



## Donald Butler

December 19, 1952 - February 16, 2020

BUTLER: Don was born on December 19, 1952 in Souris, Manitoba to Clare and Nellie Butler. He passed away on February 16, 2020 at Fairview Personal Care Home shortly after being diagnosed with cancer. Don started kindergarten at King George School in Brandon, with the remainder of his public schooling being in Souris. Don was involved in many sports and was an excellent athlete. He attended the University of North Dakota, graduating with a degree in physical education. Don's first teaching job was in Carman, Manitoba. His teaching career was cut short at 23 years of age when Don was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Even though this was a life changing moment, Don did not let this slow him down. After leaving Carman, he took classes at Brandon University and did some tutoring. He continued to be involved in the sports he loved and involved himself in other meaningful ways. He coached the Souris Blues ladies ball team, and managed the Souris Elks senior hockey team. Hockey road trips were no problem as the team would just lift Don and his wheelchair onto the bus and away they would go. Don was also on the board of many organizations such as the inaugural board of the South West Regional Health Authority, the MS Society, Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation, Helping Hands and the MLPD provincial branch. He was instrumental in getting the congregate meal program started in Souris. Don and Jim Hill were responsible for starting up music in the park in Souris, with a slogan of dissing the "dis" out of disability, and the money raised was used for implementing accessibility at many locations in town. Don is remembered by everyone for his quick smile and charming wit, his genuine interest in those he met, his strength and his positivity and his love of life. He dealt with life's challenges with dignity and grace. He is an inspiration to his family and friends of the strength and resiliency of a beautiful human spirit. Don is survived by his wife Karen O'Hara and his step children Michael and Kristi Josephson and their families in Vancouver, brother Doug Butler and wife Martha in St. Louis, MI, nephews Christopher and Michael and niece Elizabeth. He was predeceased by mother Nellie Butler in 2001, father Clare Butler in 2005, father-in-law John Jacobsen in 2008 and mother-in-law Agnes Jacobsen in 2016. Don is being interred at the Souris Glenwood Cemetery. A Celebration of Don's life will be held in the spring. Donations in memory of Don may be made to the Multiple Sclerosis Society, 457-9th Street, Brandon, MB, R7A 4A9 or to the Canadian Cancer Society, 415-1st Street,

Brandon, MB, R7A 2W8.

# Comments

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“ Don was a great friend to me and my brothers when we were growing up in Souris. I remember going to watch him and my brothers play many hockey games, baseball games and street hockey games. He was a great athlete and enjoyed being around people. He was so much fun. MS changed his life in so many ways but his great sense of humour and big smile shone through that and he made the best of it. He didn't give up. A great example to us all. I will miss reminiscing with you, your sense of humour and that big smile and positive attitude. You will be missed by many. Rest In Peace Don. You deserve it. Sending our condolences and prayers to you Karen and family.

Ellen & Bill Legge

Ellen Legge - February 29 at 12:10 PM

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“ Karen Doug and family. My condolences to your families. Don was a very special person. He was always happy and greeted everyone with smile. Don was always interested in knowing how family and friends from Souris were doing. Don loved to visit with anyone he knew. He will be missed by everyone that knew him.

Darlene Nichol (Cameron) - February 24 at 09:24 PM

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“ Karen, Doug, and families..... I am so very sorry to hear this news. I will always remember the smile that greeted everyone, the intelligence, and that terrific sense of humour that I so enjoyed. He never lost his wit and charm throughout all the ordeals that life presented. I know that I, and so many others, will miss him. He was an inspiration to our human spirit.

Diane Martin(Stokes) - February 24 at 10:35 AM



“ Hello Karen  
Thinking of you & your family at this sad time  
We'll remember Don for his "upbeat" attitude despite his physical disability. He was a pleasure to visit with.  
Sincere sympathy  
Paulette & Garry Van Damme

Paulette Van Damme - March 23 at 01:59 PM

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“ Karen & family: Our sincere condolences in the loss of Don. We always enjoyed visiting with him @Wheat Kings games & then in Fairview. He was a very nice person & will be missed. May your special memories be comforting to all of you.. Bill & Norma Edwards

**Norma Edwards** - February 22 at 08:08 PM

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“ I am so sorry for your loss. May you find comfort in your many memories.

**Judy McCroary** - February 22 at 02:02 PM

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“ Sincere condolences to Don's family. Don was such a good friend, growing up in Souris and although we lost touch over the years, every time we did meet there was an immediate reconnection. Health wise he had a very difficult life, but he was always so cheerful and positive when we met.

**Howard & Myrna Cavers** - February 22 at 01:19 PM

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“ Brenda and I were very sorry to hear of Don's passing, and send sincerest condolences to his wife, family and friends.

**Lyndon and Brenda Bournon** - February 22 at 08:54 AM

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“ Our condolences to the Butler family from the Fleischmann family. I was one of Don's helpers when he lived in Souris. We stayed in touch when he moved to Brandon. He always had a big smile and good conversation. He was my only home care client and he made the experience very rewarding. We will all miss him.  
Tom

**Tom Fleischmann** - February 21 at 12:09 PM

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“ The Carman Beaver hockey team of 75/76 enjoyed their time playing alongside Don.... on and off the ice. RIP

**Dennis Young** - February 21 at 09:32 AM

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“ Don was a wonderful man, he will be missed.

