



Donald Frank Stephanic

July 21, 1959 - December 12, 2025

Donald Frank (Don) Stephanic died on December 12, 2025, at the age of 66, after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer that spanned more than a year.

Don was born on July 21, 1959, in Highland Park, Michigan, to Frank and Patricia (Oberski) Stephanic. The third of four children, he grew up in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. From an early age, Don demonstrated a strong work ethic, intellectual curiosity, and a quiet determination that would define both his personal life and professional career.

Don pursued his higher education at Michigan Technological University, where he earned both his undergraduate and master's degrees. Following college, he began his career at General Motors before moving on to GMF Robotics (now Fanuc). His entrepreneurial spirit later led him to co-found Applied Manufacturing Technologies, where he spent 13 years as Vice-President. Don later acquired Western Engineered Products, which he owned and operated with pride for 15 years, before selling the company and retiring.

On July 13, 1985, Don married the love of his life, Betsy Benner, in Livonia, Michigan, and they shared forty wonderful years together. Together they built a life rooted in love, commitment, and family. Don was a devoted husband and a proud father to his two daughters, Alison (Bobby) Robinette and Megan (Sami Merhi) Stephanic. Being a grandfather to their daughters, Emilia and Josephine Robinette and Sophia and Elizabeth Merhi, was one of Don's greatest joys, and he cherished every moment spent with his grandchildren.

After retiring, Don and Betsy split their time between their home in Grand Blanc, Michigan and their cottage on South Lake Leelanau in Cedar, Michigan. They also enjoyed traveling south in the winter, visiting family and friends and attending golf tournaments. One of their favorite places to travel was Grand Cayman, where they enjoyed many happy vacations. Don's favorite activities were golfing, fishing, playing cards, and above all, spending time with family and friends. He was also deeply committed to giving back to his community. Don served on the board of trustees of Kingsbury School for eight years, ending his tenure as the Board Chair. During this time, he helped Kingsbury make the transition from an independent private school to a public charter school, helping to ensure its continued existence. Don also contributed his expertise as a member of an advisory board at Lake Superior State University.

Don is survived by his wife, Betsy, his daughters, sons-in-law, and granddaughters, as well as his siblings Mark (Paula) Stephanic, Diane (Jim) Toscano, and Jeanne (Ray) Jeffery. He was preceded in death by his parents and infant daughter, Elizabeth.

Don will be remembered for his integrity, leadership, generosity, and unwavering dedication to those he loved. He leaves behind a legacy of hard work, kindness, and family devotion that will continue to inspire all who knew him. He will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

A celebration of life will be held on Monday, December 22, 2025, at 11:00 am at Fenton First Presbyterian Church, 503 South Leroy Street, Fenton, MI 48430, with a luncheon at the church afterwards. Family will greet visitors on Sunday, December 21, 2025, from 1:00-4:00 pm and 5:00-8:00 pm at the Dryer Funeral Home (101 First Street, Holly, MI 48442) and again Monday, December 22, 2025, at Fenton First Presbyterian Church, from 10 am until the time of the service. Burial will be in the spring at the Solon Township Cemetery in Cedar, MI.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations in Don's honor to the Holly Presbyterian Church (207 E. Maple Street, Holly, MI 48442) or Michigan Technological University (www.mtu.edu).

Fenton First Presbyterian church will be livestreaming Don's funeral on Monday, please see link below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8309142301?pwd=RHJ4dDBPdEhMN25yKzFzSzZNeUVPQT0>

Cemetery Details

Solon Township Cemetery

11577 S Cedar Rd.
Cedar, MI , MI 49621

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 21. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Dryer Funeral Home
101 First St.
Holly, MI 48442
<http://dryerfuneralhomeholly.com>

Family will have break from 4-5 PM

Visitation

DEC 21. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Dryer Funeral Home
101 First St.
Holly, MI 48442
<http://dryerfuneralhomeholly.com>

Visitation

DEC 22. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church of Fenton
Fenton, MI

Funeral Service

DEC **22**. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church of Fenton
Fenton, MI

1. Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8309142301?pwd=RHJ4dDBPdEhMN25yKzFzSzZNeUVPQT09> 2. use the Zoom app and use this Meeting ID Meeting ID: 830 914 2301 Meeting Password: 5013 3. Use your telephone line to listen in: Call +19292056099 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (New York) Or Call +13126266799 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (Chicago)

Tribute Wall

KB

“ Kingsbury Trust Board planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Frank Stephanic.

Kingsbury Trust Board - December 19, 2025 at 01:36 PM



“ Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Donald Frank Stephanic.



December 19, 2025 at 01:36 PM

MM

“ Mary M. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Frank Stephanic.

Mary M. - December 19, 2025 at 12:58 PM

FF

“ From the Ballina family. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Frank Stephanic.

From the Ballina family. - December 18, 2025 at 04:51 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donald Frank Stephanic.



December 18, 2025 at 04:51 PM

JO

“ Jeffrey O. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Frank Stephanic.

Jeffrey O. - December 17, 2025 at 09:31 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald Frank Stephanic.*



December 17, 2025 at 09:31 PM

BL

“ *Dear Stephanie Family,
I am so sorry to hear the news of Don's passing. I will fondly remember our times as parents at Kingsbury and class outings with our daughters. Sending prayers for Don and the entire family. Bill Lafontaine*

Bill Lafontaine - December 16, 2025 at 03:13 PM

BS

Thank you, Bill.

Betsy Stephanic - December 18, 2025 at 04:30 PM

MM

I was so sad to hear about Don's death. As the oldest grandchild of Frank and Julia Stephanic, I didn't know Don well. I must have been about 12 when he was born, too old to play with him when we were visiting Grandma and Grandpa's place. Also, as a young adult, I moved to the West Coast of Canada. But I got to know him better while attending the occasional family event--unfortunately, mostly funerals. He was always so attentive and kind.

Mary Ann Murphy - December 19, 2025 at 01:21 PM

SG

“ *Dear Stephanic Family,
I was fortunate to be charged with teaching Don and Betsy's girls and to experience Don's work on the Kingsbury Board as well as Betsy's many contributions of her personal time to support the school and the teaching staff. It was a certainty for me to observe what wonderful parents Don and Betsy were and to note how important they viewed education. Don's legacy and his life will live on for his family and friends. Please accept my sympathy and empathy for losing your beloved husband and father. Sherry Gelmine*

Sherry Gelmine - December 15, 2025 at 03:57 PM

BS

Thanks so much, Sherry.

Betsy Stephanic - December 18, 2025 at 04:32 PM