



Donald Fred Parker

November 7, 1934 - March 21, 2016

Donald Fred Parker died on March 21, 2016 at the age of 81 in Corvallis, Oregon.

Don Parker was born on November 7, 1934 in Oilton, Oklahoma to Georgia Culley Parker and

Robert Fred Parker. His early life was shaped by the ups and downs of the oil industry in which

he worked as a youth, as did all the men in his family.

Don left his hometown of Drumright, Oklahoma for the University of Oklahoma, where he

received a baccalaureate degree in sociology in 1957. Wanting to avoid being drafted, Don

joined the U.S. Navy as an Aviation Officer Candidate. In 1963, while homeported with aircraft

carrier USS Kearsarge in Long Beach, California, he met Jo Ellen Dunfee, a junior high school

teacher from Shadyside, Ohio, an event Don believed was the most important of his life. He

joyfully married her on April 6, 1963. Their most important joint accomplishments were

daughters Margaret Elizabeth and Emily Lyle, born in 1968 and 1971.

During his twenty-four year Navy career, Don Parker served four tours on sea duty in airborne early warning and antisubmarine aircraft squadrons, and as underway officer of the deck on USS Kearsarge. Ashore, he served in the Bureau of Naval Personnel and in the Pentagon as an Admiral's Aide and as a member of the Chief of Naval Operations Research and Development Priority Analysis Group. He earned an MS from George Washington University and a PhD from Cornell University during his Navy career. He believed the high points of his career were astronaut recovery operations for Wally Schirra and Gordon Cooper; polar reconnaissance in support of submarine and antisubmarine operations; command of Patrol Squadron 10 in Brunswick, Maine; a Naval War College Professorship in Newport, Rhode Island; and Commanding Officer of the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center in San Diego, California.

Two weeks after his retirement as a U.S. Navy Captain in 1980, Don began a second career as an Assistant Professor in the University of Michigan Graduate Business School. Four years later he became Dean of the University of Wyoming College of Commerce and Industry in Laramie, Wyoming.

In 1991, Don was selected as Sara Hart Kimball Dean of Business at Oregon

State University a post he held until his retirement in 2003. While at OSU, he also served on the Board of Directors of AACSB and as Board President of Beta Gamma Sigma Business Honor Society.

When asked of his proudest accomplishments, Don named a successful marriage of more than fifty years; two highly accomplished daughters who are pursuing meaningful careers as an architect and a foundation executive; and four bright, promising grandchildren. Don also found great satisfaction from his twenty-four years of service dedicated to dissuading the Soviet Union from starting World War III. Finally, he was proud to have had the chance to live the American dream. Beginning as a poor, halfbreed Cherokee boy from Oklahoma, he was given the opportunity by his country to achieve anything he was willing to work hard enough to accomplish.

Friends and family remember Don for his fierce intellect, work ethic, devotion to family and country, and wry humor. He was a serious reader and deep thinker, was abundantly curious about the world, and offered a keen and humorous commentary about the absurdities of life.

Don is survived by his wife Jo Ellen Parker; daughter Margaret Parker Salop and her husband

Paul Salop of Oakland, California; daughter Emily Lyle Parker and her husband Chris DeVore of Seattle, Washington; grandchildren Natalie and Benjamin Salop (12), Parker DeVore (10) and Josephine DeVore (8); and Don's sister Sherri Nelson of Bristow, Oklahoma.

Don Parker's remains will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery. A gathering in his honor will be held at the Corvallis Country Club on Saturday, April 9, 2016 at 2:00 pm. Don requested that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the Boys & Girls Club of Corvallis, www.bgccorvallis.org

Tribute Wall

DG

“ Dear Jo Ellen, Margaret & Emily,

We were so sorry when Anne called to relay the sad news. Our memories of all of you when we lived in Wyoming are precious to us! We will sorely miss Don's annual Christmas letter -- please know that we love you all and will never forget . . .

*Love,
Don & Kathy Gardner*

Don Gardner - April 05, 2016 at 02:08 PM

RV

“ Dear Jo Ellen,

We just read about Don's passing in the paper this morning. We are of course just heart broken to hear this! We cherish the time that we had with you both as your neighbors and fireplace sitting friends. We sorely miss him. You both were in my thoughts so much this week, that I just couldn't believe it when I read the paper this morning. You two are such special people and it's really apparent when reading Don's words and glimpsing his accomplishments, which were so many!

We are thinking of you and your family during this very difficult time.

Rhonda & Ken Vandehey

Rhonda & Ken Vandehey - March 25, 2016 at 09:31 AM