



Donald James Gallagher

November 17, 1924 - May 16, 2022

Donald James Gallagher, age 97, of Storm Lake, Iowa died on Monday, May 16, 2022 at Methodist Manor Retirement Community in Storm Lake.

Funeral Mass will take place Saturday, May 21, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Storm Lake, Iowa. Burial will be in the St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery. Visitation will held Friday, May 20, 2022 from 5-8:00 p.m. with Rosary beginning at 5:00 p.m. and Prayer Vigil beginning at 7:30 p.m. all at the Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in STORM LAKE. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of arrangements.

Don Gallagher was born November 17, 1924, to Eugene and Helen (Creamer) Gallagher in Brooklyn, Iowa. As a boy, Don helped on the farm, played high school baseball, basketball, and football, and served as president for the Brooklyn High School Class of 1942.

Following high school, Don worked on the farm and in construction before matriculating to St. Ambrose University in Davenport, where he studied secondary education. He graduated from St. Ambrose, then opted to take a position in sales with the Philadelphia Envelope Co., and toured Iowa while making calls on offices in every county courthouse in the state. He was then drafted into the U.S. Army and served his country during the Korean War.

A position selling livestock feed for the Walnut Grove Feed Company blossomed into opportunities elsewhere in Iowa, including DeWitt, Vinton, and Strawberry Point. While working in Vinton, a blind date with a kindergarten teacher in town, Anne Stock, saw the 36-year-old bachelor and the 25-year-old educator attend a St. Patrick's Day dance in Cedar Rapids. The luck of the Irish prevailed and the couple wed five months later at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Storm Lake on Aug. 5, 1961.

Eight children were born to this union in near-record time. Don and Anne bought a four-bedroom home at the end of Prairie Avenue in Strawberry Point and saw their children carve a whiffle ball field into the yard, leaving Don room for a vegetable garden, where homeruns disappeared as he hoed potatoes. The couple spent a quarter-century there, washing cloth diapers, keeping a fleet of bicycles mostly operational, and attending school, church, and community events. Curiously, Don also took up golf during this time and became integral in the operation of Backbone Golf & Country Club, hand-raking and seeding greens and running tournaments for golfers throughout northeast Iowa.

Following Don's retirement as district sales manager for Yoder Feeds in 1986, the couple moved to Storm Lake. Five of their children were graduated from Starmont High School, while three are Storm Lake High School graduates.

In retirement, Don raised money for the Storm Lake High School Booster Club. He delivered Meals on Wheels, sold some advertising for The Storm Lake Times, played Santa at Santa's Castle, toiled as an officer for the Northwest Iowa Golf Association, and worked with The Times to raise funds for local veterans to visit Washington, D.C., via the Honor Flight program.

And, he kept golfing. A lot. Don likely set a record for the number of golf holes played by an Iowan who, despite his skill, never made a hole-in-one, having

witnessed at least 10. He shot his age dozens of times and received a standing ovation at the Alta Golf Course when he fashioned an even-par 36 in league play at age 95. (He probably told you about it.)

A people person to his core, Don sipped coffee at Hy-Vee, strolled the aisles at Fareway, and learned the latest in a morning klatch at Seiler Plumbing. A child of the Great Depression, Don took pride in his appearance: pressed slacks and wingtips, juxtaposed with the home-team sweatshirt. A grandson of Irish immigrants, he came by storytelling honestly, savoring a memorable tale and crafted his own with impeccable timing, pitch, and irreverence. He enjoyed politics, news, conversation with everyone, big band music, people who were open-minded, and “good operators.” His blood pressure rose and fell with the Beavers, Tornados, Panthers, Stars, Hawkeyes, Cubs, and on Election Night.

Don is survived by his eight children: Maggie and Al Rudy of Radcliffe, Iowa; Dan and Jen of Waukee, Iowa; Joe and Cathy of St. Charles, Missouri; Tim and Jill of Storm Lake, Iowa; Marty and Emily of Storm Lake, Iowa; Katie and partner, Ronald Lindblom of Waterloo, Iowa; Ed of Jackson, Minnesota; Jerry of Cedar Falls, Iowa; 27 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; brother-in-law: Dick Claeys of Belle Plaine, Iowa; sister-in-law: Julie Stock of Roselle, Illinois; and 22 nieces and nephews. Don and Anne also hosted a foreign-exchange student, Erik Eldhagen, of Sweden, in 1991-92, who remains close to the family.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Anne; his parents, his three siblings, his parents-in-law, two brothers-in-law, two sisters-in-law, and several of his golf foursomes.

