



Donald J. Perkins

April 12, 1948 - June 15, 2016

NORFOLK -- Donald Jon Perkins

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Donald J. Perkins of Clatskanie, Oregon, a 25-year veteran Senior Trooper of the Oregon State Police, passed peacefully on June 15 in Norfolk, Nebraska, surrounded by family.

Don was born April 12, 1948 in Astoria, the third son of Emil and Aili Perkins, of Brownsmead. He attended Knappa schools, graduating Knappa H.S. in June of 1966.

After high school, Don followed in his father and brothers' footsteps as a longshoreman on the Astoria waterfront. In July, 1966, he was critically injured when a tugboat hit the log raft he was working on. It was thought he would lose his leg, but, as Don showed throughout his life, he was made of tough Finnish stock. This was the first of many times he beat the odds.

Don married Sandy Seeborg on October 28, 1967, to whom he remained wed for 32 years. He soon discovered his life's passion in law enforcement, joining the Clatsop County Sheriff reserves. In 1974, Don became a trooper in the Oregon State Police. His duty stations included Oakridge, St. Helens and McMinnville, where he worked both traffic and Fish and Game. In 1994, he moved to Clatskanie, where he stayed until his retirement in 1999 while serving the St. Helens OSP office again. During that time he served as a regional union representative for the Oregon State Police Officer's Association.

In 2001, Don married Cheryl Gowler. In retirement with his beloved wife, he enjoyed travel, garage sale-ing, poker and spending time with family and innumerable friends. In the winter of 2003, Don foiled an abduction attempt on Cheryl in Guadalajara, Mexico, suffering life-threatening wounds in the process. But once again, he lived to tell the tale.

A lifelong sportsman, Don boasted numerous Boone and Crockett trophy deer, elk and antelope.

Don is survived by his wife of 15 years, Cheryl, son Brian Perkins, and nieces Debbie Franklin (Ed) and DeAnn Crenshaw (Don), whom he helped raise. He had four grandchildren, Nick, Alex, Heidi, and Megan, and was proud to boast three great-grandchildren, Parker, Finn, and Graysen. Don is survived by siblings Richard Perkins (Eva) and Irene Kallio, nephew and hunting partner Ken Rudat (Patsy), ex-wife Sandy, and numerous nephews, nieces and friends. He was preceded in death by siblings Emil, Jr., and Helen.

A celebration of life will be held later this summer, with announcement preceding. Donations in Don's memory can be made to: Oregon State Police Officer's Association, P.O.B. 12726, Salem, OR 97309. <http://www.ospoa.com/> program

Tribute Wall



“ Donald J. Perkins

October 05, 2023 at 03:46 AM



“ From cousin Jack and his family. We were shocked and saddened to hear about Don's passing. Our family is getting smaller and smaller and we feel each loss. I was most in touch with Don in recent years. We shared phone calls and a few visits. We intended there to be more of each and we often talked about getting together in Oregon during salmon season. He was a joy to be with and a source of information on family history and current news. It was our pleasure to get to know Cheryl, to catch up on Brian's doings, and to get the latest on his siblings and their kids. He was eager to connect with our family and I think each of us had counted on a long and continuing relationship. The outstanding event I recall of his life was the tragic assault on him and Cheryl in Mexico. I remember his early reports from that trip being very joyful and I was ready to come there to see him, and then came the sad event and the long recovery. He came out of that situation very well and it was a real credit to his spirit and personality. We will miss him and we hope all of you consider our family as yours. Please stay in touch with us and rely on us for the support family members and Christians, and might I mention Finns, deserve to give each other . Love and peace to all of you.

jack hautaluoma - June 25, 2016 at 11:27 AM

DF

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Deb Franklin - June 24, 2016 at 11:47 AM

PW

“ Don was such a great asset to our Poker games at Harry's home. We all had lots of laughs with him there. We missed him at our games when he stopped coming. We all especially remember the time he introduced a new game "747" . It was a total disaster as he was not able to remember how it went. He laughed at himself right along with us. Of course, we never let him forget it either. A great man to call a friend. My thoughts our with Cheryl at this time. Hoping that she will get through this smoothly.

Patricia Walker - June 23, 2016 at 11:44 PM

 Denise
Lucas

“ I knew Don thru facebook. He befriended me. He befriended me because he was a state policeman with my brother in law Larry Lucas. One day a package came in the mail for our daughter Jaylee. I had posted a picture of Jaylee learning to knit with 2 sticks and a piece of yarn. He sent then several twins of yarn needles and instruction books. She was working on a knitted hat for him. He will be missed. Love to you Cheryl.

Denise Lucas - June 23, 2016 at 06:24 PM

MG

“ Donald fought with single minded determination the cancer that finally claimed him. As a former Oregon State Police Officer he was well equipped to deal with tough situations. Donald was very protective of those he loved and was a good man to have on your side. A really quirky sense of humor, an appreciation for the outdoor life, no one was a stranger. Donald and I looked forward to our favorite author's annual novel so we could take our time savoring and sharing the stories. Whenever Donald visited he came with his own salt shaker. He liked my cooking but would always tell me "Tastes great, just needs salt". Too many memories to choose from. I know he will make things interesting in heaven.

*Michelle Gowler
Mother-in-law*

Michelle Gowler - June 18, 2016 at 10:12 AM

DM

Will always remember Don. I remember the one year you went to some place don't remember where and you guys had some beautiful tomatoes and told me to go pick them in about a week and I did and they were great. Then when he was selling them at Alston Corner and always stopped to buy some and of coarse a chat for awhile. Always enjoyed talking to Don and will be missed. My Deepest Sympathy to the Family. Love ya Diane McKinney

Diane McKinney - June 24, 2016 at 12:38 AM

JO

Where do I start? We will miss Don in the hood at Yuma. We miss him and no words can express really how much. He was a wonderful part of our neighbor hood at the Park. Cheryl, we wish you all the best and will keep you in our prayers. Sending all our Love, Joan and Nolan

joan - June 24, 2016 at 07:14 PM

MH

I will truly miss my friend of 45 years. Don and I first met in June 1971. I had gone to work for the Clatsop County sheriffs department and Don was a reserve deputy at that time. Don spent hundreds of hours riding with me and other deputies, all donated time to the citizens of Clatsop County. Many memories of waterskiing on the Brownsmead Slough, working the roads of Clatsop County, and just having a good time with each other.

In September of 1974 we joined the Oregon State police together going to recruit school at Camp Rilea. Through out our law-enforcement careers our paths always crossed, once again sharing life together. Don and I worked Highway 58 together many times. He was well respected by the community of Oak Ridge and the citizens he served. When Don worked out of Oak Ridge his radio call sign was 2534. I say to you 2534 you will be solely missed by me and Bonnie but never forgotten.

Your friend Always,

Austi

Mike Houlihan

Mike Houlihan - June 25, 2016 at 01:33 PM