attorney General Bill Brown, working with his policy development team. He later was asked to head up the communications department. Don was invited back to OSU to teach an honors class on the American Presidency. Of the four living former presidents, Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford accepted the invitation to speak to his class.

Don decided that he wanted to provide communication services as a business. He had his own company for more than 30 years, providing communication & strategic planning to a wide variety of corporate, government, and charitable organizations. One of his joys was working with the late Pat Logsdon in electing outstanding candidates for public office. Don always believed in the importance of public service.

He worked with many governors and many business entities. He also worked with the senior staff at OSU during the transition process for several incoming OSU presidents.

Don loved life, family, people, a cause to work for, conversation and good food. Don will be greatly missed by his family and friends and the dogs, Alix & Sonoma. He was a wonderful teacher and advisor to his students and colleagues.

Charitable contributions may be made to the Mid-Ohio Food Bank and Franklin County Children's Services.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 9. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Funeral Home at Powell  
450 West Olentangy Street  
Powell, OH 43065  
(614) 792-1471  
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

## Celebration of Life

MAR 9. 7:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Funeral Home at Powell  
450 West Olentangy Street  
Powell, OH 43065  
(614) 792-1471  
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Donald Van Meter*

January 28, 2023 at 10:24 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald Van Meter.*



March 09, 2019 at 12:06 PM



“ *Don and I have been friends for almost 30 years. He taught me so much. Don was a great inspiration for me. I don't know where to find the words to express how much I admired him and how much I will miss him.*

**Bob Boltz** - March 09, 2019 at 11:39 AM



“ *Don and I have been friends for almost 30 years. He taught me so much. Don was a great inspiration for me. I don't know where to find the words to express how much I admired him and how much I will miss him.*

**Bob Boltz** - March 09, 2019 at 11:36 AM

LC

“ Love, Nancy Colley purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Donald Van Meter.



Love, Nancy Colley - March 08, 2019 at 03:00 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Donald Van Meter.



March 08, 2019 at 11:01 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald Van Meter.



March 07, 2019 at 04:22 PM

JF

“ I was very saddened to hear of Don's passing. I was able to work with him and other colleagues on a variety of projects to improve access to a high quality education. I was younger and much less experienced at the time; he was a teacher with a razor sharp wit and keen insights. I was very fortunate. My prayers and condolences go out to Sally and the family.

Jane Fullerton - March 07, 2019 at 04:17 PM

JT

“ Don and I worked on educational projects together for over two decades. He was a friend, colleague and mentor. His innovative recommendations and insightful approaches to educational improvement benefited Ohio immeasurably! I'll especially miss his keen wit and our regular conversations. Thoughts and prayers are with Sally and family during this difficult time.

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**Jonathan Tafel** - March 07, 2019 at 03:52 PM

HW

“ I was deeply saddened to hear of Don's passing. For many of us, there are often few really good friends that are both respected and enjoyable to be with. Don was one of those friends. I met Don early in my time as CEO of the Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers in the 1990s. He did some excellent political and communications strategy work for us. We connected personally, and I would often visit Don at his downtown Columbus office to chat, learn, and enjoy each others company. While we both often held strong opinions and liked to talk and share, I quickly learned to spend more time listening because of the value that I attached to Don's knowledge and expertise. I will always remember Don for his thoughtfulness; commitment to having a positive impact on the well-being of others; integrity; enjoying the company of friends; and enjoyment of good food and wine. I will miss hearing your voice and sharing in your company, Don.

*Hugh Wirtz*

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**Hugh Wirtz** - March 07, 2019 at 11:04 AM

SD

“ I was so very saddened to hear of Don's passing. I first met Don when he was working on project for the Ohio Department of Higher Education (then the Board of Regents) with his colleague Bob Boltz-Don referred to the team as Nuts and Bolts! Since that time, I've had many opportunities to work with Don, particularly as he was working to document the progress of the Ohio Mathematics Initiative. His work has been instrumental in the success of the initiative. My sincerest condolences to Don's family. We will miss him.

*Stephanie Davidson*  
*Ohio Department of Higher Education*

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**Stephanie Davidson** - March 07, 2019 at 09:43 AM

BH

“ We talked and listened.