Memorial contributions made following Anne's death 13 years ago created a

scholarship fund through Storm Lake's Dollars for Scholars, an organization Don and Anne supported. This spring, he humbly considered the blessings he enjoyed in being able to offer a pair of scholarships to high school seniors 80 years following his high school graduation. Memorial gifts in the couple's name will continue this scholarship effort for the benefit of college-bound future teachers from Storm Lake and St. Mary's high schools.

Previous Events

Rosary

MAY 20. 5:00 PM (CT)

Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - Storm Lake
1615 W Milwaukee Ave,
Storm Lake, IA 50588
(712) 732-1911
jensenfuneralhomes@gmail.com
<https://www.fratzkejensen.com>

Visitation

MAY 20. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

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Prayer Vigil

MAY 20. 7:30 PM (CT)

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Funeral Mass

MAY **21**. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church -- Storm Lake
320 Seneca Street
Storm Lake, IA

Tribute Wall



“ *Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Donald James Gallagher*



Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - May 18, 2022 at 03:18 PM



“ *Don was our neighbor when it was Kayla, Ledger and I. We were so lucky to have him there. He was always so good to us and was a friend. That friendship never ended. Every time we saw each other we always caught up. Our family has grown since then, but we all will miss him.*

Marty DeMuth - July 05, 2022 at 08:21 PM

DH

“ *Wonderful obituary and tribute to Don. Thank you for that, and the video. What a guy. I enjoyed him every single time I ran into him on the streets of Storm Lake, and always marveled as to how well he could hold his own and ride herd on that magnificent Gallagher family he helped to create. A finer bunch of rambunctious Irish Catholics were never assembled, influenced, no doubt, by their terrific parents. My sympathies to you all at this time, but I know you will give Don the celebratory sendoff he deserves.*

Dick Hakes - May 23, 2022 at 03:32 PM

TK

“ *Tree, Vince, Nannette, KAF purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



Tree, Vince, Nannette, KAF - May 20, 2022 at 05:37 PM

JL

“ *To the entire Gallagher family, deepest sympathies for the loss of such a great man. It was always great to see him at sporting events supporting the home team. Sincerely, Paul and Jackie Loos*

Jackie J Loos - May 20, 2022 at 02:38 PM

FJ

“ *2 files added to the album Memorial Folder*



Fratzke & Jensen - May 20, 2022 at 11:29 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 20, 2022 at 09:27 AM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 20, 2022 at 08:54 AM



“ *Wilbur & Karen Triplett lit a candle in memory of Donald James Gallagher*



Wilbur & Karen Triplett - May 20, 2022 at 08:08 AM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 19, 2022 at 05:42 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 19, 2022 at 04:30 PM

MH

“ *RIP Don.*



Mary Hartman - May 19, 2022 at 04:29 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 19, 2022 at 03:02 PM

DP

“ *Don was such a great and genuinely nice guy. He was always fun to visit with. He will be missed by many!*



Don and Diane Porter - May 19, 2022 at 02:49 PM

GN

“ *Grace Neuroth-Casson lit a candle in memory of Donald James Gallagher*



Grace Neuroth-Casson - May 19, 2022 at 11:19 AM

RO

“ I am heartbroken this week as I lost two people I loved. My mother and Don died within hours of each other. Then I thought “if they meet up in Heaven, my mom won’t be able to get a word in edgewise!” Roger Timko

robertimko - May 19, 2022 at 10:41 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 19, 2022 at 10:02 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 19, 2022 at 08:43 AM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 18, 2022 at 03:11 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 18, 2022 at 02:45 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 18, 2022 at 01:30 PM



“ Adam And Angie Kutz lit a candle in memory of Donald James Gallagher



Adam and Angie Kutz - May 18, 2022 at 01:20 PM



“ Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 18, 2022 at 12:33 PM

JM

“ I first met your parents via the Jessen's. I had been told they were both marvelous people, and I soon saw that assessment as being spot on. Decades later I accidentally encountered your dad at a Storm Lake gas station when I was in the area teaching a continuing education course for teachers. After about 10 minutes of catching up, I left the station and began the long drive home (Independence) -thinking I would most likely never hear from or see your dad again.