**Sherry Poitras** - February 21 at 09:14 AM

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“ WOW was I shocked to hear the news of such a wonderful man and friends passing. I just heard today and was glad I was with a friend who also knew him. Don aka(MR. BUTLER) too me! I know you didn't want me to call you Mr. but you deserved the respect. I'm going too miss bumping into you at your local coffee haunts. You always would take the time and chat about anything that came to mind. You were a very kindhearted respectful man. I rennet whenever we lived in the same building and how you'd bug me about my rug rats (grandchildren) or ankle biters. I remember telling you be careful or the ankle biters would get your ankles. Lol! So much more but now to to say goodbye for now for I know God must have kept a place waiting for you.

Karen and family and close friends our Sincerest Condolences to yo all! On behalf of myself, John and my Daughter. Take comfort in knowing Don for the kindness he showed to all he encountered and encouraged. You are missed my ole friend. With sadness we let you go go, but memories we will always treasure!

**Lucille Demeria** - February 21 at 12:35 AM

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“ Don was my first teaching partner and mentor at Carman Elementary School. Despite the difficulties he was experiencing, he was always positive and kind. I learned a great deal about handling life from Don. Sincere sympathy to his family.

**Deb Russell** - February 20 at 05:37 PM

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“ Butler family, sincerest condolences,  
Don was always friendly and truly interested  
in what was going on in your life. He was a kind kind man

**Brenda Brian Gree** - February 19 at 10:22 AM



“ Yes he was genuine through and through!

**Lucille Demeria** - February 21 at 12:36 AM

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“ As a former teacher of Don's, I was always amazed at his positive attitude to life after being diagnosed with MS. As a high school student he was a diligent learner, great athlete and constant friend. When he chose teaching as a career, I knew he would do well. However, the curve ball of MS changed his course. Meeting him in Brandon , especially at McDonald's was always a treat. Condolences to Karen, Doug and other family members. He was a great man. Rest in peace friend  
Bill and Louise Lawson

**Bill Lawson** - February 19 at 09:53 AM

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“ Just found out about Don, I am so sorry for your loss .Over the years we had some real memories of Don so today I'm sending my prayers and thoughts are with you all today.

Janice Palmer & family

**Janice Palmer** - February 19 at 09:00 AM

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“ Don was such kind person. So sorry for your loss

**Bev Schott** - February 19 at 12:55 AM

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“ Keep that smile going on your next Journey Don, we will always miss you and your humor and smiles, Run free, or spin your wheels, we'll meet again one day! You brought so much joy to those who knew you,  
Sincerely Mary Ann Carlisle

**Mary Ann Carlisle** - February 18 at 10:54 PM

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“ Karen, sincere condolences. Don was always a great guy to work with on the Accessibility committee I was part of. He had a wonderful sense of humor. Our loss is heavens gain. Hold on to the memories.

Theresa Gibbons

**Theresa Gibbons** - February 18 at 07:58 PM

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“ I taught Don in Grade 10 and 11. He had it all! Good student, good athlete, a real finesse with people and the love and support of a wonderful family. I was pleased he chose education as a career. Sadly MS wrote for Don a different chapter in his life. We are often out to Souris and over the years of running into Don, I have been constantly amazed at his strength, his dignity always surfacing throughout his challenges. He was always glad to renew acquaintances and catch up on the latest. The world has lost a wonderful, noble soul. My wife Judy joins me in expressing sincere condolences to Karen and all the family. Jeff (and Judy) Carter

**Jeff Carter** - February 18 at 06:39 PM



“ I'm so sorry to hear about don he was a big part of my family I have lots of memories with him. I miss him a lot I'm so glad a bunch of us got to see him at Christmas we had the best time lots of laughs and jokes shared by all. Big tight hugs to Karen and his brother Doug and family!

**Rodney Mcknight** - February 19 at 12:38 AM



“ It was with great sadness we heard of Don's passing. Don "Bear"taught in Carman with us. He and I coached the Carman Beavers to a SEMHL Championship in 75-76. It was always a delight working with him. He was such a positive person and accepted his sickness with great dignity. Don was very kind and had a great sense of humour. We always enjoyed his company. We send our sympathies to his wife and family. Marsh and Donna Kennedy

**Marsh & Donna Kennedy** - February 21 at 05:23 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Don's passing. Like many others my memory of Don was about his early years in Souris— a true gentleman and warrior who dealt with life's challenges in such a positive way that truly is a lesson for all of us. My memories are of Don as a prolific hockey player and athlete but also as a reporter for the Souris Plaindealer writing autobiographical moments of Souris residents — myself included. I treasure that article and my connection to Don will stay with me always! My condolences to his wife and family and look forward to sharing more memories in the spring.

Bill Gadsby

**Bill Gadsby** - February 21 at 10:02 PM



“ My sincere condolences! Don was a school friend and a wonderful man!! Peace be with your family!!

**Sande Denbow** - February 18 at 06:05 PM



“ Sorry for your loss. He was a great man.

Love, Linda Denbow

Linda Denbow - February 18 at 05:25 PM