



## Donald Henry Thorstenson

November 23, 1944 - January 30, 2021

Donald Henry “Don” Thorstenson, 76, of Medical Lake, WA entered into his Heavenly home, surrounded by his loving family, during the early morning hours of January 30th, 2021. Funeral arrangements have been made through the Cheney Funeral Chapel and St. John’s Lutheran Church in Medical Lake, WA. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and for the health and safety of our family members, the service will be available to watch live through the St. John’s Lutheran Church’s Facebook page. Cheney Funeral Chapel will also record and share the service and military honors on their Facebook page.

Born on November 23, 1944, in Mobridge, SD, Don was the second child and only son of Henry Theodore and Anne Marie (Stepenenko) Thorstenson. Though born in Mobridge, Don spent his childhood on the family farm in Timber Lake where he attended a one-room schoolhouse close to home. When he was in the 6th grade, Don left the country school, rode his horse into town, and attended Timber Lake High School, where he graduated in 1963. Don was a popular young man in his small town, he played football, rebuilt old cars with his friends, and drove around in his Model A 2 door.

On February 28, 1967, Don joined the Air Force and began his 20-year career in the Armed Forces. He spent one year on a tour of Vietnam and upon returning he was stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base. It was during this time, as fate would have it, that he went to a mixer in Airway Heights and met the

love of his life, Rose Ann Newell. The couple married while driving across the country, on August 4, 1975, and would spend the next 45 years together.

Don and Rose traveled the country and the world with the military and two kids in tow, moving from Maryland to Guam and places in between. When it was time to retire from the military in 1987, they decided to move to Washington State and put down roots for their family. Even after his military retirement, Don was always very proud of his time in the Military and wore his VET cap everywhere he went.

After retirement from the military, Don became a rock driller and was a member of the Laborers Union #238. He traveled to many different places during his second career, assisting in road building and other projects. Don was proud of his work, his coworkers, and his affiliation with the Laborers Union. After another 20+ year career was over, it came time for him to retire for a second time, and in 2009, Don learned to enjoy his “free time”.

After retirement, Don decided to start volunteering with the SCOPE program in the Spokane Valley. It didn't take very much time and Don was in love with the program. He was so proud to be a part of the community and to be directly involved with the Sheriff's office. He would tell stories of his car patrols, fingerprinting, and making sure we all knew where the dangers might be. He met many friends while volunteering and genuinely cared for each person he worked alongside. When Don and Rose moved to Medical Lake, he immediately made sure that he would be able to volunteer at the new station. He was so proud when he received his lifetime achievement award from the Sheriff and told everyone that he came to his house personally.

Don was a proud husband, father, and even prouder grandfather, he was very proud to be called “Papa”. Don and Rose took their grandchildren on many camping trips to Twin Lakes and Clear Lake. They drove their motorhome to

Oregon, Montana, South Dakota, and Wyoming, and took their kids and grandkids along with them. [1]  
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Don was a hardworking, intelligent, kind, and wonderful man. He spoke to people everywhere he went and made friends easily. He hugged the checkout girls and knew all their names; he would go to the same stores because the people there were his friends. Don loved to give advice and share his knowledge of many different subjects, he made sure he always knew the weather and made sure to ask if your oil was changed. He was truly one of the good ones and we are all better off for having known him.

Don was preceded in death by his parent, Henry Theodore and Anne Marie Thorstenson. He is survived by this loving wife Rose Ann Thorstenson; Daughters, Heather (Patrick) Striker of Medical Lake and Holly (Collin) Imus of Great Falls, MT; grandchildren, Henry Imus, Jackson Striker, and Claire Imus; Sisters, Diane (Denver) Canfield, Linda Thorstenson and Sandye (Lynn) Kading, as well as dozens of nieces, nephews, and many other family members.

A Visitation will be held on Thursday, 5-7 pm, February 4th, 2021 at Cheney Funeral Chapel. A Funeral Service will be held on Friday, February 5th at 1:30 pm at St. John's Lutheran Church in Medical Lake, WA. Military Honors will then follow at the Veteran's Cemetery in Medical Lake. If you would like to make a monetary donation in Don's memory please send it to the SCOPE Medical Lake Office. Please send any flower gifts to Cheney Funeral Chapel.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 4. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Cheney Funeral Chapel  
1632 W 1st St.  
Cheney, WA 99004  
(509) 235-2992  
<https://www.cheneyfuneral.com/>

## Funeral Service

FEB 5. 1:30 PM (PT)

St. John's Lutheran Church  
223 S. Hallett St.  
Medical Lake, WA 99022

# Tribute Wall

DS

“ I know Don as being a neighbor of ours's. We had several visits to the Henry Thorstenson family farm south of Timber Lake SD. As kids in the neighborhood we spent many days playing in there yard. I and the Stanek's family wish many comodulates to the Donald and the Henry Thorstenson family. They were great neighbors and friends to all of us. The Donald Stanek family.

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**Donald Stanek** - February 15, 2021 at 01:02 PM

VG

“ Joe and Don were stationed at fairchild base many years back when we became good friends and we continued that friendship until he left us. It was hard for all of us because we were not able to say goodbye because of the COVID. Someday we will see each other again.love and miss you. The Garza family

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**victoria garza** - February 05, 2021 at 04:39 PM

SL

“ I knew Don and Rose when Rose's sister Gale married my stepson, Ron. I was around them in many family gatherings and occasions. He was always friendly and caring about other people and was very fun to be around. I am sending my thoughts and prayers to Rose and the girls and their families, but am also glad that Don is not feeling any pain or sorrow, and I know he is healthy &\* happy and with many friends and relatives, and is at peace. I know he will be missed a great deal by all that knew him and will not be forgotten with a smile on that face. Be strong Rose and girls and I am thinking about you all now.....

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**Susan A Lane** - February 05, 2021 at 02:34 PM

BD

“ Our names are Rich Harmon and Brenda Davis from the West Valley SCOPE office. We met Don at the sally port at the Sheriff's precinct where we do finger print lifting off cars that have been vandalized. Don would share his experience with us and was always ready to help out.

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**Brenda Davis** - February 03, 2021 at 10:18 PM

GP

“ My name is Greg Preuss. I met Don while doing latent fingerprints on car prowls for the Sheriff's Community Oriented Policing Effort ( SCOPE ) He was always friendly and helpful and always had a positive attitude. Our LAFP team will miss his leadership

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**Greg Preuss** - February 03, 2021 at 09:35 AM

MM

“ My name is Marc Mowder. I met Don while visiting my girlfriend, Deb. She lived across the street from the Alki house. At first it was a wave here and there in passing. He was always in the garage or close by working on a project. One day he came across the street while I was in my truck waiting for Deb. We had fun chitchat. I love his way with words and his facial expressions. Such a sweet ol'boy!!! He and Rose put me to work on Alki fixing some peeling paint on the windows. I must have done a good job,because, they had me paint the new house and Heather's too. Thanks to you Don,Rose,Heather and Patrick!! I feel very privileged and grateful to have met you all. Jackson too!! Love and prayers for you. Looking forward to seeing you again Don. 🙏

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**Marc Mowder** - February 02, 2021 at 11:30 PM