Thankfully, I was wrong. After that by-chance encounter, your dad would out-of-the-blue call me and we'd play catch-up. He would fill me in on each of you kids (whom he loved so dearly), tell me about his most recent golf game, and inquire about me and mine. I always marveled at his keen wit and compassion for his fellow man. He, along with your mom, made this world a better place.

Jacquie McTaggart - May 18, 2022 at 10:27 AM

WF

“ With memories & love, the Spence family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



With memories & love, the Spence family - May 18, 2022 at 10:00 AM

AJ

“ My sympathies on the loss of a good man. Don was a long-time friend of my father, Bob Johnson, who passed away a year ago this week at age 96. Dad and Don played a lot of golf together at Backbone G&CC. Over their later years after Don had retired from Strawberry Point and moved to Storm Lake, he would call Dad every few months or vice versa. In the last few years of my dad's life, Don called me a handful of times to check up on Dad when he could not get ahold of him. Dad, a very active senior as was Don, was often not in his assisted living apartment to take calls, and Don was fearful that not answering the phone meant Dad was not well. After reassuring him, I would have Dad make a call to Don so they could chat.

I like the line in the obituary "he and Anne had 8 children in record time". Anne and I carpoled together to Dubuque for graduate school in the early '80s, so I got to know her pretty well, and have a good story which I shared with Jerry a few years ago.

Anne signed documents as C. Anne Gallagher, reflecting her given name. The first day of summer school at Clarke U. had Anne and I in the same class along with a couple dozen others, including several nuns. As the instructor called the roll to identify her students, she called out "Sister Anne Gallagher", upon which Anne replied with a comment on her status as mother of 8 children not being compatible with being a member of a convent.

*Art Johnson
Edgewood, IA*

Art Johnson - May 18, 2022 at 09:55 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 18, 2022 at 09:32 AM



“ *Don was one of the first people I met in Storm Lake. He was always good for a story or two, and you couldn't help but give him your full attention. My heart goes out to the family. I'm sure Don has already made plans sipping coffee and reliving old memories. In this world there are heroes and legends. Don was both. RIP my friend.*

Jason Stoltzfus - May 18, 2022 at 08:34 AM



“ *Don has always been one of my favorite people! He was a great friend of our family and absolutely the funniest person in my entire life! We were one of the babysitters for the Gallagher Klan growing up and remember how much Don & Anne were devoted to their family, but also enjoyed a night out on the town. He was so special and his humor will always put a smile on my face when I think of him. I am grateful for having "experienced" what a great joy and true humanitarian Don was on this earth. Thanks, Don!*

MaryKay Kellogg-Strong - May 18, 2022 at 08:07 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 17, 2022 at 11:56 PM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 17, 2022 at 10:33 PM



“ Sara Faas-Jones, David, Gertie, & Henry purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



Sara Faas-Jones, David, Gertie, & Henry - May 17, 2022 at 10:24 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.



May 17, 2022 at 09:44 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 17, 2022 at 09:09 PM



“ *Don and Anne were my second Mom and Dad. I treasure the long list of memories created by the friendship and working relationship our families shared. To all the Gallagher children, my love as you remember an Irish gentleman!*

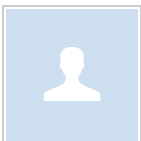
Jean Cannon - May 17, 2022 at 08:18 PM



“ *Thomas Prchal lit a candle in memory of Donald James Gallagher*



thomas prchal - May 17, 2022 at 07:57 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 17, 2022 at 12:58 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 17, 2022 at 10:23 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald James Gallagher.*



May 17, 2022 at 10:11 AM



“ *Our hearts are heavy...”one of the good ones is gone”...one of a kind....we loved him and his stories... we love his children...we loved his ability to be a best friend and a daily golf buddy to a Republican and do it again the next day... every year... and keep the love and enjoyment of being together a priority.. over politics... they truly cherished each other and their time together... forever grateful for that...our Dad looked forward to seeing Don every day... He was special... and we are better for knowing him.. but because of that we are profoundly sad he has passed on from this earth... God Bless Don*

Tim/PegiCavanaugh - May 16, 2022 at 11:47 PM