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**Bill Hoffman** - March 07, 2019 at 08:38 AM

LF

“ Louise (Thompson) Macbeth and family. purchased the Vivid Recollections for the family of Donald Van Meter.



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**Louise (Thompson) Macbeth and family.** - March 06, 2019 at 11:41 PM

TT

“Sally, Josh, and family, I was so saddened to learn of Don’s passing. You have my deepest sympathy. I had the privilege of interfacing with Don in several different settings over a great number of years. He was my graduate school advisor. I was his teaching assistant. He was of great assistance to me when I would later teach my own class on American politics. More recently, he helped me in his capacity as a consultant as I assisted an incoming state administration. Don was a brilliant and kind man, and a trusted advisor. I know how devoted he was to you, his family.

*Terry Thomas  
Baltimore, Ohio*

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**Terry Thomas** - March 06, 2019 at 04:24 PM

JP

“Working with Don was one of the highlights of my career at the AG’s office. He embodied the words “realistic and pragmatic” when it came to politics. He always, always had a good solution for a tough political policy or decision, always was thinking 4 or 5 steps ahead when it came to the impact of those policies or decisions and never was ruffled when debating an issue. In an office dominated by lawyers, Don held his own. He could argue with the best without being intimidated or demeaning. My friend, you will be sorely missed, but never be forgotten.

*Joe Paul  
Carlsbad, CA*

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**Joe Paul** - March 06, 2019 at 03:09 PM



“ *Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Donald Van Meter.*



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March 06, 2019 at 12:59 PM



“ *Dear Sally and Josh: I am so sorry to hear of Don's passing. We shared many good times together and I will treasure those memories. Please know how much I am thinking of you today.*  
*Nancy Paul*

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**Nancy S Paul** - March 06, 2019 at 11:17 AM



“ *Dear Sally: I was so sorry to hear of Don's passing. Unfortunately, I will be in Boston attending another funeral on the day of his service.*  
  
*Deborah Norris Matthews*

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**Deborah Norris Matthews** - March 06, 2019 at 10:35 AM



“ *I first got to know Don when we both worked for Attorney General Bill Brown in the early 80's. Don was a talented teacher, brilliant strategist and communicator. He also possessed an addictively upbeat personality and wicked sense of humor. He was one of the all-time great story-tellers. We became close friends over the years, both with Don and Sally. He loved his family and I know they will miss him greatly, as will all who knew him.*

*Bill Shkurti*

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**Bill Shkurti** - March 06, 2019 at 09:05 AM

MS

“ Don was a wonderful mentor. He taught me that political scientists have a role to play outside of academia. I will never forget the evening in 1981, in his living room, watching Don sign-off on my dissertation. Condolences to Sally, Josh, and the rest of the family.

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**Marty Saperstein** - March 06, 2019 at 08:47 AM

CM

“ Don was a guiding influence as my academic advisor. His consulting company was comprised of outstanding people delivering excellent work. Carol Mackey

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**carol mackey** - March 06, 2019 at 08:13 AM

ES

“ Don was a teacher of mine at OSU and I worked with him during our days with Bill Brown. Honestly, I still quote Don occasionally. I'm sorry for your family's loss. He was a good professor and colleague. Ed Spiker

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**ed spiker** - March 06, 2019 at 07:24 AM

MB

“ Mary and I are very saddened by Don's passing. Condolences to the family.

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**Mark and Mary Barbash** - March 06, 2019 at 06:44 AM

RS

“ Don was the most ethical, brilliant and hardest working person in my world for 30 consecutive years. Carol and I cherished his friendship. May his memory be a blessing to Sally, Josh and family -- and to all who loved him, as we did.

*Richard Stoff*

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**Richard Stoff** - March 06, 2019 at 04:05 AM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald Van Meter.



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March 05, 2019 at 02:16 PM

CM

“ Don's sense of humor and his political insights were so on point. Don will be missed by many friends and family. Condolences to his wonderful wife, Sally, and great son and daughter in law, Josh and Lauren. His face and voice would light up whenever he mentioned his granddaughter , Grace and grandson, William. Miss you Don. love, Carol

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**Carol Mix** - March 05, 2019 at 01:55 PM